

KIRKWOOD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

curren**t**s

Spring 2019

UNLEASHING POTENTIAL

With Kirkwood in her corner,
Courtney Obadal finds herself
moving past barriers toward
a bright future.



Kirkwood
EXERCISE SCIENCE

A PUBLICATION OF THE **Kirkwood**
FOUNDATION



Dear friends,

After what seemed like the longest (and coldest) winter in recent memory, it looks like the weather is finally turning a corner. Signs of spring are popping up all around us, and our award-winning Facilities department is already hard at work so we can once again see the campus in all its glory. This season brings with it a lot of symbolism that relates very well to what we do here at Kirkwood. The themes of change, growth, and new beginnings are synonymous with spring—and this institution.

Just as the flowers begin to bloom, many learners on our campus transform from students to college graduates. But much like the plants and trees need the assistance of the grounds crew to grow, a great number of our students need support to blossom into their potential.

Student support comes in many forms depending on the needs of each individual. For an increasing number of people, the cost of an education is a huge burden and is the major roadblock to getting a degree. If that barrier is eliminated, or even lessened, so many more people can pursue their dreams of getting a college education.

A great example of the impact of scholarships is the story of Courtney Obadal in this issue of Currents. Courtney is a nontraditional student and single mother who was facing some personal obstacles that prevented her from reaching her full potential. However, she received a Kirkwood scholarship that eased her financial stress—and it changed her entire future. Because of one donor's generosity, Courtney graduated from Kirkwood this spring with a degree in Exercise Science and will be moving on to pursue a degree in Health Studies at the University of Iowa.

But, Courtney's story is just one instance where we could make a difference. There are many people just like her in our area. Since the vast majority of our graduates stay here after they graduate, cultivating their success not only gives them a chance at a prosperous future, it also promotes healthy economic growth for our entire region. That's why scholarships are so important, and it's the reason your continued support is so crucial.

Please enjoy this issue of Currents, and thank you for all that you do for Kirkwood and our students.

Sincerely,

Dr. Lori Sundberg
President

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MAKE AN IMPACT

You're only a Kirkwood student for a couple years, but you're a Kirkwood alumna or alumnus forever.

5
DECADES

3
GENERATIONS

200,000+
ALUMNI

Visit www.kirkwood.edu/gift19 to make a positive impact on the next generation of future Kirkwood alumni.

Gifts at every level have a direct impact on Kirkwood students and enable us the opportunity to provide an exceptional learning experience.

Cover photo, Courtney Obadal.

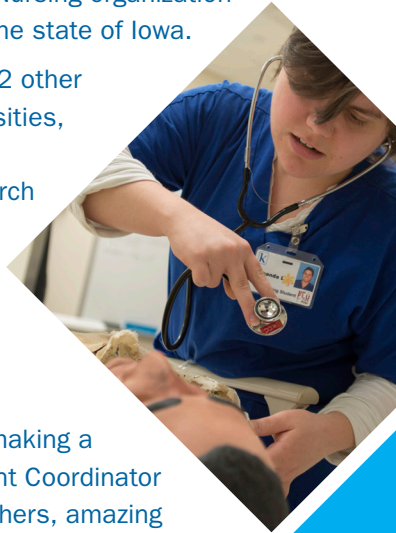
TOP NURSING PROGRAM IN IOWA

A 2019 study put together by the Registered Nursing organization ranked Kirkwood's nursing program No. 1 in the state of Iowa.

According to the rankings, Kirkwood topped 32 other institutions, including several four-year universities, to claim their spot as Iowa's leader in nursing education. The rankings were based on research of each individual program, and test scores.

Kirkwood currently has more than 800 students taking prerequisites for nursing careers and another 300 enrolled in the technical program.

"It really reconfirms that what we're doing is making a difference," said Kirkwood Nursing Department Coordinator Lauri Hughes. "We have a great group of teachers, amazing facilities, and we really try to provide our students with a unique, specialized training experience."



i Kirkwood has the **No. 1 NURSING PROGRAM IN THE COUNTRY** based on board pass rates.

EAGLE MEN'S BASKETBALL CLAIMS THIRD NATIONAL TITLE

Kirkwood's basketball program continued its storied tradition of success with an outstanding season in 2018-'19. The men's team won the Region XI Championship, finishing the regular season ranked No. 1 in the NJCAA Division II national polls. The Eagles kept their foot on the gas from there and went on to claim their second National Championship in the last four years, and their third overall title!

The Eagle women also had another great year, climbing as high as No. 2 in the national rankings at one point in the season. The women also have seven national titles to their credit.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JUNE

- 5&6** World Culinary Tour Dinner featuring Tajikistan
The Class Act Restaurant
The Hotel at Kirkwood Center
5 – 9 p.m.
- 20** Freedom Festival Tribute to Heroes
The Hotel at Kirkwood Center
6 p.m.

