Making Connections

Instructor and recently published author Ronald Ferguson passionately challenges his students to be agents of change in society.

Inside!

WISH GRANTED
RAVE REVIEWS
IT’S ALL ABOUT YOU

Reaching Out
VP establishes international relationship with Turkey. See page 7 for details.
Recently I had the opportunity to hear a presentation by Bill George, former CEO of Medtronic and author of several books on leadership ("True North: Discover Your Authentic Leadership" and "Authentic Leadership: Rediscovering the Secrets of Creating Lasting Value") and most recently ("7 Lessons for Leading in Crisis"). He is currently teaching leadership at Harvard Business School where he is a professor of management practice. The focus of his presentation was on leading in a time of crisis, when seemingly everything shifts beneath your feet as if you’re attempting to stand in a boat on a storm-tossed sea.

To paraphrase Snoopy, higher education is facing just such a dark and stormy night. At Ridgewater College we’ve seen funding cuts in excess of 2 million dollars and more are projected. We’ve seen the second half of a critical capital building project on the Willmar Campus which was approved in the last bonding cycle vetoed by the Governor. According to George, in “7 Lessons for Leading in Crisis,” the root of our current economic crisis is “failed leadership from leaders who didn’t follow their True North.” He defines True North as “the internal compass of your beliefs, values, and principles that guide you through life. Like being in a crucible, a crisis tests whether you will hold fast to your beliefs” (p. 2). The obvious question for every leader then is what are the beliefs, values, and principles that will guide us in this crisis? This isn’t about making decisions to cut budgets—which can be relatively easy management decisions—this is about being true to one’s basic beliefs and values. Ridgewater’s core strengths begin with our vision, mission, and values.

Our mission: “Ridgewater provides quality educational opportunities for diverse student learners in an inclusive, supportive, and accessible environment.”

Our values focus on a learning environment that:

- focuses on student needs and student success
- equips students to think critically and creatively, solve problems, and adapt to a rapidly changing world
- embraces diversity of thought, diversity of individual background, and affirms the worth and dignity of each individual
- focuses on continuous improvement by establishing success indicators, measuring against those indicators, and using the results to make strategic decisions
- promotes ethical and honest behavior and accountability at both an institutional and individual level
- demonstrates and reinforces the value of lifelong learning
- reaches beyond the College’s walls to the community, the region, and the world

I believe it is my responsibility to keep the organization focused on our vision, mission and values. To do that, I need to follow my True North, to balance a willingness to take risks, to rock the boat, to acknowledge that how we’ve always done it will no longer be possible, with a recognition that we must remain focused on our mission — continuing to provide excellent learning opportunities to those we are here to serve. Some of the results of that focus are enumerated in the pages of this magazine — I hope the value of that is as apparent to you as it is to me.

Dr. Douglas W. Allen
President

Our values focus on a learning environment that:

• reaches beyond the College’s walls to the community,
• demonstrates and reinforces the value of lifelong learning.
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From the President
Cover Story: 8
Making Connections
Whether he’s teaching a class or advising the school’s multicultural club, Ronald Ferguson challenges his students to offer something unique to their communities and the world.

10 Questions
We’re shifting gears with our 10 Questions column this issue. So far, our visits have been with college staff. This spring we shift our attention and introduce you to one of our students, Andy Rauen.

Tell us a little more about you.
My hometown is Oakdale, MN, a suburb of St. Paul. I am 20 years old and attending Ridgewater to complete my generals and earn my AA degree. I’m pretty active, and enjoy playing sports in my free time. I also enjoy hunting and fishing when I have the chance.

What made you decide to move from the metro area to Willmar to attend Ridgewater?
I had a couple of buddies that were out here. They said I should check it out, that it was a good campus and a lot of fun. Also, that’s part of the college experience, meeting new people and experiencing new things.

What’s your favorite instructor and why?
Trevor Johnson (biology/science instructor). He relates everything to us; puts things into layman’s terms. He also talks about his family, which makes him more personable; and he is very funny.

What are you involved in outside the classroom?
I play intramural basketball, cornerback for the Ridgewater Warriors football team, and am on Student Senate. I also like gaming. I don’t do it a whole lot, but my neighbors have an X Box and I enjoy playing Call of Duty and hanging out.

Why is it important to be involved outside the classroom?
It has made the whole transition to college more comfortable, especially for people like me who aren’t from here. Student Senate was nothing like I expected. It’s been a good experience and I’ve met a lot of good people.

What do you like best about Ridgewater?
The people. I try to make it a point to get to know everyone I can. My goal is to get the “up-mod”, you know, like – “what’s up?” I also love the wide variety of different people and backgrounds here.

What are your plans after graduating from Ridgewater?
Hopefully I’ll get my degree and move on to a university. As for now, I’m still undecided on where to go and what to major in. I’ve been thinking about engineering. That’s what my dad does. I want something hands-on; I don’t want to sit behind a computer.

What would you tell prospective students considering Ridgewater?
Make sure you visit and see the campus. Visit the programs you’re interested in to find a good fit, and talk with the instructors. Get a feel for what’s like here. Hopefully it will be your home for the next couple of years. It’s a great place – don’t take it for granted.

