

NDSU MAGAZINE

NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY *summer 2014*





**REAL ESTATE
FOR THE BIRDS**

page 14



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EDITOR'S NOTE



Wes Offerman works in NDSU's sports information office. We have never met in person, but I saw him on the national television broadcast of our men's basketball game in the NCAA tournament. Of all things, there was a clip with Wes, in his nice work clothes, dunking a basketball during warm up with the team. In addition to my awe at anyone tall and coordinated, I was thrilled that one of the behind-the-scenes guys got some air play. Then I heard he'd written a tweet that got a lot of attention, a lovely, apt message, sent a second before the end of the historic game, in which our team won our first ever national tournament game: We'll gladly be your Cinderella, America.

Nice.

In thinking about how to cover the game and all that it meant to us in terms of wild enjoyment for sports fans and exponentially greater name recognition to lots of new people around the country, I thought of Wes. I love a good back story, so I asked him to write about his experiences throughout the weekend, the big exhilarating win on a Thursday followed all too soon by a painful loss on Saturday, in Spokane, Wash. I specifically mentioned the two things I knew, the dunk and the tweet. Sure, he says. I could probably do something.

That low-key response was my first clue. I tried not to scare this nice young man who'd never heard of me until I called with this request with an overly tight deadline, but it was a pretty short time frame. But dang if he didn't finish it ahead of schedule.

In addition to beating the deadline, he sends a note that says, I tried something a little different from what we talked about, I hope you understand.

So read it, please, on pages 6-7. You'll see why I'm so impressed with this guy. Who gets a chance to tell about their own moment in the sun and passes it up? How great is it that he's working with us. I look forward to meeting him in person very soon.

Thanks for reading.

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WES OFFERMAN is a converted Bison fan who seems to spend all hours of the day and night trying to share with the world the amazing exploits of NDSU student athletes. He works in the athletic media relations office, specifically promoting men’s basketball, wrestling, volleyball, track and field, and cross country teams. Offerman assists local, regional and national media who have interest in covering the Bison, creates content for GoBison.com and operates several athletics Twitter accounts. He is a Charles City, Iowa, native, who attended a university (and used to be a huge fan of) one of NDSU’s football rivals that will remain unnamed. His favorite experiences in two years at NDSU include Riley Dolezal’s stunning USA title in the javelin, wrestler Trent Sprenkle’s win over the defending NCAA champion, and the recent NCAA basketball tournament victory over Oklahoma.



MATTHEW WAGENIUS is an ambitious sophomore at NDSU, studying public relations, international studies, and entrepreneurship. Matt also is very active on campus, participating in a fraternity, and student government, including a role last year as a public relations executive. In addition, to no one’s surprise, he is active in pursuing professional internships. Following his semester with University Relations, this summer he has a marketing internship with The Kilbourne Group. Oh, and for the fall semester, he will be living in Aix-en-Provence, France, taking classes completely taught in French. His ambitious plan for not long after graduation is to be captain of his own public relations and branding firm.



ON THE COVER



MICHAEL J. STRAND
BOWLS AROUND TOWN
 CERAMIC

ABOUT THE ARTIST

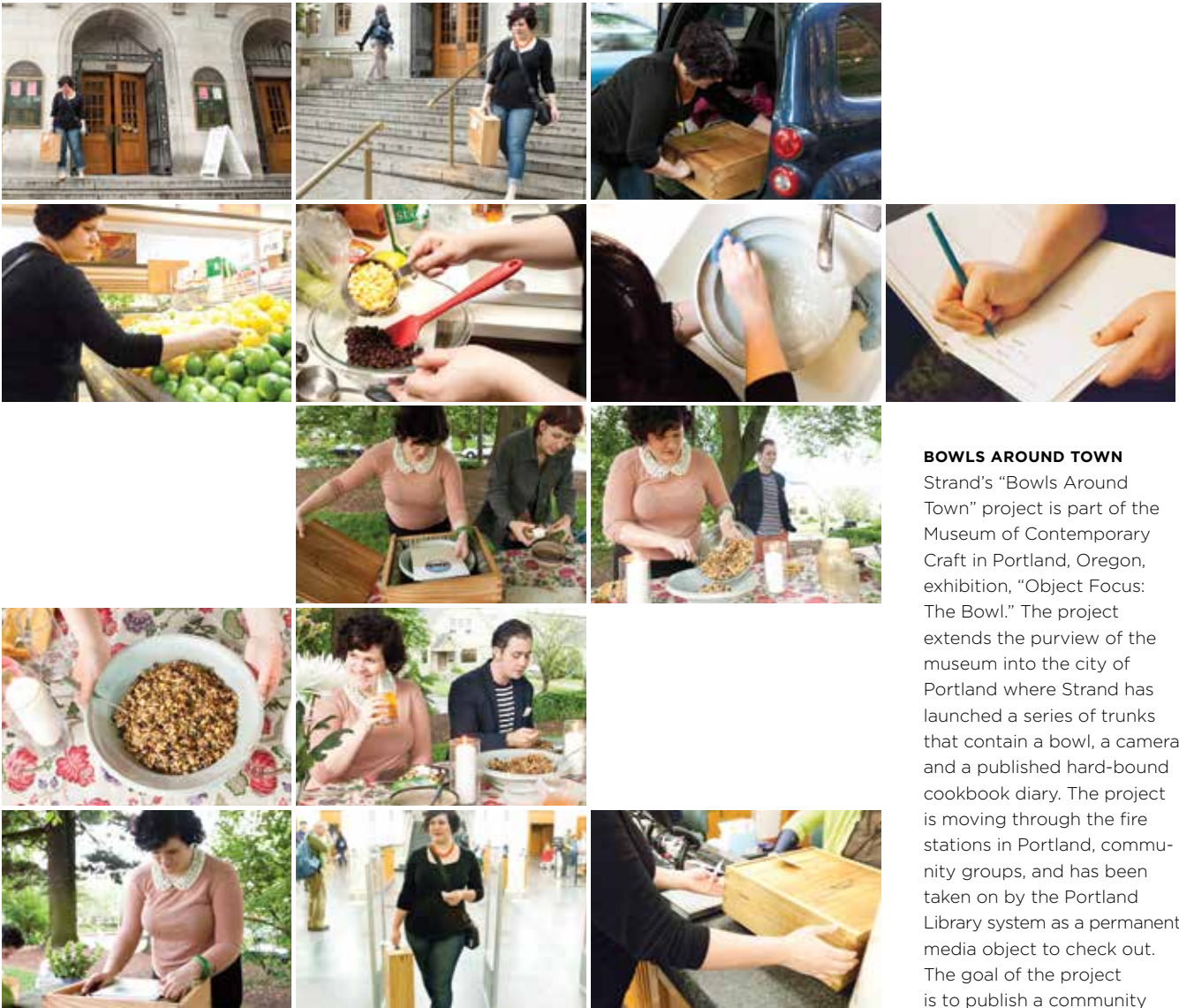
Michael J. Strand is an associate professor and head of visual arts at North Dakota State University. He has a background as a functional potter, and more recently his work has moved into social practice and community engagement. He remains dedicated to the traditional object as he investigates the potential of craft as a catalyst for social change.

Strand's work has been published internationally, with articles in *American Craft*, *Ceramics Monthly*, *Ceramics Art and Perception-Technical*, *The Studio Potter*, *Hemslojen*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and *Public Art Review*. His recent *Artstimulus* projects were cited in the Yale University Press publication "40 Under 40: Craft Futures" by Smithsonian curator Nicholas Bell.

Projects and exhibitions include an exhibit in Estonia featuring the second of 10 iterations of his initiative, "The Misfit Cup Liberation Project," launched at the Plains Art Museum in Fargo. This project has continued locations including Houston, Minneapolis, and Amsterdam, with plans for the exhibit to reach all seven continents in the next four years.

The "Bowls Around Town Project" at the Museum of Contemporary Craft in Portland, Oregon, for the exhibition "Object Focus: The Bowl" — featured on the cover of this issue of NDSU magazine — is still in circulation after a year presented to the community.

Strand lectures and does workshops internationally. Strand recently was awarded a Bush Foundation Fellowship. With this award he will focus on human system dynamics and other fields as complements to his existing art practice to connect rural communities in North Dakota with China, Germany, Brazil and South Africa.



BOWLS AROUND TOWN

Strand's "Bowls Around Town" project is part of the Museum of Contemporary Craft in Portland, Oregon, exhibition, "Object Focus: The Bowl." The project extends the purview of the museum into the city of Portland where Strand has launched a series of trunks that contain a bowl, a camera and a published hard-bound cookbook diary. The project is moving through the fire stations in Portland, community groups, and has been taken on by the Portland Library system as a permanent media object to check out. The goal of the project is to publish a community curated and developed cookbook that brings together images, recipes and the history of these recipes to be shared among participants and the public.

Carlin Dupree was on SportsCenter. Are you kidding me? Carlin Dupree was on SportsCenter.

That was my 'pinch myself' moment. It was after midnight in Spokane, and it was almost too surreal to believe it was happening. There was Carlin, our true freshman guard from downtown Milwaukee, in our hotel room talking on the television screen on one of the most popular sports shows in the nation.

Several hours before, the team had knocked off the number five seed Oklahoma for the first NCAA Tournament win in North Dakota State University history. The dramatic details down the stretch have been relived and replayed elsewhere, but Carlin had been a big part of it. When Summit League Player of the Year Taylor Braun fouled out in overtime, Carlin came off the bench to score four straight points, lifting NDSU to a victory.

It's not that Carlin's spot on my screen wasn't warranted.

