Leadership at Kuyper

In his autobiographical work—Confessions—dated A.D. 397, Augustine wrote: *Quid est ergo tempus? Si nemo ex me quaeret, scio; si quaerenti explicare velim, nescio.* [“What then is time? If no one asks me about it, I know. But if someone asks me to explain it to him, I do not know.”] Using his reasoning, if we were to substitute the word *leadership* for *time,* many of us would find ourselves in Augustine’s quandary—we think we know what it is until we are asked to explain it. One of the core components of Kuyper’s identity is being “a ministry-focused Christian leadership College.” However, leadership at Kuyper is different than the way most of us would define it—it is a process of understanding God’s call on one’s life, learning ways to work with others, and accomplishing God’s work. This type of leadership is relational, ethical, purposeful and empowering.

At Kuyper, the process starts with what Academic Dean Tamara Rosier describes as the key to understanding Christian leadership. She maintains that everyone who is a Christian is also called to leadership and that an understanding of who they are in relationship with their Creator is the beginning of their leadership journey. “We are leaders because of whom we follow. Once we cultivate our understanding of our biblical worldview, we need to learn how God has equipped us to engage His world. As we develop as leaders, we learn how to love and work with others. Christ-centered leadership is a relational process of people working together to make a difference in God’s world.”

While Rosier said that there are dozens of theories on leadership, Kuyper’s application of leadership is based on a biblical model of truth and sound academic research. “Leadership theories...”

Bringing God’s grace to the playground: a Kuyper student’s internship experience

Bryan Bartell was a little skeptical about being the designated “rap and song teacher” at an inner-city children’s ministry this summer. But, despite his hesitation, Bryan, a senior, passionately dove into the challenge at New City Kids ministry in Jersey City, New Jersey.

Bryan’s intercultural studies major at Kuyper required him to complete an internship to bring real-life perspective and experience to what he had been learning in the classroom. When New City Kids visited a Kuyper chapel last year, Bryan knew that he needed to find out more. “I was inspired by the talent of the kids and the heart of the leaders,” he recalls. “I had to follow up.”

Following up meant that Bryan would accept a summer internship with New City Kids as the coordinator for their Adventure Camp program and, of course, as a rap and song teacher. “I did a lot of planning, a lot of praying, and a lot of flying by the seat of my pants,” said Bryan. “My primary responsibility as adventure coordinator was to plan adventures around New Jersey for my group of middle schoolers. We went canoeing, hiking and rock climbing. We went to a museum, learned how to tie knots, and took swimming lessons. In...

Internships continued on page 6

Reaccreditation

Kuyper College is scheduled to receive reaccreditation status in 2013, but before that takes place, the faculty and staff must complete a self-study of the institution. During the past few years, the Higher Learning Commission has increasingly emphasized a self-study process as both a procedure for gathering data for the Commission’s accreditation decisions and as a means for self-improvement by institutions of higher learning. As a result, the Commission requires Kuyper College to submit a comprehensive self-study report, which will be conducted over a two-year period. Joy Milano, associate registrar, is heading the Kuyper reaccreditation and self-study team.

The report that Kuyper will provide must give evidence that the College meets the criteria requirements for accreditation...
As I reviewed the draft of this newsletter, a hymn crept into my heart and I started humming the tune of O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus. What struck me about the stories and accounts related here was a sense of the profound nature of God at work through individuals and through the College as a whole. This is especially touching when it shines through the life of a student—a younger person who is discovering the vast treasure-store of God’s calling and grace. This realization opens their lives to love, and to embrace and help others in a way and to a degree they never imagined themselves drawn to or capable of. Like a light bursting forth on a cloudy day, students experience a fresh awareness of the deep love of Christ and the depth of their own faith. This is Kuyper College!

The awareness of this dynamic is what also energizes us who work at the College. There is nothing more delightful nor more rewarding than seeing students come alive with a new appreciation for their identity, place and purpose in the kingdom of God! When I wrote some time ago about the exceptional spirit of our faculty and staff and the high level of morale characterizing them all, I did so in a reflection on the impact of tight budgets and curtailed programs. I believe that the content and spirit of this newsletter highlight the real motivation behind people’s dedication to and excitement about the College. Students are being impacted deeply and are energized in realizing that they—and not just the College as an institution—are the subject and implementers of our purpose statement: Bringing God’s Grace into Today’s Culture!