JULY

- 10 & 11** World Culinary Tour Dinner featuring Morocco
The Class Act Restaurant
The Hotel at Kirkwood Center
5 – 9 p.m.

AUGUST

- 1** Jazz Under the Stars Big Fun
Noelridge Park
7 p.m.
- 7&8** World Culinary Tour Dinner featuring Oaxaca
The Class Act Restaurant
The Hotel at Kirkwood Center
5 – 9 p.m.
- 8** Jazz Under the Stars Soul Sherpa
Noelridge Park
7 p.m.
- 15** Jazz Under the Stars Christopher's Very Happy. Band.
Noelridge Park
7 p.m.
- 22** Jazz Under the Stars Funk Daddies
McGrath Amphitheatre
7 p.m.
- 31** Iowa Classic Horse Show
Iowa Equestrian Center

For a full listing of college events, visit www.kirkwood.edu.

To register for one of the Passport Dinners, visit www.thehotelatkirkwood.com/events.

OVERCOMING
OBSTACLES IS NOTHING
NEW TO COURTNEY OBADAL,
THANKS TO HER
DETERMINATION AND
HAVING KIRKWOOD
IN HER CORNER.

COURTNEY OBADAL

STUDENT FEATURE



Graduating this spring from Kirkwood with an Associate of Arts degree in Exercise Science, Courtney plans to take a few more classes to complete an Associate of Science degree before applying for University of Iowa's health studies program. Her ultimate goal is to become a registered dietitian.

Courtney knows firsthand how important diet and exercise are to quality of life. Changing her own lifestyle has helped her overcome her depression, anxiety, insomnia, and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

In high school, the Cedar Rapids native says she didn't believe in herself, skipped classes, and struggled to pass.

It was a downward spiral headed for failure. She graduated but was unsure about her career path. Courtney had her son six years ago and worked and took care of him, but did little else.

"I had no motivation," she says. "I didn't feel good or eat well. I wanted to feel better."

Finally, with encouragement from her mother, Courtney signed up for resistance training and kick-boxing at Farrell's eXtreme Bodyshaping and worked with a coach.

"That got me back into shape," she says. Plus, she drastically changed her diet, cutting out sugar and coffee. "The biggest thing was eating breakfast. I never took time for myself with those sort of things."

A friend had enrolled at Kirkwood, which prompted Courtney to look at the exercise science program. She started at

Kirkwood in 2017, working part time and taking up to 16 credits per semester.

Last summer, she completed a two-week study abroad trip to Italy during which she studied literature, history, and humanities. She returned home to a letter from Kirkwood awarding her a John P. and Jean W. Ferring Endowed Scholarship.

"That was huge," she recalls. "It was a big relief, financially."

Today, Courtney, 27, is a single mom with a six-year-old son, working part time and attending Kirkwood full time while maintaining a 3.9 GPA. Without the help of the endowed scholarship and other financial aid, Courtney doubts she'd have come this far.

"I've had really good professors. They really know what they're doing," she says. "Class sizes were under 20. And we did a lot of hands-on activities, working with fitness classes at the rec center."

Her advisor and Kirkwood's flexibility in scheduling have enabled Courtney to care for her son, go to her classes, study, and work part time.

As she noted in her application for the Ferring scholarship, "I am prepared to face any challenge to reach the career and life I want for myself and for my son."

i

Iowa's 15 community colleges educate **MORE THAN HALF** of the state's residents.

John P. and Jean W. Ferring Endowed Scholarship

Eligibility for this scholarship:

- Must have a minimum 2.5 grade point average.
- Preference given to a single parent.
- Must have intention to complete a four-year degree.
- Must demonstrate financial need.

Kirkwood provides scholarship opportunities for everyone and makes the application process as easy as possible for students who balance their education with multiple jobs, family life, and other obstacles. One simple online application puts students in consideration for every scholarship opportunity they qualify for. With more than 1,400 scholarships awarded every year, there are a lot of pieces to the pie.

The cost of education continues to be the most prominent barrier keeping students from their potential, but access to scholarship opportunities makes Kirkwood—one of students' most accessible and affordable college options—even more accessible.

When scholarship opportunities increase, student debt goes down, and new dreams get realized.

Thanks to our donors, Kirkwood has **one of the largest scholarship programs in the country**, awarding over \$3 million in scholarships every year.

For more information about scholarships visit www.kirkwood.edu/scholarships.

BRETT BAUMGART

LIFETIME EAGLE



Brett Baumgart personifies Kirkwood's favorite adage: "Once an Eagle, always an Eagle."

It's a natural bond for Brett, Kirkwood's Recreational Services supervisor. Not only has this 35-year-old been a Kirkwood Community College student and is an alumnus, but he's also found his career fit as a Kirkwood employee.