As a true freshman with a sometimes limited role on the court, Carlin had only done three media interviews all season. His first appearance was with the in-house multimedia crew. His second was with the student newspaper on campus. Carlin's only other interview came by virtue of being nearby when I found out that one of our more prominent players was ill and couldn't do his scheduled appearance one afternoon.

And now there was Carlin, suddenly a recognizable name for college basketball fans across the country, sitting in front of the official NCAA Tournament backdrop wearing his green jersey with North Dakota State University spelled across the chest.

That should have been enough to make me smile, but here's what really put me over the top:

Carlin took a question from a reporter about himself and answered it by saying how much it meant to him to be able to extend his teammates' season. It would have been easy, and — quite frankly, should have been expected — for him to talk about himself, his moment and what it meant to him.

He did not do that. Through all his excitement, he was honest and humble. He spoke about his teammates.

I smiled from ear to ear.

Now, Carlin doesn't deserve all the attention here. He was just one prominent example of how the NDSU men's basketball team capitalized on its time in the national spotlight at the 2014 NCAA Tournament. Taylor Braun, Marshall Bjorklund, TrayVonn Wright, Lawrence Alexander, Kory Brown and the rest of the guys did just as fine of a job representing our university.

After the extreme adrenaline rush of the overtime victory over Oklahoma, the guys on the team had to attend the postgame media press conference and take media interviews in the locker room. Our student athletes and coaches did radio interviews in New York and San Diego, to Portland and Florida, to the Twin Cities and Chicago.

Dozens of national media requests rolled in — ESPN, CBS, Sports Illustrated, SiriusXM radio shows, the SVP & Russillo radio show on ESPN, the Jim Rome Show. Players did on-camera interviews with CBS/Turner, and we even had a video crew assigned to follow the team for all-access footage. We also made sure to take care of all the Fargo and North Dakota media that had traveled to Spokane to cover the team. Spanning the 36-hour time frame leading into our third

HUMBLE, THOUGHTFUL, ELOQUENT INDIVIDUALS

ESSAY

BY WES OFFERMAN





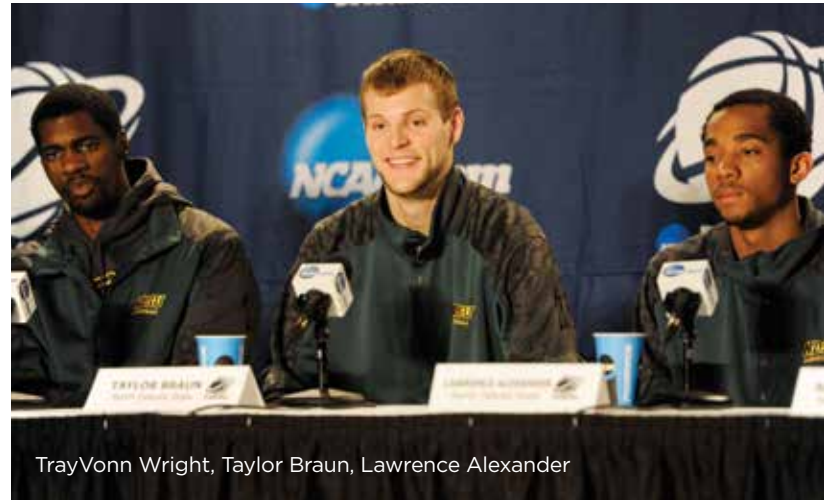
Carlin Dupree

round game against San Diego State, the media crush had the potential to become grueling and overwhelming.

There's been a lot of talk recently about whether student athletes should be treated like professionals. I don't have any clue about the answer to that question, but I do know for a fact that our guys handled themselves like professionals.

Never once did I have one of the guys on the team say, "No, thanks. I've had enough." To a man, they all weathered the media storm with flying colors. They all handled themselves in a professional manner and took great pride in the opportunity to represent their university.

It showed. I can't recall the number of people who came up to me and told me how great it was to work with our guys. From NCAA officials to members of the national media to arena employees, I received a steady stream of positive feedback. Common themes emerged. I heard about how tough our guys were and how hard they played. I heard about how humble and polite they were and what a treat it was to interact with them. I heard about how evident it was that they had pride in their university and how they had fun representing NDSU.



TrayVonn Wright, Taylor Braun, Lawrence Alexander

From my perspective, seeing our guys shine in press conferences and on television and hearing them talk about their teammates, their athletic department and their school with such pride — that actually means more to me than what they accomplished on the court. For 99 percent of them, in ten years it won't matter if they can make a three-pointer, grab a rebound or block a shot. But it will matter that they are humble, thoughtful, eloquent individuals.

Those are the kind of skills that will take them places in life and continue to make them excellent ambassadors for our university.

With the time demands of the job, unfortunately that's not something I get an opportunity to think about on a daily basis. Too often, we get caught up in the hustle and bustle of the day-to-day tasks, trying to get things completed and making sure events run smoothly.

I want to take this opportunity to publicly thank our student athletes for the reminder they gave me. During the blur of the NCAA Tournament, I didn't get a lot of time to take a step back and appreciate what had been accomplished. A few weeks later, it is very evident.

While I can't guarantee that our student athletes always see the big picture, it is clear now that the big picture sees them. And the big picture most definitely likes what it sees.



LIFE AS A RESEARCH SUBJECT

by David Nilles

I write about NDSU research every day, and now I am about to take my understanding of what that means to a whole new level. I'm about to transition from observer to research subject.

And. Here. We. Go.

Max Pagel looks up from his computer as I gently knock on the door and stick my head in. He's in an athletic training room deep within Bentson-Bunker Fieldhouse, and though I've spent many years on campus, I had trouble navigating the basement maze. I'm late for my appointment.

He reassures me I'm in the right place.

The study is about the effects of caffeine ingestion on muscle cramping, which requires people who are capable of consuming caffeine and have muscles to cramp. This means I need to agree to a few dietary restrictions and the prospect of "some discomfort from electrical stimulation." I'm willing to try most anything once. And since I'm the only writer on the team young enough to fit the study's age requirements, I'd feel guilty saying no.

Pagel stands up from his computer. He is tall and has short-cropped brown hair with a beard to match. He is fit and lanky, the build, I presume, of a former athlete. He certainly looks the part, wearing a hooded sweatshirt and khakis.

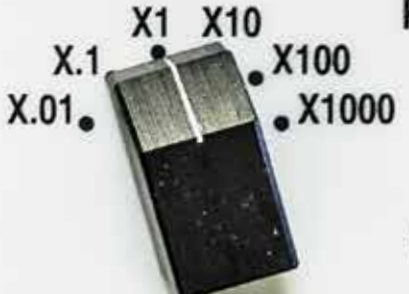
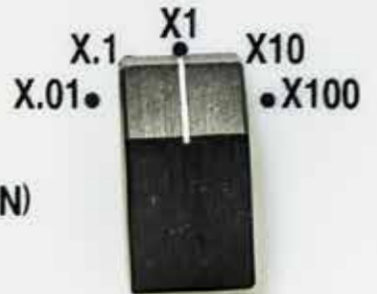
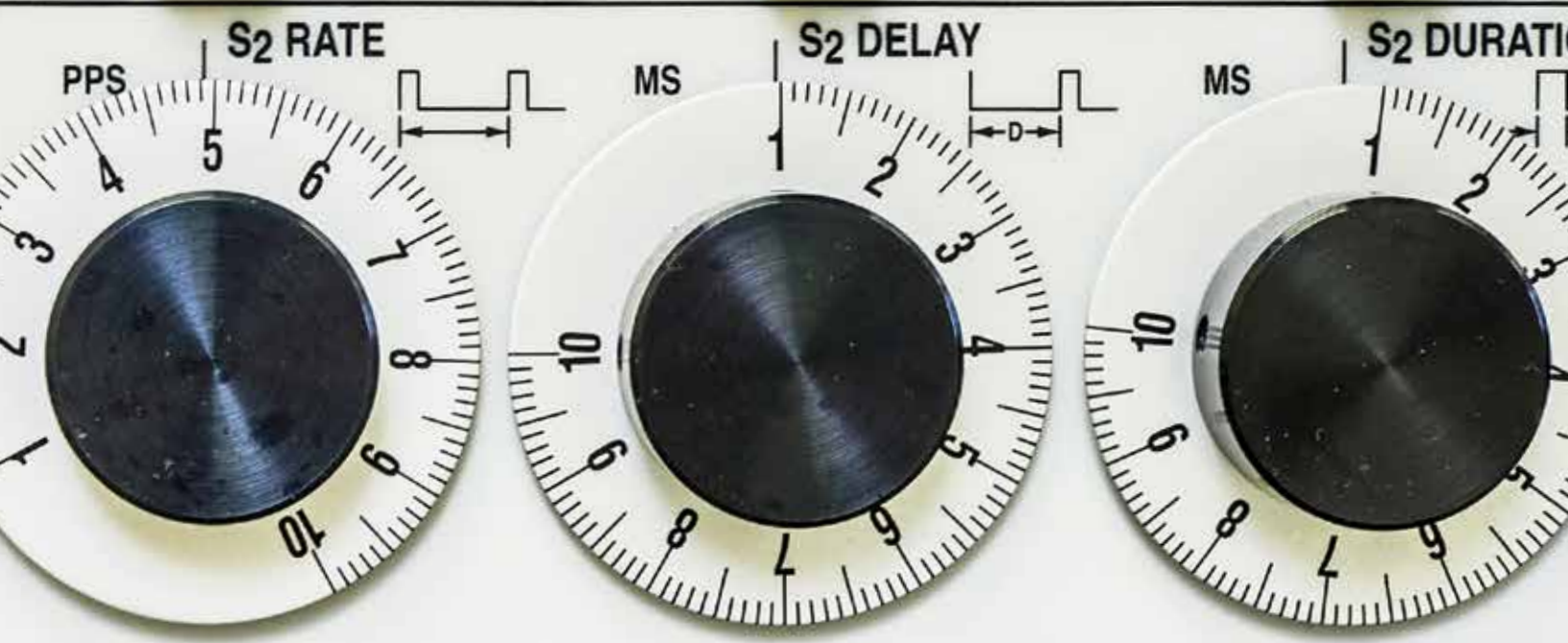
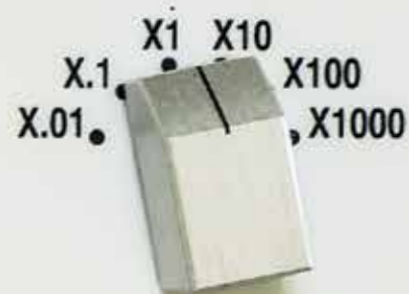
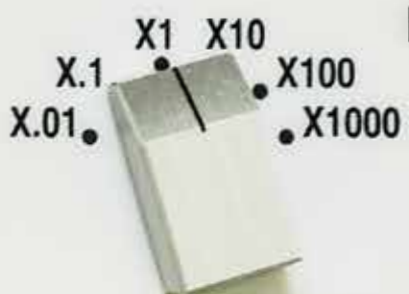
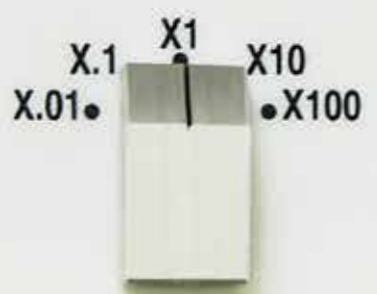
He hands me a questionnaire. I answer standard questions about heart, mental and blood-borne diseases, family history and my current health. I get weighed, so no luck if I fibbed about my body mass index. Next, he asks me to remove my right shoe and sock and motions for me to sit on the green athletic training table near the room's entrance. I'm