You know that you are part of that as well and you will see as you read this newsletter that students recognize how important you are in helping them further their lives in service to Christ and His church. I hope that you truly do feel the same sense of reward, affirmation and excitement we do who daily come alongside these students. I am so grateful that you care, pray and support what we see as our response—our mission—to the deep, deep love of Jesus. Thank you for embracing us in your life!

O the deep, deep love of Jesus
Spread His praise from shore to shore!
How He loveth, ever loveth,
Changeth never, nevermore!

Dr. Nicholas V. Kroeze
President

Reaccreditation continued from cover
in the following categories:

• Mission and integrity
• Preparation for the future
• Student learning and effective teaching
• Acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge
• Engagement and service

For each category, a committee has been created that is taking an in-depth look at specific issues regarding the College. Each committee is composed of members from different departments of the College. “We have representation from Student Life, Facilities Management, the Business Office, Faculty—the entire College is involved in the process,” said Milano. “We also have some recent graduate representation on the committees so that we have a student perspective as well.”

The self-study evaluation report is a large undertaking for the College. “In general, for a college our size, the report will be anywhere from 100 to 250 pages. There is a lot of information that has to be included,” said Milano. The report will serve as the formal application for reaccreditation and as a frame of reference for the peer evaluation team that will visit the College during the 2012/2013 academic year. The peer evaluation team will then make its recommendations to the Higher Learning Commission, who will make a final decision by May, 2013.

According to Milano, the reaccreditation process, though lengthy, will serve as a tool that the College will use in the future. “The goal of the Higher Learning Commission is that, as a result of this self-study and evaluation process, all of us at Kuyper will take an honest look at what we’re doing and how we’re doing it, and then use the information we’ve gathered to address important issues and continue the never-ending task of increasing the quality of the College,” she said.
Serving Interculturally

Kai Ton Chau
Assistant Professor of Music and Worship

Toronto, Ontario, the most multicultural city in the world, had been my home for almost nineteen years until I came to Grand Rapids in 2009. This past summer the Lord opened doors for me to go back and serve over a weekend at an ethnic Chinese—yet multicultural and multilingual—church. I was invited to preach and lead a workshop on worship and song leading at a church in Mississauga, a vibrant city adjacent to Toronto. Typical of many Toronto-area Chinese churches started in the late ‘80s and early ‘90s, this church has not only grown in numbers, but also experienced changes in its demographics.

The first-generation immigrants who came to Canada twenty years ago have teenage children by now. Meanwhile, many of these families brought their parents over as well. Therefore, it is quite common for the Chinese churches to have families of three generations come to worship on Sundays. While many of these first-generation immigrants’ mother tongue is Cantonese (a popular Chinese dialect in southern China), a large majority of the Canadian-born, second-generation Chinese speak English as their first language. In addition, although the number of immigrants from Hong Kong started to decline in the mid-’90s, immigration from mainland China and Taiwan has grown substantially at the same time. Therefore, Mandarin Chinese (or Putonghua) has gained popularity in recent years. As a result, many Toronto-area Chinese churches reached out to these newer immigrants and formed Mandarin-speaking congregations. Due to language barriers and subtle differences in the subculture, it is commonplace for Chinese churches to have multiple Sunday services conducted in different languages. Church-wide services, however, need simultaneous interpretation.

It was under this cultural backdrop that I preached at three services—in Cantonese Chinese on Friday night, Mandarin Chinese at the 9:30 a.m. service on Sunday, and English at the 11 a.m. service. My mother tongue is Cantonese Chinese. To preach and lead workshops in a second or third language, I needed an extra amount of time and effort to prepare and develop suitable translations. Through the grace and power of the Lord, I was able to lead the services as planned. (Interestingly, the Saturday workshop was not translated. As there were participants from all three people groups, we interacted with a mixed use of languages.)

In this global village, the little corner we live in—Grand Rapids—is becoming more multicultural every day. I pray that God enables us to be more prepared to serve our neighbors cross-culturally.

“*In My Words* is a feature of *The Kuyper College News* highlighting first-person stories by Kuyper College faculty and staff.
that rely on a leader’s traits or behaviors may work when the predominant goal of leadership is production or efficiency, but we are called to ‘...go into the world...’ and to work with people.” She explained: “We need a different type of leadership—one that is based on Jesus’ example. Jesus relied on the relationship with His heavenly Father, understood what He was called to do, developed relationships with those around Him, and led them as they changed the world.” Rosier said that Kuyper College is building a community of leaders who desire to follow this example.

