

## A BRIEF LOOK AT USD

### Two Join USD Foundation Staff

The University of South Dakota Foundation has added two new staff members to its Constituent Engagement team.

Heidi Schemmel who has a BA in marketing from the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire, is associate director of constituent relations. She previously worked in market research and most recently as a donor relations specialist for the Sanford Health Foundation.

Leslie Gerrish is associate director of constituent engagement. She leads the event management initiatives and other donor engagement efforts. Her undergraduate degree was granted by Purdue University; her master's degree in fundraising and nonprofit management by Indiana University. Gerrish most recently served as an account manager for Wellington, a Kansas City-based event firm, for which she planned and executed events in this country and internationally.

The mission of the University of South Dakota Foundation is to provide private resources for the University of South Dakota, to increase the excellence of students' educational experience.

### Theatre Dept. Plans Busy Season

The University of South Dakota Department of Theatre will bring to stage for the 2015-16 season comedies, thrillers and musicals in four productions.

The season opens Sept. 25-Oct. 4 with William Inge's comedy "Bus Stop." It's March 1955 when a freak snowstorm forces an interstate bus of passengers to pull over and take shelter in a rural diner just outside of Kansas City. It shows what bad weather can do to our emotions and attitude toward others.

USD actors next travel to Transylvania and produce one of Mel Brooks' famous comedies, "Young Frankenstein," from Nov. 20-Dec. 6. All characters from the film make their way to stage in this energetic musical as Fredrick Frankenstein creates a creature just like his infamous grandfather with the help of Igor and Inga.

In the spring, the department moves from hilarity to the shadowy world of playwright Martin McDonough as it presents his dark comedy "The Pillowman" Feb. 18-21. This play contains adult themes and languages as the audience watches fiction writer Katurian being interrogated by two police about some gruesome child murders.

The main stage season concludes April 14-24 with Stephen Sondheim's musical "Assassins." This Tony Award winning musical brings to life people who attempted or achieved the assassination of U.S. presidents. The assassins share stories, meet and discuss issues and inspire each other as they pursue their idea of the American dream.

All USD Theatre Department performances are in the Wayne S. Knutson Theatre on the USD campus with evening performances at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday matinees at 2 p.m. Season tickets, which provide a 25 percent discount, are \$45 for adults, \$36 for seniors (62+), \$30 for youth (K-12) and non-USD students, and \$15 for USD students with a valid ID. A form for ordering season tickets can be downloaded from [www.usd.edu/theatre](http://www.usd.edu/theatre) or requested by calling 605-677-5400 or emailing [theatre@usd.edu](mailto:theatre@usd.edu).

### Faber Forum Speakers Set

The fall lecture series hosted by the University of South Dakota's College of Arts & Sciences will feature speakers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Commerce, the Sioux Falls banking industry, a businessman and a history professor.

The four Farber Forums and the 64th Annual Harrington Lecture will take place in Old Main's Farber Hall over the next few months. Hosting speakers from within the university and beyond, all five lectures are free and open to the public. Each Farber Series lecture begins at 4 p.m. on its respective date, and the Harrington Lecture begins at 7 p.m.

The Farber speakers:

- Christine Cagle, the CDC's associate director for policy, planning and communications in the division for HIV/AIDS prevention, will present "The New Era of HIV Prevention in a Dynamic Health Care Field" on Sept. 16.
- Douglas J. Hajek, a 1985 USD School of Law graduate, will deliver "When Citibank Came to South Dakota: The economics, personalities and politics behind the move" on Sept. 22. The banking lawyer is currently partnered with the Davenport Evans firm in Sioux Falls.
- Stephen B. Hall will lecture Oct. 8 on "International Job Opportunities: 10 Secrets of Getting that Overseas Job." Before his employment with the Bureau of Industry and Security in the U.S. Department of Commerce, Hall attended both Vermillion High School and USD (1974).
- Fred Winkler will present "Are College Students Still Designed for Slow in a World Gone Fast?" on Oct. 21. The 1966 USD School of Law graduate is president and CEO of Dakota Investments and COO for Citigroup (formerly AT&T) Universal Card Services.
- Finally, on Oct. 28, USD history professor Clayton Lehmann will deliver the 64th Annual Harrington Lecture. He received his doctorate degree in history from the University of Chicago and plans to speak on "Imagining Greece." Much of his teaching and research have focused on Greek and Roman history, archaeology and epigraphy. The honor delivering this lecture is chosen each year based on recommendations from a faculty committee in Arts & Sciences.

### Fraternity Raises Support For Childhood Awareness Month

September is Childhood Cancer Awareness Month and one University of South Dakota Fraternity is helping to raise awareness and funds all month. The Pi Kappa Alpha Fraternity (PIKE), whose charity-of-choice is Cure Kids Cancer, is proud to engage the USD campus and Vermillion communities in their efforts as they help local children battle cancer.