thankful for the morning slot so a complete stranger doesn't have to inspect my foot after a day in dress shoes.

Pagel begins firmly tracing his thumbs along the top and side of my foot. I am momentarily self-conscious. But he works with athletes every day, I tell myself. Some sock fuzz is likely the least of his concerns. He is searching for my flexor hallucis brevis, the muscle responsible for flexing my big toe. Somewhere midfoot he finds it and reaches for a permanent marker. With a ruler, he meticulously measures down the side of my foot and adds two dots to my sole to mark the proper location for sensors that will measure my leg and foot muscles.

Pagel doesn't freely offer up much information, but he answers any questions fully and quickly. It's a trend he keeps throughout the study. Rather than pepper him with questions, I take mental notes and let him work.

I notice a computer on a mobile cart nearby. The cart's lower shelf holds what I later discover is an electrical muscle stimulator. I don't think much of it at the time. It's just another piece of equipment in the windowless room. It might appear more threatening if I knew it would be responsible for sending electrical impulses into my foot. But, for now, it's a silver box covered in an assortment of knobs and switches. Sometimes naivety isn't a bad thing.



AIN)

Pagel asks me to roll up my pant leg so he can pinpoint a final spot just below my right kneecap. He uses a disposable razor to shave a small patch of skin. It's the first of several times I wonder what my aged colleagues are doing. He lightly brushes around each dot, and another inside my right ankle, with fine sandpaper. I expect a sting when Pagel cleans the areas with isopropyl alcohol, but none comes. Each of his movements is purposeful. He doesn't waste any motion. He's efficient.

Pagel needs to be meticulous with these steps, and he is. He attaches four disposable patches to which sensors are clipped. Each location must be accurate for each research subject. The sensors are connected via wires to a sending unit the size of a cigarette lighter, which, in turn, feeds into the computer. The entire mechanism is responsible for spitting out data on my muscle movements.

PAGEL CLICKS A MOUSE. A SECOND LATER A QUICK BURST OF EIGHT ELECTRICAL PULSES SURGES THROUGH MY FOOT.

I know that researchers, including some at NDSU, already have studied the impact of pickle juice and potassium on muscle cramping, which makes me wonder how Pagel settled on his research hypothesis. He tells about a football game he attended as an undergraduate athletic training student at Minnesota State University Mankato. Four players repeatedly left the game with leg cramps. A trainer discovered all four of them had consumed caffeine-laden energy drinks prior to the game. Pagel didn't think caffeine was the problem, and his study will go a long way toward helping prove or disprove his hypothesis.

As Pagel talks, he locates an arterial pulse on the inside of my ankle. It lies next to the nerve that directs signals to my big toe. I learn this from Pagel. I've never given my foot's function much thought.

.....

Today's goal is to tell my nerve to tell my toe to flex. To accomplish this, Pagel places an electrode on my ankle over the nerve. When he hits a button on the muscle stimulator, the electrode sends a single electric pulse into my foot. It's a bit of a shock, literally.

Pagel spends several minutes looking for the correct spot to place the electrode. It's important to his study to get as accurate of information as possible. We find the

right spot with my feedback. He straps the electrode in place with an athletic bandage.

We begin baseline testing. Pagel asks me to flex my toe four times. As I do, we both watch the computer screen. The software program traces and records my movements with a sine wave. The oscillation produces data Pagel will use to support his findings.

I realize my presence isn't the important part. It's the data I can provide.

To extract that data, Pagel will send electrical pulses of increasing intensity, measured in hertz, through my foot. If my foot doesn't cramp, I rest for 60 seconds before a higher intensity pulse.

Pagel clicks a mouse. A second later a quick burst of eight electrical pulses surges through my foot. Each pulse briefly flexes my big toe downward. The effect of all eight pulses feels like a foot cramp, which is the ultimate goal.

Aside from the pulses, I feel nothing and my foot relaxes.

After the first 60-second rest, Pagel increases the intensity and sends another set of pulses through my foot. We repeat the process several times. Pagel reminds me to fight the urge to flex my foot, which is difficult when it wants to cramp.

I find myself trying to remember what combination of hertz and volts causes electrocution. I'm not concerned for my safety, as Pagel regularly checks on my welfare. It's just the type of thought that crosses my mind each time a relative stranger straps electrodes to my leg after I've signed an informed consent release form.

Pagel asks me how I'm doing. "OK," I lie.

Pagel turns the stimulator to 12 and clicks the mouse. He notices it before I feel it, but my big toe is stuck pointing downward. "Do you feel that?" he asks, glancing at my foot, then the computer and then me. I fight the urge to flex my foot, which by now is locked in a full-blown spasm. It feels like a charley horse, and once it takes hold, focused mainly in the ball of my foot, I desperately want to stomp, shake or massage my foot – anything but hold still.

Pagel makes sure he has adequate readings. He then slowly releases the cramp by pushing up on my toe. It's a relief. We have our baseline and I'm done for the day.

.....

The next day I receive an email from Pagel. I briefly wonder if he's booting me from the study because I wasn't tough enough. No such luck. It's a list of caffeinated foods



PAGEL
ASKS
ME
HOW
I'M
DOING.
"OK,"
I LIE.



and beverages to avoid. I must abstain from caffeine for the rest of the study. A dull headache reminds me that I should be cutting back anyway.

I return to the lab. Another test subject is lying on the table. I quietly take a seat while Pagel continues with him. "We're going to 14. Are you ready?"

The subject, Grant, nods that he is. "And, here. We. Go."

Grant is holding the rolled-up towel. I feel a little better about myself.

During a 60-second rest period, Pagel walks across the room. He tells me to close my eyes and hold out my hand. I comply. I'm not sure what to expect, but I presume it involves taking a pill. I know I will receive three during the study. Each contains varying levels of caffeine, ranging from none to the equivalent of three 16-ounce cans of energy drink.

It is a pill. I swallow it with a plastic beaker full of water.

Meanwhile, Pagel finishes up with Grant, who cramps at 24 hertz. I wonder if I look that comfortable. I'll find out soon.

After Grant leaves, I remove my shoe and sock and take his place on the table.

No sandpaper this time, just a little alcohol prior to sticking on the sensors. Pagel easily finds the nerve in my heel. Both of us know what he's looking for.

The only change in today's routine is a 30-minute wait for the pill to take effect. I lie on the table with my eyes closed. I can't nap, so I ask Pagel more about his hypothesis.

It takes 22 hertz to cramp my foot. It's a new personal best, although I wonder if it supports Pagel's hypothesis. I later find out the pill was a placebo. It shouldn't have differed much from my baseline number.

.....
The remaining two tests follow the same pattern. I take a pill, rest for 30 minutes and begin the electrical impulses. In essence, they are routine.

And then my role in Pagel's study is complete. I go to Pagel's office one last time to collect my research-subject compensation. This time I don't knock and startle two students. One is lying on her side on the training table. Another research study already is underway.

Pagel tells me he has been surprised by some of the results. His gut feeling is they won't completely support his hypothesis. Then it is my turn to be surprised. Pagel tells me my foot was hardest to cramp.

Sarah Russell (right) is NDSU's new student body president, and Hilary Haugeberg (left) is vice president.



Running the show

PRESIDENT SARAH RUSSELL

Expected graduation date: May 2016

Major: Industrial engineering and management

Hometown: Fargo, N.D.

I got involved in Student Government because it was where my strengths and passion aligned to make the greatest impact at NDSU for students. An added bonus is being surrounded by other students who have the same goal of serving others. I have never learned so much from my peers or built more friendships than I have in my two years in Student Government.

