2015 ANNUAL REPORT TO THE SYNODS

Seeking Truth, Building Strength, Inspiring Service—Together. These seven, simple words are the Carthage mission statement. They serve as the foundation for everything we do here as we seek to educate young men and women. We proudly embrace our Lutheran heritage, even as we welcome all to our beautiful, lakefront campus. We challenge students, faculty, and staff to seek excellence in every endeavor, and we affirm that the privilege of an education carries with it the responsibilities of social awareness. We are, in short, your college.

But what is your college? Physically, Carthage comprises an 80-acre campus on the shore of Lake Michigan. The campus is in Kenosha, a city of 100,000 in southeastern Wisconsin—an hour from downtown Chicago, a half-hour from downtown Milwaukee. Intellectually, Carthage is more than 150 full-time faculty—no graduate assistants teach our students—with degrees from some of the most prestigious universities in the world. 91% of the full-time faculty have the terminal degree in their field. The average class size is 18; there simply are no large lecture halls on campus. Carthage was named a Best Midwestern College by The Princeton Review (2014), and a Tier 1 National Liberal Arts Institution by U.S. News & World Report (2014).

Your college has enjoyed a spectacular year, which simply challenges us to reach ever higher. Here are a few of the highlights of our work this year:

• When the present school year opened in September 2014, Carthage set an all-time record enrollment with 2,599 full-time undergraduate students. Thanks to the very hard work of our admissions officers, we were among the 13% of colleges nationally that reached their enrollment targets this year.
• Each year, some 800 adult learners enroll in undergraduate, graduate, or professional development classes at Carthage.
• We are good stewards of our resources. The College is on track to end this fiscal year with its 27th consecutive balanced budget.
• The endowment fund was at an all-time high of some $82 million as of December 31. Still, this is well below the average of colleges our size, and well below what we need in order to truly support student financial aid and innovative academic projects.
• Phase I of the $43 million renovation of our science facilities was completed in January 2015, and faculty and staff have moved back in to their new offices, classrooms, and labs. Phase II began even before Phase I was formally complete, and should be completed by June 1, 2015. Phase III takes place this summer, and will be completed by September 1, 2015. The project includes a major renovation of the 70,000-square-foot David A. Straz, Jr. Center for the Natural and Social Sciences, and creation of a new 35,000-square-foot wing to the south and east, embracing the Center’s lakeside location. This will increase classroom and laboratory space by more than 40%, which is essential, given that more than 25% of Carthage students major in the natural sciences.
• As part of this renovation project, Carthage received the second largest gift in its history, a $10 million grant from the Tarble Family Foundation of Los Angeles.
• Carthage is the new home for NASA in Wisconsin. Carthage was named the lead institution for the Wisconsin Space Grant Consortium, which funds education, research, and informal education projects through a national network of university-based Space Grant consortia.
• After a lengthy process of research and preparation, Carthage launched a Bachelor of Science in Nursing program. The founding director of the program is working to satisfy all educational, regulatory, and accreditation requirements. We hope to welcome our first students this September.

• The American Institute of Physics (AIP) recently selected Carthage’s Department of Physics and Astronomy for its new study on effective undergraduate physics programs. Carthage is among the best in the country at preparing undergraduate physics students for careers in STEM fields—science, technology, engineering and mathematics—according to the AIP. Carthage is one of six colleges and universities nationwide selected for the project.

• Over the past fifteen years, Carthage has invested close to $200 million in new campus facilities. There is no deferred maintenance.

• The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools has given Carthage high marks and granted reaccreditation without condition.

• The latest strategic plan is nearly complete. More than 125 faculty and staff members, and some 75 or so members of the greater community, have been working in conjunction with the Board of Trustees, which is fashioning its next five- and ten-year strategic plan for the College. The Board will approve the plan later this year.

• When it comes to critical thinking, problem solving, and written communication, Carthage seniors are in the top 11 percent nationwide among colleges and universities using the Collegiate Learning Assessment, a national tool administered at institutions across the country to assess their impact on student learning.

• Carthage is ranked seventh nationally for student participation in short-term study abroad by the Institute of International Education (Open Doors 2013 Report).

• Carthage students studied on five different continents during the 2015 January Term. The Carthage Choir went to Spain, and the Women’s Ensemble sang in China. Students studied economics and business in South Africa; the tropical ecology of Costa Rica; religion and society in India; the economics and science of rural development in Guatemala; business and marketing in Sweden; and biology and geography in Nicaragua, among other J-Term trips.

• Carthage students volunteered their time and effort in thriving partnerships with the United Way campaigns in both Kenosha and Racine Counties, as well as Kenosha’s Boys and Girls Club, Women and Children’s Horizons, Shalom Center, and other non-profit agencies. Students also supported national efforts such as the ALS “Ice Bucket Challenge” (more than 75% of the incoming freshman class participated!), the Relay for Life, and Walk a Mile in Her Shoes.

• Finally, and most importantly, within six months of graduation, 95 percent of graduates report landing a satisfying career position or enrollment in graduate school.

The Lutheran concept that God gives us our vocations, that we strengthen them through the attainment of skills and knowledge, and that we use these strengths in the service of others, is essential to our mission, inspiring and leading students to find their own particular way in this complex world. Carthage is proud to be a college of the church, and proud to provide a challenging and rewarding liberal arts education in a Lutheran context. Thank you for your partnership with us!

Gregory S. Woodward
President

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