Brett's enthusiasm for Kirkwood started early, as a kid in Coralville watching his older brother thrive at Kirkwood playing basketball. Sports was an integral part of his family, so when Kirkwood recruited Brett and gave him a basketball scholarship, he was ready. He also qualified for a Pell Grant, which helped cover school costs.

From 2002 to 2004, while finishing his associate degree, Brett played basketball and golf for Kirkwood.

"Doing both was great," he recalls. "From August through May every year, I was playing one sport or the other. It kept me involved and busy. It also really prepared me for learning to get organized and how to prioritize."

Kirkwood's basketball team went to nationals both years Brett played, being narrowly beaten in the semifinals. Ask him about a favorite memory and he points to framed pictures from the March 2004 regionals to go to nationals; one shows him mid-leap scoring a key point. Brett made the game-winning 3, to win by 2 points. The crowd stormed the basketball court, Brett recalls. The next morning, classmates gave him a standing ovation as he entered the classroom.

That camaraderie is what makes Kirkwood shine, Brett says.

"It's the people," Brett adds. "The coaches and teammates, faculty and staff—those are the people who make Kirkwood great."

Brett graduated in 2004 and transferred to Grandview College (now University) in Des Moines,

where he completed his business administration degree in 2006. He wasn't sure of his next step, Brett says, but he hoped to ultimately partner his business degree with a sports program. Having stayed in touch with Kirkwood friends, teammates, and coaches, Brett never lost that special Kirkwood bond.

He sold insurance for a while—until one of his former coaches told him about the job opening for running Kirkwood's recreation center and programs. Brett started in October 2011 as recreation services supervisor.

Brett has found his Kirkwood training has prepared him well. He runs into other former students and former faculty/staff also now working at Kirkwood. He enjoys mentoring work-study students who are helping him oversee the rec center's operations. Helping them has brought him full circle.

"I love it," Brett says with a smile. "Everybody knows each other. It's like a sports family. My bosses, co-workers, and faculty/staff are all outstanding."

43% of Kirkwood grads graduate debt free.

Alumni Leadership Council

Cassandra Brower '16
Iowa State University, Student

Lorlei Christner '90
Van Meter Inc.

Teri Copler '80
TrueNorth Companies

Steven Crane '96
Farmers & Merchants Savings Bank

Jackie Dennis '95
U.S. Probation Northern District of Iowa

Jeff Driscoll '86, '92
Primus Construction

Holly Feldmann '11
Kirkwood Community College

Shawn Gallagher (Chair-Elect) '86
Ladco, Inc

Deborah Gertsen (Chair) '83
Cedar Rapids Bank & Trust

Stephen Hanisch '10
Kirkwood Community College

Nicole Hasenbank '93
U.S. Bank

Lisa Huggins '95
Neighbor Insurance

Carissa Johnson '10
Cedar Rapids Freedom Festival

Dawn Jones '93
Wylde1 Marketing and
Communication Strategic Solutions

Denise Kassis '17
University of Northern Iowa, Student

Mary Klinger (Past Chair) '88, '14
St. Luke's Health Care Foundation

Tina Kubovec '16
UnityPoint Health

Brad Marcus '90
U.S. Bank

Kristin McVay '05
UnityPoint Health

Jason Pasker '01
Farmers State Bank

Tim Ruth '77, '93
McCreeedy-Ruth Construction LLC

Rick Seger '80
Cedar Rapids Bank & Trust

Brian Stoll '18
Illuminate Digital

Kasi Tenborg '16
The Hotel at Kirkwood Center

Don Tyne '76
Linn County Veteran Affairs

Chris Wheeler '86
Point Builders LLC

MICHAEL J GOULD RECREATION CENTER GETS RENOVATED

The Michael J Gould Recreation Center is seeing the end of a renovation project that began in 2018, consisting of several updates throughout the building and a 6,000-square-foot, one-story addition to the complex.

Built in 2003, the facility was dedicated as the Michael J Gould Recreation Center in 2006, following a \$1 million donation from Michael and his wife, Jan, to establish an educational endowment in perpetuity that met the areas of greatest need for Kirkwood students.

Renovations include new finishes, fixtures, and lockers in the men's and women's locker rooms and a single-user restroom/shower room. Additional improvements include minor renovations to existing indoor lounge space, new wall paint, and the installation of new LED lighting fixtures and controls throughout the building.

The most significant improvements are displayed in a new free weight room and multipurpose room. The renovations offer a much larger and more comfortable areas in which to lift, with 10 bench/squat areas. The multipurpose room is available for use by credit classes as well as various group fitness classes offered at the rec center.