I've learned: There's no time to waste. Whether it's getting involved in an organization, learning more about another major, or reaching out to a friend — it's better to take a risk and leave your comfort zone than remain stagnant. College is only four years, but what you fill those four years with will benefit you for the rest of your life.

I chose to study at NDSU because the engineering program was extremely competitive with other major universities in the country, but has the price tag of only half or a third of other universities' costs. Also, NDSU places such an emphasis on well-rounded students that I knew I would be able to enhance my education outside of the classroom with encouragement from faculty, staff, and administrators.

My advice to incoming students: Ask questions and get to know people around you. Whether in class, in your residence hall, or anywhere else on campus, there are so many students, faculty, and staff who would love to help you feel welcome at NDSU.

VICE PRESIDENT HILARY HAUGEBERG

Expected graduation date: December 2015

Major: Management communication

Hometown: St. Paul, Minn.

I got involved in Student Government because I wanted to serve NDSU students, give back to the campus and become more informed and involved with internal and external happenings that affect our campus. I also had sorority sisters who were extremely encouraging and really pushed me to seek out opportunities within Student Government.

Why I chose NDSU:

- The endless opportunities for students to become involved within campus organizations and clubs.
- When I was visiting colleges my junior and beginning of my senior year, no other schools even came close to the intensity of NDSU's school spirit.
- Excellent and rigorous academic major programs.
- Tradition; I am the fourth generation of my family to come through NDSU.
- Affordable tuition and the upfront honesty and knowledge about where my individual dollars are going.
- Fabulous Fargo. Could there be a better city?

My advice for incoming students is to get involved, take chances and be willing to step outside of your comfort zone. Take advantage of the academic resources that campus has to offer. Find a great planner or organization system that will work best for you. It takes me an eternity to pick out a planner because I am so picky about the requirements. Your professors, teaching assistants and academic deans want to know you, so introduce yourself. Finally, don't take yourself too seriously. The number one reason that we come to college is for academics, but be sure to have some fun experiences and memories thrown into the next four years as well!



charming one bedroom: great view, hardwood throughout

This project was designed as a way for beginning architecture students to design and build real houses, for real residents, in the style of real architects.

Students design the house for a specific type of bird, bat or owl, keeping in mind the bird's favored environment, immediate nesting habitat, size, number of family members and patterns of use, the sorts of issues architects consider when building for humans. The creations are shown at the Plains Art Museum, and awards are given in various categories.



MISTER TWISTER

STATE CLIMATOLOGIST LOVES TEACHING PEOPLE ABOUT THE WEATHER

Only in North Dakota would a bunch of brave souls slog through snow and bone-chilling cold to spend a Friday evening talking about the weather.

And so at a time of day when most people are hurrying home or to after-school haunts, a crowd of weather groupies gathers in a meeting room at North Dakota State University's library. They shrug out of heavy parkas, nibble on cookies, warm themselves with coffee and settle in for a lecture by Adnan Akyüz, North Dakota's official state climatologist and an associate professor of climatological practices at NDSU.

Akyüz is a slight, wiry man who sports a dark suit, a red tie and a pure enthusiasm for all things meteorological. He paces before the crowd with the quick, athletic step you'd expect from a man who spends his down time scaling walls as a rock climber.

"I'm not sure why you would go to Hawaii for vacation," he quips to the crowd, taking a gentle jab at the tropical paradise's monotonously temperate weather. The extremes of

North Dakota's atmospheric conditions are so much more interesting to the weather junkie. They produce fascinating phenomena like the circumzenithal arc, a sort of frozen rainbow caused by refracted sunlight through horizontally oriented ice crystals in clouds. Or temperature swings so dramatic that there's a 191-degree difference between the state's record high and its record low.

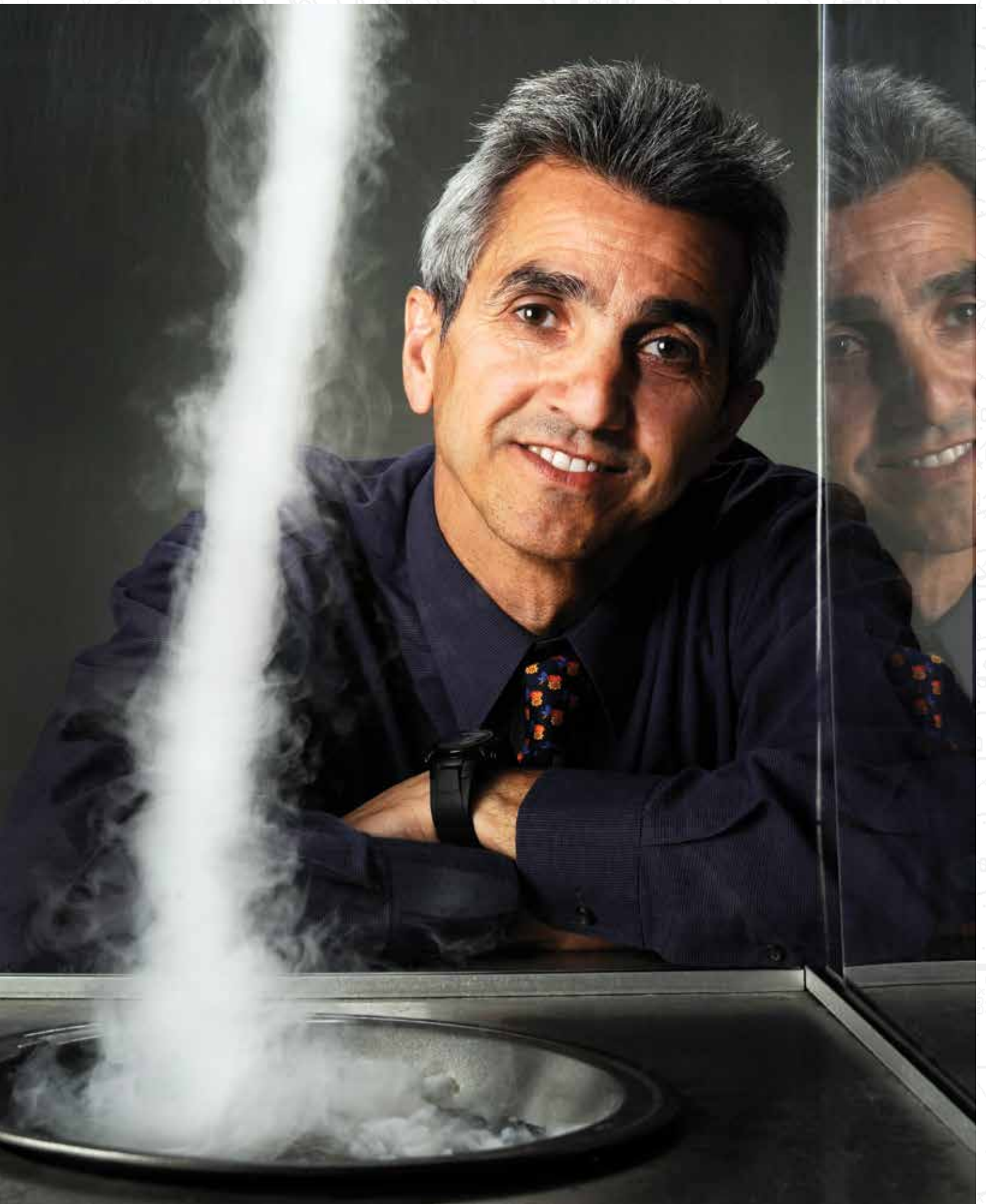
Whether Akyüz is explaining tornadoes to third graders or presenting lectures to college students in his advanced climatology classes, he has a flair for putting an accessible, entertaining spin on a very complex subject. He uses humor, ingenious analogies and a slew of visual aids to drive home the concepts of climatology — a complex fusion of atmospheric sciences, physical geography, oceanography and biogeochemistry.