**Equipping Leaders**

Dan Kroeze, professor of biblical studies, sees the Kuyper leadership process as: “Every one of us taking responsibility for who we are, accepting where God has placed us, and with the skill set that He has given us, we make a godly impact on those around us.” When asked if leaders are born or made, without a moment’s hesitation, Kroeze said, “They’re made. We don’t need a certain personality to be a leader; we do need a certain competency, but obviously our model for leadership is Jesus Christ.”

Kroeze said that the faculty originally had leadership as one of the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for every Kuyper graduate. After many discussions, the faculty realized that leadership is so integral to each of the outcomes, that it should be the overarching point for all of the SLOs. “So, in order to become a competent Christian leader, we equip and train our students beyond the knowledge of subject matter to have competency in biblical worldview, critical thinking, cultural diversity and communications,” he said. Kroeze added that students are trained by making sure that they experience real-life situations—where learning becomes doing—through demanding internships where every SLO competency level is tested and proven. “For example, how do you as a leader come to agreement on a variety of conflicting points of view if you’ve never been in a position to competently resolve conflict?” he asked. “Our students are placed in those situations and trained how to do so."

Bransen Parler, professor of theological studies, addressed another component of the leadership model at Kuyper—knowledge with understanding. He explained: “We want our students to be trained in their specific discipline and field of study so they clearly understand how God will use them to contribute to the common good for the building of His kingdom.” Parler made clear that because everyone at Kuyper follows the leadership of Christ, they are driven by an attitude of service. “It is not about, ‘Hey everybody, listen to me, I’m the leader, I’m in charge now.’ But it’s a genuine attitude that seeks the good of all,” he said. “When we do that, having the skills, being aware of our gifts, having the knowledge and understanding to do all of that, we become not a place for ‘Christian leaders,’ but a place where Christian leaders are being made.”

As knowledge and understanding are key parts of the Kuyper process for making leaders, so is the training of students on how to connect and engage with others. “As leaders, we help our students develop a framework by which they can encounter a very secular, postmodern culture and engage that world for Christ,” said Kuyper’s provost, Mel Flikkema. “That framework is our biblical worldview, which is integrated in all the different dimensions of our curriculum. That view also stresses the importance of the character formation of students—having their personal life squared to what Christ demands of all of us—so they not only will be able to talk the good talk, but walk the good walk. What profit would all the head knowledge and skills be to our students if their characters are flawed?”

The training of Kuyper students in

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**Kuyper College Leadership Model**

Cultivating Worldview

Understanding Self

Engaging God’s World

Connecting with Others

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*Every student is expected to attain a level of proficiency in each of the following Student Learning Outcomes.

--Formulate, articulate and apply a biblical Reformed worldview.

--Examine and critically engage the development and diversity of ideas, individuals, groups and cultures.

--Communicate effectively using a variety of media.

--Demonstrate information literacy skills that are foundational to lifelong learning.

--Demonstrate effective skills in their chosen field of service.
leadership starts during their first year. During this time, they learn about their strengths and weaknesses. “First-year college students are developing their sense of identity,” said Rosier. “We foster their growth by providing opportunities to learn about themselves and how God has gifted them.” Students also are challenged to take an honest inventory of their weaknesses and to understand how to develop or manage them.

**Responsible Leadership**

The leadership process at Kuyper rests on the foundation of the greatest commandment “loving God with all of our heart” and on the second “loving our neighbor as ourselves.” According to Ryan Struck-Vander Haak, vice president for student enrollment, Kuyper's biblical worldview and leadership model flows from a Reformed mindset which acknowledges that all individuals are image-bearers of God. “Therefore,” he said, “we train students to have a positive view of the people around them. They learn that people are not to be manipulated or coerced into a way of thinking or acting. They are to be respected first, and then influenced by word and deed for the purpose of redemption and sanctification.” Struck-Vander Haak said this includes fighting injustice by making sure all people have a voice and are included in the community. “That’s the second greatest commandment,” he said. “The first flows from a heart filled with gratitude, knowing we are flawed and sinful and that our individual salvation is free through the grace of God that brings us redemption in Christ. However,” he continued, “Christian leadership realistically acknowledges that in engaging our culture in order to bring about social change, it is impossible to have lasting transformation without hearts that recognize the supremacy of Christ over all of creation. So that brings us back to the first of the two greatest commandments—a continuum that never ends.”

