FEUERHERM NAMED STAFF MEMBER OF QUARTER

Deb Feuerherm, administrative assistant in the Department of Athletics, has received the Staff Member of the Quarter award.

Deb was nominated for all of the work she does in support of VCSU athletics. Her nomination read, in part: “...Deb has been doing outstanding work at VCSU for years. ...The VCSU athletic department has added coaches, teams, and positions in the time Deb has spent at the Fieldhouse. Her workload has involved a variety of responsibilities in coordination with a large group of people. She has done a tremendous amount of work with concessions, tickets, fundraisers, scholarship funds, passes, and much more.... I appreciate Deb's efforts for VCSU and believe she accomplishes far more work for our athletic program and university than most people would realize.”

VON HAGEN WINS COLLEGIATE PIANO COMPETITION

Tara Von Hagen, a VCSU piano student, competed in the NODAK Music Competitions, held June 24 in conjunction with the North Dakota Music Teachers Association annual conference at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks. She placed first in the collegiate division and received a $200 prize.

VCSU DUO PERFORMS IN FROST FIRE PRODUCTION

Alumnus Jacob Olson ’15 and VCSU student Mariah Smith, a theatre minor, were cast members in the production of “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat” at Frost Fire Summer Theatre near Walhalla, N.D.

Based on the “Coat of Many Colors” story in the Book of Genesis, the show features music by Andrew Lloyd Webber with lyrics by Tim Rice. The production ran June 27–July 29.

SUNDSTROM ATTENDS SCIENCE OLYMPIAD INSTITUTE

Teather Sundstrom, assistant professor of chemistry and regional Science Olympiad director, attended the Science Olympiad Summer Institute in Phoenix, Ariz., from July 13–17.

The week consisted of presentations and hands-on activities that covered the rules and expectations for each of the 46 Science Olympiad events. The workshop also provided a good source of contacts to help with clarification and arbitration of event rules.
The acquired knowledge base will help tremendously when Sundstrom seeks volunteer event supervisors this winter for the annual VCSU Regional Science Olympiad in March.

PROFILE OF A 2015 VCSU GRADUATE

A profile of Scott Westby, a member of the Valley City State Class of 2015, follows. This is the last of the profiles of five members of the recent graduating class; the July issue included profiles of four of Westby’s classmates.

Scott Westby

Scott Westby didn’t necessarily think of himself as a student leader at Valley City State; generally he considered himself more the “smiley guy around campus” who wanted “to make VCSU a more fun place.” But recognition started coming his way junior year, and that caused him to acknowledge the leadership role that was clear to others on the basis of his record of involvement and engagement on campus.

Salutatorian at New Rockford-Sheyenne (N.D.) High School, Westby served VCSU as a Viking Ambassador (three years), a New Student Orientation Leader (two years), a Student Senator (two years), president of the history honor society Phi Alpha Theta (two years), and an Improv Club member (two years, and as vice president one year). He also played in the athletic band for a year and in Concert Band two semesters. He was a member of Alpha Lambda Delta, the freshman honor society, and was named to homecoming court his junior year. Westby received the Viking Pilot award, also in his junior year, for his significant contributions to student life at VCSU.

At the Senior Awards Luncheon on May 15, Westby was named recipient of the Claude M. Burrows Memorial Award for Outstanding Achievement in Social Science, and he shared the Outstanding Student in Teacher Education (Secondary Education) Award. He was also listed in “Who’s Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges.” And this spring, Westby graduated summa cum laude with a bachelor’s degree in social science education.

In addition to all of the accolades this past year, Westby had the privilege of having his mother, Laurel (Ploium) Westby ’84, on campus, as she had joined the education faculty as an instructor in fall 2014. The experience brought the two closer together, according to Scott, who felt like his fellow students told him that they had just met his mom and/or thought she was great at least once a day. “That made me appreciate the impact that she had, that any one person can have,” he says.

Reflecting on his days at VCSU, Westby thinks of how quickly it’s gone by: “Crazy pace—time speeds up when you’re busy,” he says, and adds that the time has been “special.” He’s thankful for his faculty mentors Tony Dutton and Steve King—“they have more knowledge than I’ll ever hope to have”—and he considers himself “pretty lucky” to have found his voice on campus and been given a chance to lead and “be a positive role model for others.”

Westby recognizes it’s the things you do and the people you meet, not just what happens in the classroom. One of his leadership roles involved rallying the troops (about 35 of them) for an epic two-and-a-half hour snowball fight on the eve of an already-announced snow day. Calling it one of his “favorite moments” in Valley City, Westby knows he’ll never forget it, just like the many friends he’s acquired. “The relationships you make are incredibly strong and long-lasting,” says Westby. “That speaks to the atmosphere here.”

With his career plans up in the air—he’s contemplating work in a higher ed setting and possibly grad school in the future—Westby is both “excited and a little terrified” thinking about where he’ll end up. But he’s comfortable with his experience at VCSU, which he describes as “personal learning.”

Westby came to Valley City somewhat a shy guy—in his own words, a little “closed in.” “Four years later, no one would say that,” he says proudly. “I figured out what kind of person I want to be, who I want to associate with, reconciling what I think and what I feel with who I am.”

That’s what an education—a VCSU education—can do for a person, especially a bright, talented young man like Scott Westby.