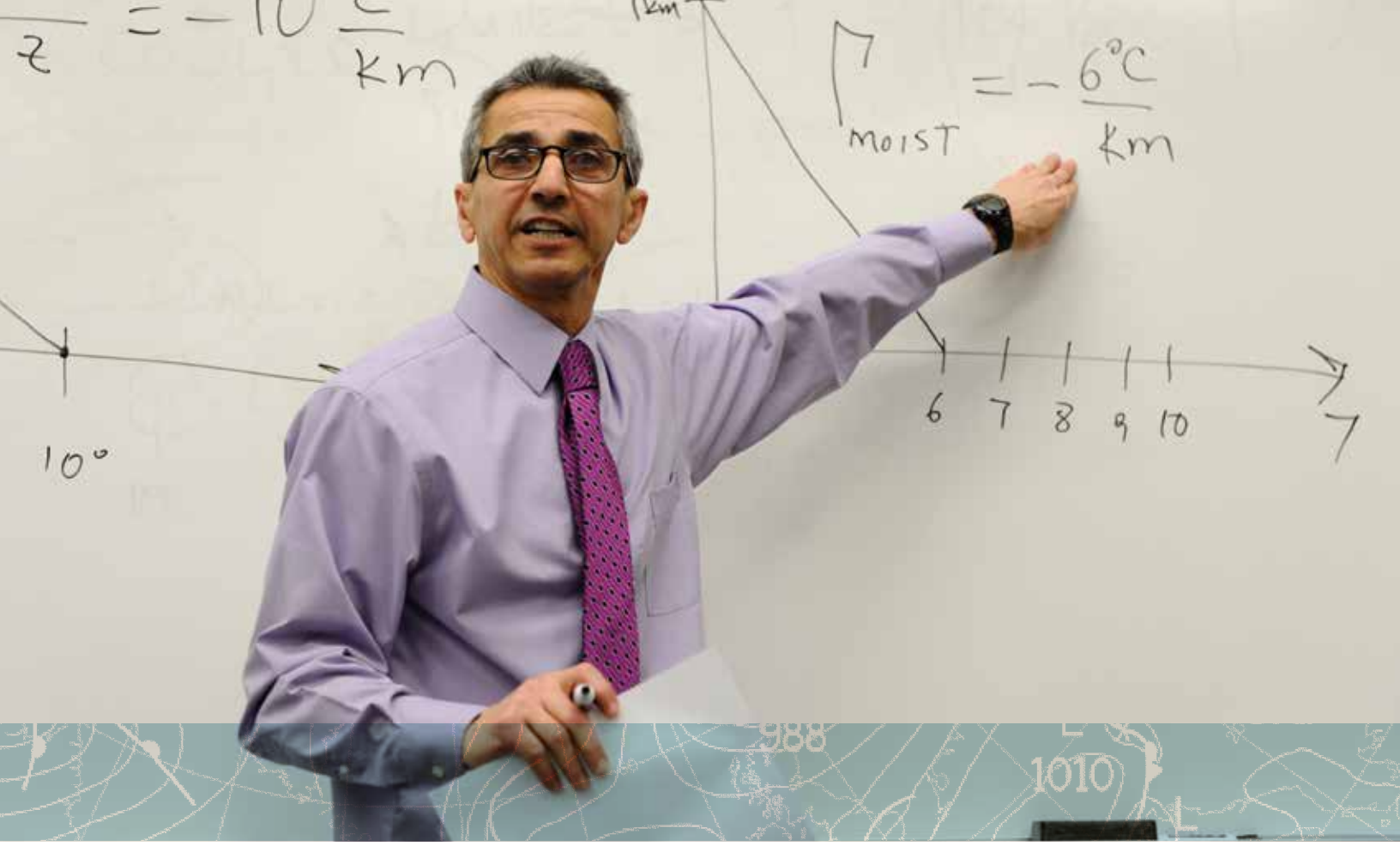
He illustrates the difference between weather and climate with the metaphor of a man walking a dog. The canine wanders off both sides of the sidewalk to sniff grass, greet other dogs and strain at his leash to chase squirrels. Likewise, weather represents the

dog's short-term excursions — our temperature highs and lows, the amount of rainfall in a single storm — that we experience on a day-to-day basis. Climate, on the other hand, represents the overall journey and path taken by the dog walker.

The same concept helps clarify the difference between meteorology and climatology. Meteorologists look forward, focusing for several weeks at a time on short-term weather systems. But climatologists like Akyüz take a broader view. They study past climate trends for as far back as records are available, observe long-term average weather patterns, determine what human or natural factors might trigger climate shifts and investigate possible future climate trends.

Climatological studies by Akyüz and his predecessors have helped shine light on several significant trends in North Dakota. One is that the state's average annual temperature has risen 2.7 degrees over the last century. While that increase may sound negligible to the average person, it's actually the most dramatic increase found in any state in the





I LOVE TO TEACH SOMETHING TO STUDENTS THAT THEY'VE NEVER HEARD BEFORE.

IF I CAN HELP THEM BREAK A MISCONCEPTION THEY'VE CARRIED THROUGHOUT COLLEGE, THAT STUDENT WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT MOMENT A NEW IDEA REPLACED A MISCONCEPTION. THAT'S EXCITING.

nation. Akyüz credits the temperature boost to a complex cascade of events that include greenhouse gases, solar radiation and changes in land characteristics. Because an increase in temperature enables the air to hold more water vapor, the warming trend also has triggered more rain and snow. The state now receives a half inch more precipitation annually than it did 100 years ago.

Akyüz's work can address problems both past and future, large and small. Yet another hat that he wears is as director of the North Dakota Agricultural Weather Network Center, a rural grid of 75 automated weather stations. By using climatological data from the network, Akyüz can advise farmers on the best time to apply pesticides to battle widespread problems like root maggot on sugar beets, late potato blight or *Fusarium* head blight on wheat. In the process, he can help the North Dakota agricultural industry save tens of millions of dollars.

But Akyüz has been asked to shine light on smaller and more personal conundrums such as genealogical questions. Families might approach him with requests to pin down the year that a tornado or blizzard claimed a family member so they could flesh out a more complete family history.

THE CHILL OF IT ALL

When Akyüz and his family first arrived in North Dakota in 2007, he says he made quite an entertaining spectacle for his neighbors. Forever the scientist, Akyüz turned the most everyday activities into experiments. He purposely ventured outside in light jackets, simply to determine the least amount of warm clothing required to be comfortable in certain outdoor conditions.

On this particular sub-zero day in early February, Akyüz has wisely stuck to a heavy blue parka. That parka — which is good from 0 to 32-below — has seen a lot of action in a winter defined by Arctic incursions and marrow-freezing cold.

Now as winter hardened as any native Northerner, Akyüz actually bemoans the fact North Dakota doesn't get more snow. When he hears about areas like Wisconsin or the Sierra Nevada mountains in California being buried under hundreds of inches of white stuff, "I get very, very jealous," he says, grinning.

It's a little surprising that this self-confessed winterphile came from the Mediterranean. He grew up in Tarsus in southern Turkey, a region with summers so sun beaten and hot that asphalt turned to goo. It wasn't until Akyüz was 17 and traveled to the nation's

capital of Ankara that he saw snow for the first time.

Smitten by the science and majesty of weather, Akyüz pursued an undergraduate degree in meteorological engineering from Istanbul Technical University. He received his graduate degrees in atmospheric science from the University of Missouri-Columbia and worked in positions ranging from Missouri's state climatologist to climate surface specialist for the National Weather Service. He was headquartered in Kansas City, right in the thick of tornado alley. For a while, Akyüz was a storm chaser, although he never got to witness a full-blown tornado.

When the NDSU opportunity cropped up, Akyüz knew he was moving to a whole new kind of meteorological center. Unlike the Coasts — where the weather is modulated by the huge heat capacity of the oceans next door — the Upper Midwest is much more vulnerable to extreme temperature swings and dramatic precipitation patterns. To wit: North Dakota's all-time low of 70-below (excluding wind chill) and record-breaking high of 121 both occurred in 1936. That difference is the second largest in the world, topped only by a high/low swing reported in Siberia.



CLIMATOLOGIST, MEET CLIMBATOLOGIST

You might not think rock climbing and climatology have a whole lot in common.

Think again.

When Akyüz isn't found teaching classes or crunching numbers on regional weather trends, you might find him scrambling up the climbing wall inside the campus fitness center. The 34-foot edifice has been carved and molded to resemble the geology of western North Dakota and its various climbing routes are labeled with names like "The Twist and Shout" and "The Wings of Eagles." Like a methodical spider, Akyüz climbs up the sheer wall, clinging onto whatever footholds, cracks and ridges are within reach.



The activity exerts just about every part of his body, from the muscles in his legs to the tendons in his fingers. But it also strengthens his brain. Akyüz says the problem solving involved in rock climbing rivals what's needed in scientific query. "Everything is physics really," he says. "Each move is a problem set. You plug the unknown into the next equation until you find your final solution. And whatever you have on hand, you grab. Nature doesn't have rules."

It's funny that Akyüz began rock climbing only after moving to the board-flat Red River Valley. A long-time swimmer, he was looking for another way to supplement his workouts. NDSU plant pathologist Berlin Nelson persuaded him to try climbing, even though

Akyüz admits to a long-time fear of heights.

But the vertical sport also taught Akyüz some broader lessons about communication, trust and teamwork. Climbers always rely on a reliable harness secured to a rope held by a "belay," or partner. The duo needs to communicate effectively and trust each other implicitly. Akyüz quickly learned that if the equipment was conscientiously checked and the belayer had his back, even rock climbing could be relatively safe. "After a couple of falls while securely tied on the rope, you realize there's nothing to be afraid of," he says.

Since then, his expertise has advanced to the point where he has successfully scaled the formidable 800-foot-tall Devils Tower in northeastern Wyoming. In fact, his wife, Tanya, and children, Evren, 13, and Esena, 11, also have become climbers.

ENGAGE, ENTERTAIN, EDUCATE

It's like a breaker switch.

People's brains shut off immediately when they don't understand science or math. "It isn't that they aren't as smart as others," Akyüz says. "It's just that they become so overwhelmed by the onslaught of information that they give up. They just think, 'I can't do it,'" he says.

With that in mind, Akyüz uses the same tactics to teach his students as he does to preach the word of meteorology to any other layman. He relies on a variety of media and interactive approaches to keep students engaged.

In a recent class, Akyüz keeps the pace clipping along like a storm chaser in pursuit. He shows a slide of the aurora borealis so dramatic that even these stoic students in a morning class are moved to ooh and aah. He asks questions and calls on students by name, even in an auditorium-sized class. He explains the almost non-existent, four-inch slant of the Red River Valley by holding up a pack of Extra gum.

Down the hall from Akyüz's Walster Hall office, he keeps a whole storage room of props as teaching aids. Inspired by the spinning Lazy Susan-style tables in Chinese restaurants,

he designed a flat, metal rendering of the Earth — about four feet across — that rotates like a record. A graduate student intricately painted a map of the Earth on the disk, so that it almost looks like a globe flattened by a steamroller. During lectures, he spins the disk and drops a metal ball on it to demonstrate the Coriolis effect, a force that as a result of the Earth's rotation deflects moving objects (as projectiles or air currents) to the right in the Northern Hemisphere and to the left in the Southern Hemisphere.