**A Praxis Institution**

According to Kuyper's president, Nick Kroeze, Kuyper's objective will ultimately be achieved by students as they live out, on a daily basis, the three key elements of transformational leadership—seeing, caring and acting. “In our world, few people see the need around them, fewer still care about the need, and fewer yet will actually act to meet that need,” said Kroeze. “That is at the very heart of leadership—action born of seeing and caring; it’s what motivates us. So we teach students to see need, to care about the people affected and to act to meet the need—making the Word of God relevant by taking it into a praxis orientation and putting it into action on His behalf and for His purpose. So, at Kuyper, leadership does not mean a title, position or following. Leadership is being able to take beneficial, biblically correct action in the face of a need—be that physical, spiritual or social.”

Kroeze asserted that everyone at Kuyper has the calling and responsibility to exercise leadership in the world by honoring God and embracing their neighbors. “We teach our students to be aware, and through internships give them exposure that helps them enhance their discernment and heart of care, while providing a context where they begin to bring about a process of transformation. In essence, they begin to live the embodiment of the historical mission of the College for the past 75 years—Bringing God's grace into today's culture. That is the kind of leadership that thrills my heart,” he said. “Effective, transformational leadership for the benefit of others—it is the essence of who we are at Kuyper College.”

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**Leadership Theories**

- **Transformational**
- **Great Man Theory**
- **Trait Theory**
- **Behavior Theory**
- **Situational Theory**
addition, every Monday and Wednesday night we took a bunch of kids sailing, all the while trying to emphasize teamwork and the summer’s biblical theme—the beatitudes.” While sailing was one of Bryan’s favorite things to do, according to him, the highlight of the whole summer was the time he spent studying as he prepared a children’s sermon on the dangers of revenge.

And what about his performance as a rap teacher? “I quickly discovered that my skill was far less important than my care for the kids,” said Bryan. “This summer, I bonded with middle-school kids and by God’s grace was able to help them explore their beliefs and connect the church to the playground. New City taught me that the development of kids cannot be separated into compartments. It’s all important—spiritual, intellectual, emotional, physical and social.”

Getting to this point in his life has been a long road for Bryan. A non-believer, he began his college career in his home state, at Oklahoma State University. He first majored in business before switching to psychology and social.

At Kuyper, Bryan’s faith has flourished and been strengthened. “Kuyper has given me an opportunity to get to know myself in the light of God’s grace,” he said. “I also appreciate the hands-on or praxis aspect of the College. While all classes expect exceptional academic performance, several also transcend the classroom, shaping the attitude of students in areas like racial relations, ministry strategies, leadership qualities and trends of the Church worldwide.”

Through his studies at Kuyper and his summer internship at New City Kids, Bryan feels like he understands more of ministry, especially across cultures. “I learned that working with kids is anything but predictable, that ministry is difficult, that ministry is rewarding, that very few things are simple, and that intercultural ministry is just as much about being sure of who you are as it is about accepting who other people are,” he said. “The internship made me more open to new ideas and revealed firsthand the importance of contextualizing the Gospel to a particular audience.”

As to the future, Bryan says that his summer internship has made him very aware of the importance of children’s ministry. However, regarding his specific calling, Bryan is still unsure. He explained: “This internship gave me a moment of pause. There is no halfway in urban ministry—especially with kids. It’s all or nothing. This both excites me and frightens me. Yet, I’m still wrestling with what the direction of my future ministry will involve. Nevertheless, there is one thing of which I am certain: God’s will is always done.”
**NEWS AND EVENTS**

Professor Lisa Garvelink’s article, “Willa Cather’s Midwest,” was published in the 2010 fall issue of the literary magazine Third Coast.

Professor Richelle White presented a paper at the Association of Youth Ministry Educators’ 17th Annual Forum in Louisville, Kentucky—“Wholly Hip-Hop: A Pedagogy of Engagement—An Experiment in Practical Theology.”

Professor Greg Scott’s article, “Financial Planning: Students and Faculty,” was published in Social Work International Opportunities for Academic Credit: Suggested Guidelines for Study Abroad Programs.

Professor Branson Parler received a Ph.D. from Calvin Theological Seminary.

Professor Allison Backous’s essay, “Lament,” was published in the October, 2010 issue of Image Journal.

Academic Dean Tamara Rosier’s article, “There Was Something Missing: A Case Study of a Faculty Member’s Social Intelligence Development,” was published in To Improve the Academy.

Men’s and Women’s Basketball Schedules – Visit www.kuyper.edu/athletics.

Kuyper Visit Days – Schedule can be found at www.kuyper.edu/visit.

Winter Retreat – Friday and Saturday, January 14 – 15, 2011, at Eagle Village in Hershey, MI.

Blood Drive – Sponsored by the Student Activities Committee and Michigan Blood – Thursday, February 3, 2011, in the Boonstra Fitness Center from 10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Winter Concert – Friday, February 11, 2011, in the Vos Chapel at 7:30 p.m.

