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The Courage of Learning

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The Courage of Learning | Augustana College

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Steven C. Bahls, President of Augustana College

My wife, Jane, and I are fans of chamber music. While visiting Passau, Germany, this past summer, we had the opportunity to attend a concert by the Passau Chamber Orchestra. The performance took place along the banks of the Danube River in Passau's historic city hall, a building that dates back to 1393.

We had been invited to meet the conductor after the concert. As we were chatting, a young violinist introduced herself, having overheard enough to deduce we were Americans. She said she was from Rock Island, Illinois, and asked where we were from. You can imagine our surprise when we learned the violinist was Kristina Wallig, a junior at Augustana College!

Kristina had been taking part in a foreign study program at the University of Passau during my first year at Augustana, so this was our first chance to meet- and what a memorable meeting it was, so far from home.

It takes courage to spend a year at a foreign university, taking classes from professors who don't teach in your native language. It takes even more courage to compete for a position in an ensemble like the Passau Chamber Orchestra. But I have found that Kristina is typical of so many members of the Augustana community. She has the courage to invest herself fully in all that she does. Since returning from Passau, she has helped to coordinate our new Presidential Debate Series, in which students and faculty come together to discuss issues of great importance to our society.

After a year at our college, I have been deeply impressed by how many members of our community have the same level of courage and commitment as Kristina Wallig. Just as she had the courage to take risks to invest in her education, many members of the Augustana community are courageous in their dedication to the College and its students.

Our faculty members are more than just figures behind a podium; they have the courage and fortitude to actively serve as mentors for their students. In doing so, they form relationships with students that last long beyond graduation. And most students aren't content with just one major and involvement in just one activity. Most take full advantage of the many opportunities this college affords, and many augment their majors either by adding minors or doublemajoring. I've even met a few triple majors.

Augustana students are a community of doers, not spectators. They have more than two hundred programs and clubs to choose from, and most choose more than one. And they're not content to simply stick with those activities related to their major. They, like Kristina, step outside of their comfort zones. Science students sometimes dominate theatre productions. Business and education students enhance our choirs, bands and

orchestra.

I believe students like Kristina Wallig bode well for our future. With her courage to step outside of her comfort zone and pursue excellence, she will become one of the many Augustana graduates who make important contributions to our world. In doing so, she will be sustained by the bold commitment not just of Augustana's faculty, but also those of its alumni and friends who have invested in the College on behalf of students like her.



Accounting	Communication Studies	Geography	Music	Pre-Optometry
Africana Studies	Computer Science	Geology	Music Education	Pre-Pharmacy
Anthropology	Creative Writing	German Studies	Music Performance	Pre-Physical Therapy
Art	Economics	Greek	Neuroscience	Pre-Physician Assistant
Art History	Elementary Education	Graphic Design	Non-Profit Leadership	Pre-Seminary
Asian Studies	Engineering	History	Development	Pre-Veterinary Medicine
Biochemistry	Engineering Physics	International Business	Philosophy	Psychology
Biology	English (Literature)	Japanese	Physics	Religion
Business Administration	English (Writing)	Landscape Architecture	Political Science	Scandinavian Studies
Chemistry	Environmental Management	Latin	Pre-Dentistry	Secondary Education
Chinese	& Forestry	Library and Information	Pre-Law	Sociology
Classics	Environmental Studies	Science	Pre-Medicine	Sociology (Social Welfare)
Communication Sciences	Ethics	Mathematics	Pre-Music Therapy	Spanish
& Disorders	French	Multimedia Journalism	Pre-Nursing	Theatre
		& Mass Communication	Pre-Occupational Therapy	Women's & Gender Studies