AMVETS POST 6 IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

VETERANS SUPPORTING VETERANS

Veterans often face struggles most of us cannot imagine: financial stress, isolation, and emotional and psychological troubles such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Thanks to Kirkwood and members of the Cedar Rapids AmVets Post 6, veterans who are Kirkwood students can find ongoing support to help them succeed.

Don King, commander of AmVets Post 6, has been in their shoes, as a veteran and student. He was in the Marine Corps from 1972 to 1975 and helped relocate refugees to the U.S. as the Vietnam War ended. He remembers struggling to remake his life and finish his education. So, working with Kirkwood's Veterans Affairs office to support other vets is important.



Kirkwood provides the One Stop/Veterans Affairs office in Kirkwood Hall, where veterans can connect with a variety of support and assistance. Since 2013, AmVets has sponsored a scholarship fund to provide help with education costs, according to each veteran's needs.

Post members help as many vets as possible, focusing on those in danger of "falling through the cracks," Don says. One year, AmVets raised \$700 to help a vet who was a single parent and needed funds for Christmas gifts for his daughter and new tires.

AmVets Post 6 has also covered improvements to Kirkwood's Veterans Lounge, a quiet, private study and lounge space with computers, a printer, snacks, and a microwave – only for veterans. It's a great place to find current veteran information and talk with other veterans. In 2013, AmVets contributed \$1,500 for new window treatments and paintings to make the lounge more comfortable for vets.

The post also participates in and

supports the Linn County Veterans Stand Down, an event providing haircuts, dental care, medical checkups, and \$50 gift cards. On June 22, the post will sponsor the 20th Annual Veterans Fundraiser—the AmVet Riders Motorcycle Bug Run, with veterans riding motorcycles together. Support also comes from the AmVets Post 6 Ladies Auxiliary—gift and grocery cards at Christmas, for example.

"We like to think globally but act locally," Don says. "We have raised more than \$100,000 over the past 19 years."

Most importantly, Don notes, the funds are available without a lot of red tape and paperwork.

"Some of the things might seem small, but if you have a flat tire or need a textbook or money for groceries, you need that right now," Don explains. "We want to provide the support they need."



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We like to think globally but act locally. We have raised more than \$100,000 over the past 19 years.

— ” —

—Don King

Kirkwood is consistently ranked as a top **MILITARY FRIENDLY SCHOOL** by several publications.

EXCELLENCE IN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION



This March, Kirkwood was honored to receive the prestigious Simon Award for Comprehensive Internationalization by NAFSA, the world's largest nonprofit association dedicated to international education. Named after the late Sen. Paul Simon of Illinois, the award recognizes colleges and universities for excellence in integrating international education throughout all facets of their campuses.

Kirkwood was one of five colleges to receive the award and was the only 2-year institution recognized by NAFSA.

For years, the International Programs department at Kirkwood has made its impact felt on a local, national, and worldwide

scale. The college is ranked fifth nationally in the number of study abroad students for 2-year colleges nationwide and consistently attracts a diverse range of international students from countries around the world. The institution has put an emphasis on innovative international experiences for all students, both in and out of the classroom, due to the global commitment of its board, administration, faculty, staff, and students.



Kirkwood students come from **43 states** and **54 countries around the globe.**

CELEBRATING ARTISTIC ALUMNI SUCCESS

This year Kirkwood featured its first ever all-alumni art exhibition throughout February and March in the Iowa Hall Gallery on the main campus. The exhibit showcased the work of 38 talented former students, many of whom returned for the exhibit's final reception on March 28.

The exhibit was a great way to celebrate the artistic success of former students and it also helped illustrate the large scope of career opportunities available for current students with a talent for art.

Many Kirkwood alumni artists have found tremendous success in a variety of fields. Students have transferred to 4-year institutions to further study the arts, medical illustration, or architecture, and several others have found success as clay artists, glass artists, photographers, sculptors, graphic designers, interior

designers, painters, illustrators, tattoo artists, and entrepreneurs.

"Art gives students a chance to learn about themselves," said Kirkwood assistant art professor Arbe Bareis. "It helps them embrace their fear and vulnerability and take risks. Art helps students build confidence and develop a healthy, assertive voice."





CELEBRATION OF SUCCESS 2019 AWARD RECIPIENTS

On April 25, the Kirkwood Alumni & Friends organization held the eighth annual Celebration of Success event at The Hotel at Kirkwood Center. Hundreds of Kirkwood graduates came back for the evening's dinner and reception, which recognizes the significant accomplishments of our alumni.

Recap of this year's event: www.kirkwood.edu/alumnicelebration

PRESIDENT'S AWARD

Centro, Inc.

TRUSTEES' AWARD

Joe Greathouse

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

Aaron Amstutz
Dr. Clayton T. Parks
Bruce Teague III



Kirkwood FOUNDATION

6301 Kirkwood Blvd. S.W.
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52404

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