When giving presentations to grade-school students, he will haul out a "tornado" machine — a glass box that almost looks like a theater popcorn machine — then add dry ice and boiling water. Voila: A miniature twister is born. He uses the tornado machine when proselytizing to children on a topic that he's especially passionate about: the importance of wearing bike helmets when preparing for tornadoes. He believes so strongly in this safety measure that he's created a "Tornado Helmet Safety" Facebook page. "The brain is the most precious organ in your body," he tells students.

And he urges the students in his college courses to stay in touch should they feel lost. It's easy for the brain — that breaker switch — to switch off when pelted with this flurry of physics, physical science and even geometry. After his class, a female student with a streak of blue hair and an oversized backpack approaches him and asks for clarification on how to convert Celsius to Fahrenheit. Akyüz goes to great lengths to explain it to her, sketching on a white board until she digests the formula.

"I love to teach something to students that they've never heard before," Akyüz says. "If I can help them break a misconception they've carried throughout college, that student will always remember that moment a new idea replaced a misconception. That's exciting."

— TAMMY SWIFT





EXCERPTS

MIKE DRAGOSAVICH

has been working his tail off for the past seven years, developing and expanding businesses in Fargo. He publishes four magazines, has a clothing line and an e-commerce store. He's active in the local advertising organization, hires local talent, and can't do enough to convince others how great it is to live and thrive in North Dakota. As long as he stays around here, he'll probably be as well known as Drago the punter on the North Dakota State University football team, 2004-2007, including his role in one of the early wins against a big dog, the University of Minnesota, and two years trying to make a pro team. He's a genuinely nice guy, kind, goofy, creative and energetic. His own bio on one of his social media pages sums it up: "Email me if you need something or just want to arm wrestle."

Going off into the NFL was a couple years of struggle. I got further than most, but didn't get the whole way. It was a huge learning experience for me.

When I was with the Colts, I was there for six months in the off season. I'd go work out until about 10 and then I'd have from 10 until the next day. So I had my computer and I just started my own blog, and I just fell in love with researching business and creating my own business and all that kind of stuff.

When I finally hung it up and said I need to move on from football I came immediately back to Fargo, no hesitation, because of how much support not only people at NDSU and the NDSU fans have for the sport but also just the different community people I've met along the way, how just caring they are. It really is a black and white deal from where I came from on the south side of Chicago.

The first thing I ever did was I started a little VIP card called FM Spotlight VIP card. I called on fifty different businesses and signed them up. It ended up being pretty successful but found out it wasn't a sustainable business model so I'd have one month where I'd make some money and the next month I'd make none and you have no idea what the heck's going to happen.

Along the way, I created fmspotlight.com which was a way for me to put down all of my different specials for the different people who owned the cards but then I also really wanted to expose the different events and music in the area because I've always thought that this place had amazing entertainment options.

The first magazine was the size of a CD case and that was all I could afford. I ended up spelling a word wrong on the cover of my first magazine, which was devastating but it was actually equally entertaining because it was supposed to say Helping Fargo-Moorhead Enjoy, Save and Grow and ended up leaving out the "j" in enjoy so it said Helping Fargo-Moorhead Enoy, Save and Grow. I had an army of people proofread the thing, too, I was so nervous; of course. Passed the first one out and somebody says 'do you realize there is a word spelled wrong?' It almost took me down.

I wasn't the best student on earth, I'll tell you that right now. When people read that they'll start laughing. It's just crazy looking back how much you don't know when you're there.

When I was 18, if you had told me I'd be in Fargo, then the NFL, then a magazine, it just blows my mind just thinking about it.

I know a lot of people say how can you juggle sports and academics? I kind of say how can you not? Your butt's on the line if you don't go to class and get your stuff done.

To this day the single greatest memory of my whole life came from that game we won. Because the game we beat Minnesota, in the punting world — we were up by four with a minute left. And I had to punt. This would have given them the ball and given them a minute to come down and potentially score and win the game. A minute in college football is an eternity, because they stop the clock every time you get a first down. I did what's equivalent to scoring a game winning touchdown for a punter, which was they came in and brought the blitz trying to block it and the guy missed me but I went down screaming like he hit my leg, like he just tore my leg off, right, hoping to get that penalty flag, that roughing the kicker. And they ended up throwing it. So we got a first down, kned the ball, won the game.

Didn't get hit, no. I sold it like an actor. I feel like if I wouldn't have done that, they could have had a chance to win it and that was one of the biggest victories we've ever had, you know with all the fans there, 30,000 fans.

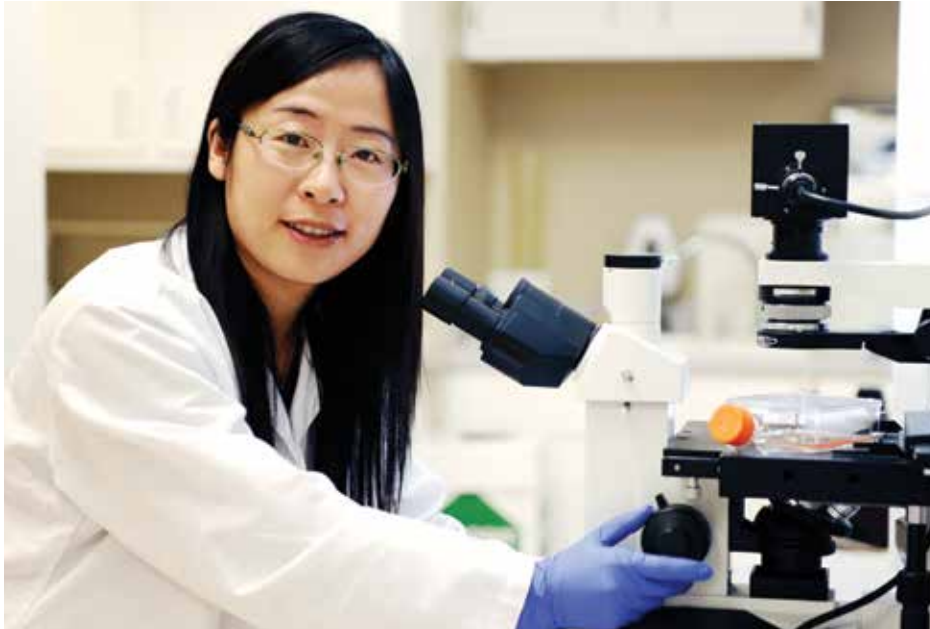
The nice part of punting, it's such a muscle memory thing. You can basically do it blindfolded because you just do it over and over and over again. You end up kind of blacking out because it's so fast.

I used to hold for field goals and that's even worse. That to me was more nerve wracking than punting.

I hit a cheerleader in the face with a shanked punt in Northern Colorado. It was my first year punting, it just went right off the side of my foot.

The one time the coach really got into me was because we were up by like forty and I figure I'm not going to punt any more, it's the fourth quarter, we've got our third stringers in, I'm just kind of hanging out, and we're getting ready to be done with it. Sitting around chatting and their quarterback throws an interception for a touchdown, and so I've got to go hold for a field goal out of nowhere, and I can't find my helmet. He has to call a time out. I still can't find it, so I have to take one of the lineman's helmets that doesn't even fit, I've got to hold it up with one hand.

Student innovation honored



Innovation Week winner Shuang Zhou, a graduate student in pharmaceutical sciences from Chifeng, China

A new cancer therapy, a service to prevent children around the world from drowning, and hummus made from North Dakota products won awards in North Dakota State University's third annual student innovation competition.

The competition began in October with 34 teams in products, services, and corn-based innovations. Winners were announced at an awards ceremony on March 6.

First place in the product category went to Shuang Zhou, a graduate student in pharmaceutical sciences from China, for developing a new therapeutic agent for neuroblastoma, a form of cancer that most commonly affects children and infants and needs more effective treatment. The new therapy targets cancer stem cells.

First place in the service category was awarded to Aqua Motion International, which provides free swimming lessons to children in high-risk drowning areas around the world.

In the corn innovation category, the winners were Hum-HealthyPlus for developing a recipe for a more nutritious and cost-effective hummus that is gluten-free. The hummus is made from corn flour and lentils, both produced in North Dakota.

Innovation Week:

- Encourages students to be innovative thinkers
- Enhances student awareness for innovation as a precursor to entrepreneurship
- Empowers students to pursue entrepreneurship as a career choice
- Expands student access to resources available for innovators and entrepreneurs
- Engages the current entrepreneur and business communities with students

IN THE NEWS

NDSU, Fargo and North Dakota are getting a lot of attention from around the country these days. A few examples:

In a column on Forbes.com about demographic, social and economic trends, the author extols the virtues of North Dakota and Fargo, noting that in Fargo, more than half the population has baccalaureate degrees, well above the national average of 40 percent.

No. 1

Business Insider listed Fargo as No. 1 on its list of the best cities for brand-new college graduates, citing the low unemployment, and a high percentage of young adults in the population.

USA Today also ran a story about towns attractive to recent college graduates, putting Fargo on the list of what they called "millennial magnets."

Vox.com, a new site for explanatory journalism, ran a story about North Dakota's enviable education rate. The lead paragraph: "If you want to find the best-educated young adults, head to Massachusetts - or North Dakota."

NDSU pops up as the most desirable college in North Dakota, in a survey by eCollegeFinder based on the number of applications received. North Dakota State University received 5,812 applications and accepted 84 percent.

More specifically, NDSU's nursing program was noted as one of the top in the country based on affordability, quality, accessibility and board pass rates.