Throughout September, the PIKES will be hosting the following events:

- Sept. 14: Ribbon and awareness handout throughout campus
- Sept. 24: Annual Dining for Kids event at Little Italy's Restaurant (831 East Cherry Street). From 5 p.m. until 7 p.m., guests will be able to enjoy two slices of pizza and a soft drink for \$5. A large portion of the funds raised will benefit local, courageous children helped by Cure Kids Cancer.

Numerous posts through our social media outlets to help raise awareness for this worthy cause.

And much more... Stay connected with us through our social media outlets at the bottom of the page!

Cure Kids Cancer's mission is to help children's cancer centers, like the one at Sanford Children's Hospital in Sioux Falls, SD, find life-saving treatments and eventually cures for children's cancer by raising funds and awareness. Cure Kids Cancer is a program of Children's Miracle Network Hospitals.

Third-year Nursing major and Pi Kappa Alpha's vice president of external affairs, Robert McCauley, of Pringhar, IA, is proud of his fraternity's accomplishments. "Cure Kids Cancer is a special organization to our fraternity. We are helping local kids battling for their lives," McCauley said. "We are committed to making a difference."

For more information about Pi Kappa Alpha at USD, please contact Nathan Christensen at (507) 215-5396 or by email at [Nathan.D.Christensen@coyotes.usd.edu](mailto:Nathan.D.Christensen@coyotes.usd.edu).

# Vermillion Sculpture Walk Dedicated

BY SARAH WETZEL  
For the Plain Talk

Community members and VIP's gathered at the final Thursdays on the Platz event to dedicate the recent changes and additions to the Vermillion Sculpture walk which includes 11 new sculptures between the University of South Dakota campus and the Vermillion downtown area.

Vermillion Sculpture Walk Committee members were in attendance passing out pamphlets about the sculpture walk next to 'Moon Dance', one of the new sculptures which was installed on the Platz.

Mayor John E. (Jack) Powell shared some of his thoughts with the gathered public.

"With the merger with the university and the community, this is a wonderful opportunity," he said. "With the sculpture walk, Dr. Schou brought that idea to the city council some months ago and the city council overwhelmingly supported this. It's a wonderful opportunity for our students to come down and interact with the citizens and I hope that the students will think of this as their home away from home rather than their campus."

"I do want to thank many people for their donations to our sculpture walk to make it successful for the city sculpture walk," said Dr. Larry Schou, Dean of the USD college of Fine Arts. "I want to thank the Vermillion City Council for their support."

The Dakota Hospital Foundation, Vermillion Area Community Foundation, Vermillion Area Arts Council, Vermillion Chamber and Development Company, John Walker Construction company, Vermillion Chiropractic and other donors were also thanked for their support in addition to the USD grounds crew who assisted in the installations.

Schou also thanked SculptureWalk Sioux Falls, the program from which the Vermillion Sculpture Walk stems.

"Without SculptureWalk Sioux Falls none of this would have started be-



SARAH WETZEL/FOR THE PLAIN TALK

Mayor John Powell was among those present to dedicate the Vermillion Sculpture Walk last Thursday at the summer's final Thursdays on the Platz.

cause with their organizational skills, all that they've learned to do to make an amazing sculpture walk in Sioux Falls," Schou said. "They're the driving force that helped move this forward."

Jim Clark, Executive Director of Sculpturewalk Sioux Falls, was in attendance and said he was immensely pleased with how the Vermillion Sculpture Walk has come together.

"It's a wonderful partnership," Clark said. "Couldn't be better. The sculptures you have are from four different artists and then about six different artists on campus I think, so wonderful sculptures, some of which we've had on sculpture walk, some we haven't. We have some of yours in downtown Sioux Falls."

According to Clark, the partnership started several years ago.

Up till now the sculpture walk has been confined to the USD campus.

Artwork is rotated every several years, a process that will continue with the artwork downtown giving Vermillion art enthusiasts something to look forward to.

"We hope to have more in a couple of years," Clark said. "We hope you all enjoy them and recognize the wonderful people down here that have been involved in making this happen."

The enjoyment has already begun according to Schou.

"I've already heard many great comments about what we have in the city and on campus so I'm just absolutely thrilled that we have all this great fine art and public art in our community and it will continue to grow in the years to come," he said.

New Sculpture Walk pamphlets will be available in downtown businesses and campus offices within the next few weeks.

## Annual 5K Run/Walk Helping University Of S.D. Students In Crisis

BY SARAH WETZEL  
For the Plain Talk

As National Suicide Prevention Week draws to a close, those in the Vermillion community have the chance to take part in raising awareness and helping University of South Dakota students with mental health challenges.