2011 Spring Break – Monday, March 7 – Friday, March 11.


**CLASSNOTES**

**Births:**

Darrell Delaney (2005) and his wife, Kai, along with big brother Christopher, welcomed Tristan Alexander to their family on August 12, 2010.


Tom (2008) and Kari (Schierbeek) Sterk (2006), along with big sister Hailey, celebrated the addition of Zachary Thomas to their family on October 4, 2010.

Raidel (2007) and Marcy (Kooreman) León (2005) welcomed their daughter, Celia Shalomi, to their family on October 14, 2010.

Josh Westhouse (2010) and his wife, Alison, announced the birth of their daughter, Annika Marie, on October 19, 2010.

Troy Bierma (2000) and his wife, Faith, along with big brother Yazzie, welcomed Annabelle Priya to their family on November 12, 2010.

**Marriages:**

Anna Kooi (2010) was married to Mark Surdam on September 4, 2010.

Meghan Heyboer (2008) was married to Andy Luster-Bartz on September 18, 2010.

**With the Lord:**


Jessie (VanDyke) Lemmer (1948) on October 30, 2010.

**Stewardship continued from page 6**

for their education. “This has made me realize that my education doesn’t just belong to me,” said Brianna. “Before I worked in a Phonathon, I never realized how many people are giving and backing me up financially. Knowing that has made me take ownership of my classes to a deeper level because I now understand that my education is not just my own—it also belongs to everyone who contributes to make my attendance here possible.”

Brianna now also understands the need to continue the mission of the College by helping financially. “When I’m part of the alumni of the College, I want to give so future students can be helped like I’ve been helped,” she said. Brianna has already put her words into action: “I gave money in the last Phonathon,” she added as she laughed. “We were nearing the end and getting close to the goal, so I filled out a pledge form to help the College meet that goal because I personally know the importance of the support that we receive.”

Normally when people do business with telemarketers, they expect a product or service in exchange for their money. However, when people give to Kuyper College, they expect nothing in return, at least as far as earthly things go—they realize that theirs will be an eternal reward.
To Ashley Kooistra, family is the most important part of her life. “I have grown up in a very spiritually strong family,” she said. “My parents have taught me to live out my faith in everyday life, being faithful to our family’s philosophy: ‘Whatever you do, do it to the best of your ability—never go halfway.’” Ashley’s parents have led the way in this area as their unique family shows.

Ashley is the only biological child in a family of six children. Her parents have adopted five other children—three younger sisters from China and two older brothers through the foster care system. “My parents have shown me how to rely on God as I’ve watched them move from one stage to another,” she said. “They have also taught me that God has a plan for my life that I might not see for quite a while.”

When she was 10 years old, Ashley was challenged by her mother to take her faith to heart. Ashley wanted to make profession of faith, but her mother sensed that she wasn’t ready and told Ashley, “If you can tell me what it means to make profession of faith, then you may.” Frustrated, Ashley decided to begin to find out the answers. It took Ashley some time, but she did come to know what it means to fully rely on God. She explained: “I have found God to be my total support. I cannot go through life on my own. I do not do anything, but rather, He does everything through me.”

Ashley said she chose Kuyper because it is a school that would push her academically without forgetting that she is an individual. “I also wanted to attend Kuyper because I knew that it would force me to be a social person—I would not be able to hide in a corner through my classes,” she explained. And then, with a smile she said, “It also helps that Kuyper is only 20 minutes away from home—I really wanted to be able to visit my family often.”

At Kuyper, Ashley said that she has found another family, a group of students who want to help each other succeed and who look out for each other. “I also found a staff that cares and loves each individual student. They meet students at whatever place they are and help build them up from there.” Ashley added that her classes have made her think about who she is in relation to the world around her. “My faith has been challenged and strengthened. Before coming to Kuyper I could answer a lot of the Bible questions with textbook answers, but through my studies here I’ve had to internalize and figure out the ‘why’ of my answers. My knowledge turned from knowing to an understanding of what my faith in Jesus Christ really means.”

A social work major, Ashley is not sure of what she will do after graduation, but because of her family’s example, she knows it will involve adoption. “I have a heart for international adoption, and I am sure that I will participate in it throughout my future, whether it is adopting, volunteering or working in the field of adoption,” she said.

There are many special events that take place at Kuyper College. There is also an e-Newsletter. If you would like to receive event information and the e-Newsletter online please send your e-mail address to: advancement@kuyper.edu.