Top 10

NDSU also recently was listed as one of the top 10 pre-veterinary programs in the country by vettechcolleges.com.



A fond farewell

PRAKASH MATHEW came to NDSU in 1971 as a graduate student and really never left. He did move to southern Minnesota for a few years to try a different job, but returned and continued to contribute to the university he loves. He became vice president for student affairs in 2006. He's the first one in and the last one out, a workaholic, a news junkie, and the kind uncle to thousands of students. It is not an exaggeration to describe him as the heart and soul of NDSU. He is retiring at the end of June.

President of Federal Reserve Bank speaks at NDSU

NDSU students had the uncommon opportunity to hear directly from the president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis in April, when Narayana Kocherlakota spoke at NDSU. About 150 students and people from the private sector attended his evening presentation.

“The long haul in the United States is a very positive one. The key to taking advantage of positive things over the economy’s long haul is not viewing this commencement as your last commencement. There is going to be more opportunity to get more education, and people should be availing themselves to that,” Kocherlakota said. “The key to being successful as the economy continues to evolve is going to be the willingness to keep oneself re-educated through relearning.”

“Finance is the cornerstone of the U.S. and global economy. Having the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis president here provides a wonderful opportunity for students to listen firsthand to a major financial leader, and ask questions that may guide their careers and aspirations,” said William Nganje, chair and professor of agribusiness and applied economics.

The Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank serves the Ninth Federal Reserve District, which includes Minnesota, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, 26 counties in northwestern Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.



Narayana Kocherlakota, president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis

CLASS NOTES

To read the most current class notes and obituaries, and to submit information, visit nds.u.edu/classnotes.

'60s

LARRY ELLINGSON, BS '69, pharmacy, received the American Diabetes Association's prestigious Wendell Mayes Jr. Medal for Lifetime Service. The honor, which recognizes outstanding lifetime achievement in the cause of diabetes, was presented at the organization's Community Volunteer Leadership Conference in Nashville, Tenn. Ellingson is a former association board chair, and served on numerous national and international task forces and committees. He lives in Fountain Hills, Ariz.

AL GUSTIN, BS '69, agricultural economics, was inducted into the North Dakota Agricultural Hall of Fame during ceremonies at the N.D. Winter Show in Valley City, N.D. He retired in 2012 after a 45-year career in farm broadcasting.

'70s

GREGG HALVERSON, BS '71, animal science, received the 2013 Potato Man for All Seasons Award. The Packer and The Grower.com presented the honor in conjunction with the National Potato Council. He is president and CEO of Black Gold Farms, with headquarters in Grand Forks, N.D.

KAREN-RENEE MOORE, BA '73, zoology, has been an online faculty member for Indiana Wesleyan University since 2001. She also pastors a local church and is an on-call chaplain at Maine Medical Center, Maine's only level-1 trauma center. She and her husband live in western Maine near Sebago Lake.

DANNY R. HOFFMANN, BS '74, animal science, was named the 2013 North Star Classic Livestock Honoree. A life-long farmer and livestock producer from Wheatland, N.D., he was honored for his commitment to the livestock industry in the state and for being a supporter of the North Star Classic since its beginning.

DIANE (SCHOMMER) PADDEN, AD '78, nursing, joined the American Association of Nurse Practitioners as vice president for research, education and professional practice. The group is the largest full-service national professional membership organization for nurse practitioners of all specialties. She previously was an associate professor of Health Sciences at the Uniformed Services University in Bethesda, Md. She lives in Clarksville, Md.

'80s

DOUGLAS D. HANSON, BS '80, architectural studies, is president of HansonLA. He recently was named architect for a planned 34-story apartment skyscraper in downtown Los Angeles, which will be twice as tall as most other buildings in the historic downtown area. Hanson and the project were featured in the Los Angeles Times business section on Feb. 27.

SCOTT M. WILLIAMSON, BUS '81, university studies, completed 30 years of service as a certified registered nurse anesthetist with the Kaiser Permanente medical group in Vallejo, Calif. He and his wife, Dai-Hsia, live in American Canyon, Calif.

DAN NOBLE, BArch '82, architecture, was named president, CEO and chair of HKS Inc., a Dallas-based architecture firm.

TIMOTHY BACKMAN, BS '84, agronomy, received the 2014 Premier Seedsman Award from the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association. He has served on the association board for six years and is a past president. He owns and operates Backman Seeds Inc., as well as farms in Herman, Minn.

BRIAN GOODROAD, AD '84, nursing, completed his term as president of Minnesota Nurse Practitioners, a state nurse practitioner organization. He is an associate professor and director of graduate programs for the School of Nursing at Metropolitan State University, St. Paul, Minn. He also is a nurse practitioner at the HIV Clinic at Hennepin County Medical Center.

TORY HART, BS '88, agricultural economics, was elected to Bank Forward's board of directors. He is the bank's senior vice president of lending and is market president at Bank Forward in Carrington, N.D.

KEVIN GYOLAI, BS '89, athletic training, BS '90, biological sciences, PhD '08, cellular and molecular biology, was named president of Benilde-St. Margaret's School in St. Louis Park, Minn. He previously was Inver Hills Community College dean of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. He and his wife, Kristine, have four children and live in Eagan, Minn.

'90s

DAVID KARELS, BS '90, construction management, is president of G6 Construction Services, a new firm offering construction management, development, consulting and general contracting services in the Fargo area.

JASON SCHMIDT, BS '93, animal science, was elected regional vice president of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association policy division, representing the organization's region 7. He represents beef producers in North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas. He runs a fourth-generation commercial cow-calf operation near Medina, N.D.

MARK JENSEN, BS '94, business administration and economics, MBA '95, business administration, was promoted to vice president/credit risk officer at Western State Bank of West Fargo.

DONNA J. BYE, BLA '98, landscape architecture, received the Western Planning Association 2013 Western Planner of the Year award at the annual conference held in Lake Tahoe, Nev. The organization includes 13 states. She has been the planner for the city of Minot, N.D., since 2001.

TRISHA (MATTER) HELGESON, MBA '98, business administration, joined Starion Financial as the marketing and communications manager at the bank's Mandan, N.D., location.

ANDREW JOHN BJUR, BArch '99, architecture, was among first list of "5 Under 40" published in the West Central Tribune. The inaugural group was recognized for their leadership, professional contributions and community involvement in the Willmar, Minn., area.

RENA STENSETH, BS '99, business administration, joined Choice Financial in Fargo as director of human resources.

'00s

CHRISTOPHER HANSON, BArch '01, architecture, completed his Architecture Registration Exam in December. He is a licensed architect at Vanman Architects and Builders as a senior project architect. He lives in Golden Valley, Minn.

JUSTIN LATTIMORE, BS '03, accounting, was appointed chief financial officer at Iron County Hospital in Pilot Knob, Mo. He specializes in Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement methods and specializes in rural health care models. He lives in Pilot Knob, Mo.

SCOTT ALVIN NORDHOUGEN, BS '04, business administration, was promoted to insurance operations manager for the Student Insurance Division of Wells Fargo Insurance. He is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations, which includes loss reporting, accounting, eligibility, waiver audit and Customer Care Team for clients around the nation. He lives in Sacramento, Calif.

JUSTIN FLACK, BS '06, construction engineering, was named Richland County engineer in Wahpeton, N.D. He previously worked in Fargo for a concrete and aggregate producer.

ELIZABETH PEARCE, MS '07, psychology, was named program coordinator and supervisor for comprehensive assessment services and trainee supervisor at the Portia Bell Hume Behavioral Health and Training Center in Fremont, Calif.

Innovator and entrepreneur

Tristan Pollock is a co-founder of TheStorefront.com, a website that links artisans, fashion designers and other businesses with available store space for short-term rental. The new company is gaining wide attention, including a recent feature in the Wall Street Journal.

Pollock, who graduated from NDSU in 2008 with a degree in business administration, was working in an e-commerce job when he teamed up with business partner Erik Eliason to start a website for social entrepreneurs and journalists. TheStorefront.com evolved from that earlier collaboration.

“We saw big box stores and malls struggling. E-commerce companies were coming offline — they basically built their brand online and became very successful, but they were starting physical stores for short periods of time. We wanted to create something that would allow anyone to do that,” Pollock said.

The company launched its services in Los Angeles, New York and San Francisco. “Anyone who has unique products to sell can use Storefront to rent a store for a day, week or month. We see everything from one day to six months,” Pollock said. “We’ve set up thousands of stores now and the site has been live for just over a year. We’re really excited about that.”



NDSU grad Tristan Pollack (left) co-founded Storefront.com with Erik Eliason.

Pollock says his collegiate experience prepared him for the workplace. “I take great pride in going to NDSU. I met some really great people, I had amazing professors who really encouraged me and I did a lot of internships in Fargo that gave me hands-on experience that helped guide me in my career,” he said.

The goal is to build TheStorefront.com into an international marketplace for temporary rental needs. “Whether it’s Fargo, New York or Paris, we want to make it quick and simple for entrepreneurs to have important face-to-face conversations with customers,” said Pollock, who grew up in the Twin Cities area, and now lives in San Francisco.

’10s

SHAWN CROWLEY, MArch ’10, architecture, received the 2013 Early Career Architect Award from the North Dakota chapter of American Institute of Architects. Crowley is an architect with EAPC Architects.

HERMAN R. DURAZNO, MS ’11, construction management, was promoted to project manager for the Laurin Group. He previously was a construction project coordinator. He lives in Toronto, Canada.