In its tenth year, Nikki's Run is a run/walk that begins at Prentiss Park Saturday at 9 a.m. with registration at 8, runs a course through downtown Vermillion and ends back at the park.

Prizes are awarded to first place finishers in the male and female categories of 15 and under, 16 to 25 years old, 26 to 54 years old and 55 and over. T-shirts and refreshments will also be provided.

Proceeds from the race all go to Nikki's fund which benefits USD students directly.

"The Nikki fund has really been instrumental in helping other students on campus with mental health issues," said Kimberly Grieve, USD Dean of Students. "It will provide for medication temporarily, to get students back and forth from appointments that they need. It's really been helpful for our students."

You never know but certainly help is always something you can't measure. Even if it didn't save lives it certainly saved a person in the situation they were at the time.

"The communities of Vermillion and Yankton have been wonderful partners and supporters of Nikki's Fund," said Janine Harris, founder of the event. "Since its inception in 2006, we've raised almost \$40,000 for USD students. Prevention begins with each and every one of us. Our mission is educating others that suicide is not an option but getting the help they need and deserve is."

The cost to participate in Nikki's Run is \$15, however Harris encourages people to

come anyway even if they are not able to pay because the purpose of the run is not just to raise funds.

"People bring their families and their kids," Harris said. "People are there with strollers. It's a time of sharing and grieving and remembering."

According to Harris, many race participants themselves have been touched in some way or another by the effects of suicide herself included.

"I lost my daughter to suicide in 2005 and at the time I was working down at the Al Neuharth Media Center," she said. "I just thought I wanted to do something in Nikki's memory but also for others who are struggling with depression or any other type of mental health issues. Also for people that are left behind. I think we just need to do a better job with the resources out there when people are struggling with these issues. It's kind of a way to get the word out throughout the state."

According to Harris the purpose of Nikki's Run goes beyond awareness and getting some exercise.

"It gives people a safe place to come and grieve for the loved ones they lost to suicide," she said. "The funny thing is I think nationally people don't comprehend the numbers of people that are touched by suicide. When we lose someone it's not only your immediate family and friends. Might be colleagues, church groups, might be college, it just touches so many people. The ones left behind are always left with the whys and what should I have done, what could I have done. Having the walk is a safe place for them to come grieve and share their loss and it's very nonjudgmental. It's very supportive. At the end we get together and get in a circle and we have a balloon release."

Though Harris does not get to ask each participant individually, she guesses that most have lost a loved one to suicide or had some

other connection with it.

"When you lose someone in an accident and a cancer, don't get me wrong I'm not comparing a suicide death with those death in being more traumatic but it is different," she said. "When you lose someone, you know when you're in a crowd of people you say 'Oh, I lost my sister or brother to cancer.' People don't say 'I lost a loved one to suicide.' There's a social stigma out there that makes it not easy to talk about. It needs to be talked about more. We need to remind people in our lives how much we love them and how much we care about them."

For this reason, Nikki's run is just as much for the living as the memory of those who have passed on.

For participants who need a little extra conversation, counselors from the USD counseling center will be in attendance.

As far as the difference Nikki's fund has made in the lives of USD students, Harris said there's no way to be sure.

"It's hard because of confidentiality," she said. "I don't get a lot of feedback but I know that the professionals working at USD are able to share bits and pieces of how the fund has been able to help students. What I wanted to do with the money in the fund is help students and keep them in school so if they're struggling with mental health issues, medication, assessments, appointments that they might have to pay out of pocket, and that's where the fund kicks in. Nikki's fund has also provided training to USD staff and the fund has also brought in nationally known speakers to the campus for

suicide prevention."

Harris currently resides in Sioux Falls and so relies on staff from the USD counseling center and other departments to help put on the event.

"I'm trying to keep it to the roots of how it was established," she said. "It was established for USD students. I'm also a USD alum. I think it's in a good place and if we can help the students there and help them so they can stay in school and get that degree then that's the important stuff."

As far as those left behind should a loved one succumb to suicide, Harris recognizes the challenge but also knows there is help out there.

"We have to learn how to live with what happened and that's a big struggle," she said. "With the helpline center in Sioux Falls they have a great support system. They have support groups and other resources and materials that support the families who have lost someone to suicide. Find someone you can talk to about this. It's just not something that comes across in normal conversation. You need to find a safe place where you can share that grief when people are nonjudgmental and understanding."

A safe place like Nikki's Run Saturday.

For more information about Nikki's Fund or to make a donation, please call Janine Harris at (605) 670-8740 or email [nikkisfund84@gmail.com](mailto:nikkisfund84@gmail.com).

For those in need of personal assistance call the International Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.

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