DAVID LEEDAHL, PharmD ’11, pharmacy, completed two years of pharmacy residency at Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn. His research project, titled “Predictors of mortality among bacteremic patients with septic shock receiving appropriate antimicrobial therapy,” was accepted for publication in the biomedical journal BMC Anesthesiology. He is the pharmacy clinical manager at Sanford Medical Center in Fargo.

ERIN MARKESTAD, BS ’11, public relations, was appointed international marketing specialist in the North Dakota Department of Agriculture. She plans and coordinates international trade marketing events with international, federal, state and local agencies; provides market development assistance to North Dakota companies; and conducts market research and coordinates development of markets for agriculture products.

JOHN H. “JACK” HOEVEN, BS ’12, geology, joined Advanced Engineering and Environmental Services Inc., known as AE2S, in the firm’s Bismarck, N.D., office. He is a construction services technician in the Rural Water Group.

JAKE JORAANSTAD, BS ’12, computer engineering, was named to Prairie Business Magazine’s “40 Under 40” list, which honors outstanding business professionals in the region. He was recognized in the “Rising to the Top” story in the December issue of the publication. He is the CEO of Myriad Devices of Fargo. He began his career while he was an NDSU student and has since grown his mobile technology company to nearly 25 employees in three years. At 24, he is the youngest person on the list.

ESSAY

BY MATTHEW WAGENIUS

We are a community

In high school, I always felt uncomfortable, as if I didn't quite belong. I surrounded myself with a phenomenal group of friends toward the end of high school and I am very thankful for them, but something never quite clicked for me. I was simply going through the motions. Every day I would get up, drive to school, go to class, and then drive home. I never felt connected to the community or as if I was a part of anything larger than myself.

I went to college excited and eager for a fresh start at finding my place. Based on what I saw in movies and television shows, I was expecting to find a single, small group of friends who frequently went to their favorite coffee shop to catch up. Since my scope and expectations were so small, I was in for a bit of a surprise.

I had the pleasure of going to Texas earlier this year, to watch North Dakota State University's football team win its third consecutive national championship. I was excited to go watch the Bison play for a national championship, but I'm six feet two inches tall, so I wasn't exactly looking forward to sitting on a crowded coach bus for twenty hours each way. I had planned out the entire bus ride, which books I would read, which papers I would write, I never imagined that I would instead connect with a group of complete strangers.

I was fully prepared for the first twenty-hour ride, sweatpants, pillow, sound canceling headphones and all. I got on the bus with a group of students I had never met before, and we then went to another location to pick up community members who bought the unsold student tickets. I already had my book out and headphones on, the universal sign for "don't bother me."

A woman got on the bus carrying nothing but a small bag. She slumped down in a seat behind where our pod of students sat. After

a few minutes, she reached around the seat and tapped me on the shoulder. I was caught off guard and a little bit uncomfortable.

I wasn't quite sure what I was expecting her to say or sound like. When she started to speak, her voice was gravely, like what I suspect to be from years of smoking. "My name is Delilah, at least for the weekend." I'm still not sure why she never told me her real name. She then looked around, trying to settle in, "I didn't know I was going on this trip until a few hours ago."

Soon after we first talked, my discomfort faded a bit. Before long, she was on the move, starting to mingle. Within a half hour, the whole bus was humming with conversation. People were laughing, telling jokes, and sharing stories like old friends.

As I watched Delilah move from row to row, I noticed how at ease she was with whoever she talked to. She brought even the crabbiest people on the bus to a smile and sometimes even a laugh. I am confident that if Delilah had not been on the bus there wouldn't have been nearly as much camaraderie.

The twenty-hour bus ride flew by much more quickly than I was expecting. I finished none of the projects I had set out to do on the ride down.

The morning of the game, I walked around the tailgate area with some of my new friends from the bus and some old friends. I recognized face after face as we looped our way through the crowd. Everyone was happy to be there. People were waving hello, playing catch, and giving out food to strangers. At one point, some NDSU fans noticed some fans from the opposing team walking around, looking with expressions of bewilderment. They were invited in. I even spotted Delilah, standing on top of a random bus.

After the game and the win, the weekend had come to an end. We boarded the bus for the twenty-hour ride home. People weren't

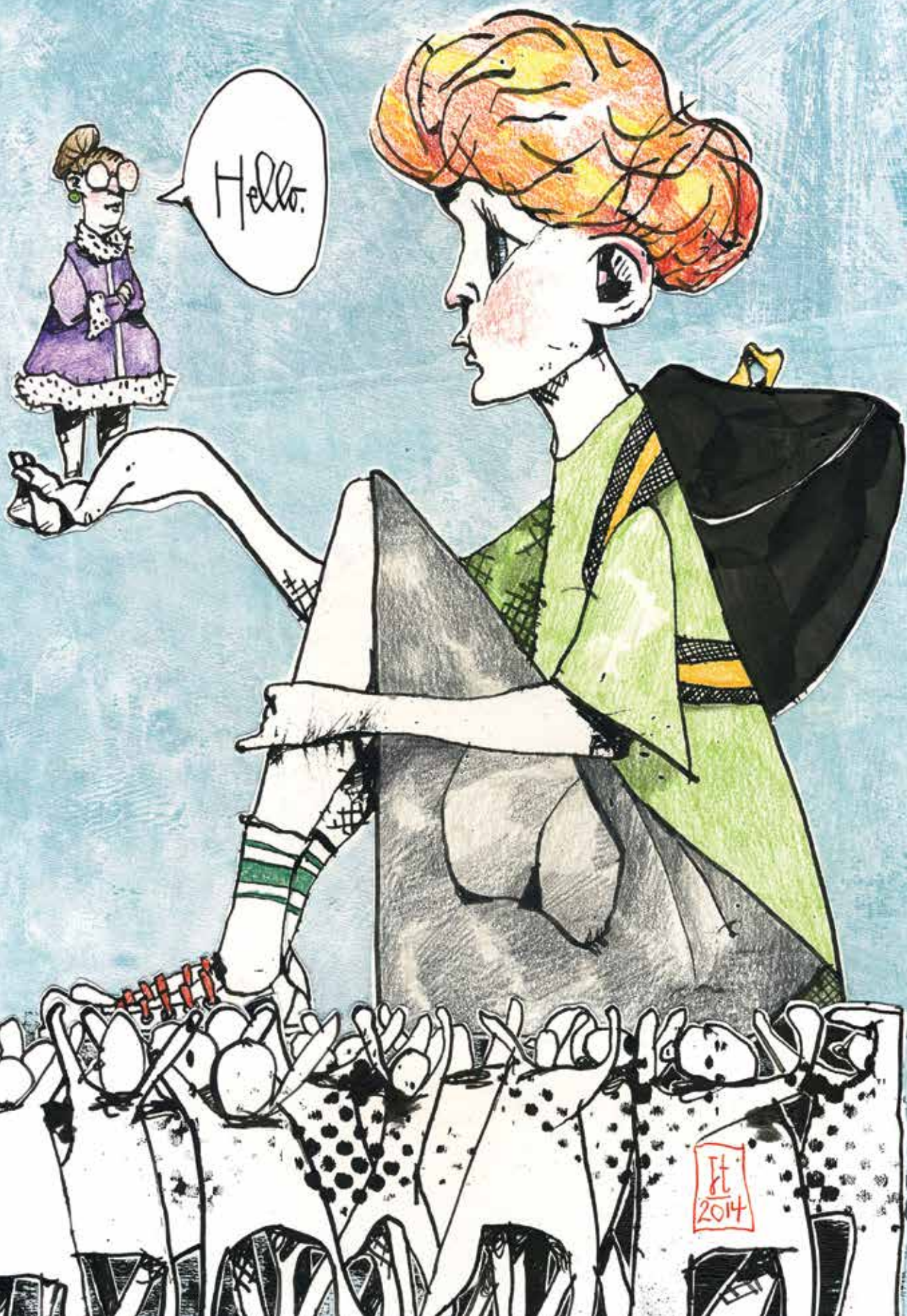
as talkative on the ride home; everyone was exhausted from the weekend. It was getting dark and the bus slowly got quiet. I was sitting next to Delilah when I leaned over to ask her about her book. Somehow we moved into a deep conversation and started to talk about life challenges and aspirations. She shared book recommendations and talked about her daughter. We discussed life, love, and loss. She expressed the importance of not obsessing over what people think and living without regret, that's what she has done and she has been happy thus far. I found myself talking about personal topics that I hadn't discussed with my closest friends. It started to get late and the conversation became slow and eventually died out. I sat back in my chair, exhausted from talking, and looked out the window.

I watched the moon while we passed by field after field of wide open, snow-covered spaces, I thought about the way we are a community. NDSU is a place that we are permanently attached to and will always feel connected to.

In a strange way, Delilah perfectly embodies that sense. She didn't know anyone on the bus, but that didn't stop her from becoming friends, being courteous, and hospitable to everyone she met. She was even willing to give advice to a stranger and connect on a deeper than average level.

I am preparing to study abroad in France next semester and I have a strong feeling that my sense of community will follow me even when I am more than 4,000 miles away.

As I was gathering my things preparing to leave the bus, Delilah looked at me, paused, and said, "Have fun in life. You will be very successful and I know you can accomplish anything you set your mind to. I am so glad our paths crossed." And with that, I exited the bus, and it is unlikely our paths will ever cross again.



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DAN KOECK

KILN FIRE This kiln at Renaissance Hall requires a team of experienced wood firers. Art students participating in the firing of their work sign up for two-hour slots, working with an experienced firing crew member. Wood is stoked into the kiln around the clock for four days, ending with a final larger stoke at the end. The kiln cools for at least ten days before opening and inspecting the new work. Every kiln opening is like Christmas as a kid when the unwrapping of presents begins.