Is Ridgewater what you expected? Not really. I thought I would only be here for a semester or so. Now I’ve been here for two years.

How is it different? It has definitely exceeded my expectations. I was hesitant at first, until I got involved and started meeting people. Then I realized that this is the right place for me. It is what you make of it.
Ridgewater College has been notified by the Higher Learning Commission (a commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools) that the group has reaffirmed the college’s accreditation.

The reaffirmation follows a quality check-up visit by peer reviewers that took place last February. The review team submits their report to the HLC Reaffirmation of Accreditation Panel who reviews the findings and makes the recommendation to reaffirm accreditation.

According to Ridgewater President Douglas Allen, “The reaffirmation of accreditation is an independent and exhaustive process, and it confirms publicly the quality of our faculty and staff and of the learning opportunities available at both campuses of Ridgewater College. I can’t say enough about the hard work of everyone at the college — all of whom are part of the reason for this reaffirmation. It’s also gratifying to know that our focus on continuous improvement pays dividends. As our enrollment continues to grow, it’s nice to see that our legacy of quality teaching and learning continues to grow as well.”

Ridgewater College participates in the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP). AQIP is an alternative process through which an organization can maintain its accredited status with the Higher Learning Commission.

The Higher Learning Commission is one of six accrediting agencies in the United States that provide institutional accreditation on a regional basis. Institutional accreditation evaluates an entire institution and accredits it as a whole. Other agencies provide accreditation for specific programs.

The Commission, recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, accredits approximately 1,100 institutions of higher education in a nineteen state region.

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New Scholarship

$360,000 Presidential Incentive Scholarship Program Established

Ridgewater College announced in December the creation of a new scholarship initiative for low-income students. The Presidential Incentive Scholarship will be funded by Federal stimulus dollars. These funds were provided by the U.S. government to help offset the negative effects of the recent economic recession.

Eighty eligible students (chosen at random) enrolled in at least 12 credits at Ridgewater for fall semester 2009 who completed all their course work with a minimum GPA of 2.5 will received $1,500 toward college-related expenses for spring semester 2010 if they have enrolled for at least 12 credits. If they complete the spring semester with a grade point average of 2.5 or higher, and re-enroll in at least 12 credits the following semester, they will be given another $1,500. Students may receive this scholarship for 3 consecutive semesters, as long as they meet academic and enrollment requirements.

To be eligible to be chosen for the Presidential Incentive Scholarship, a student must be low-income as determined by eligibility for the Federal Pell Grant as of the beginning of fall semester 2009. The original 80 in the cohort who have met the criteria will all get the scholarship, and those who continue to meet the stated requirements will receive the award through the end of the incentive period (spring 2011).

“This incentive program is targeted specifically at the financially neediest college students,” said Dr. Douglas Allen, president of Ridgewater College. “We are hopeful that the program will be significant in helping students pay for college, and thus it will motivate them to be successful by reducing or even eliminating the need for these students to take out loans.”

Cancer Survivor Beauty and Support Day

In observance of the Cancer Survivor Beauty and Support Day, the Ridgewater College Cosmetology Club joined with other schools/salons nationwide to offer free pampering services for cancer survivors. Cosmetology and Massage Therapy students at Ridgewater College offered head wraps, haircuts and styling, spa manicures and pedicures, facial treatments and makeup, and seated chair massages.

“Ridgewater’s Cosmetology Club and Massage Therapy students participated in the Cancer Survivor Beauty and Support Day because we believe that volunteerism and community service are important to the success and growth of our students and the well-being of our community,” states Melissa Coborn, Cosmetology instructor and Cosmetology Club adviser.

“The real beauty of the day is the support that it gives our cancer survivors,” said Barbara Papel, Founding Chairman of the Cancer Survivor Beauty and Support Day.

Green Light

Automotive Program Receives National Certification

The Automotive Service Technology program at Ridgewater College in Willmar has received re-certification by the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF) and The National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE). To achieve this coveted recognition, the school’s automotive training program underwent rigorous evaluation by NATEF. Nationally accepted standards of excellence in areas such as instruction, facilities, and equipment were used.

“This is great news for automotive-minded young people and their parents,” said Donald Sayfer, NATEF Chair. “Because this program increases cooperation between local education and industry leaders, it gives added assurance that Ridgewater’s graduates will be employable entry-level technicians. As a result of the quality education provided by Ridgewater College, the motoring public will benefit since better repair technicians will join the workforce.”

Upon completion of the evaluation, NATEF recommended that Ridgewater College be certified by The National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE). ASE is a national non-profit organization which tests and certifies repair technicians, in addition to certifying automotive training programs.

For great careers and intern opportunities, think Rice.

For information on careers, nurse residency programs, and healthcare internships at Rice, call 320.231.4499 or visit www.ricehospital.com. Questions about planning your career in healthcare? Call Southern Minnesota AHEC at 320.231.4375.
An “Essay” Win

As a winner, Adam and his instructor, Rick Molenaar, received an all-expenses paid trip to the 2009 NetRiders Skills Challenge. The competition is a global technology education program that provides students with networking and technical skills to compete for a grand-prize trip to the Cisco Systems International Convention.

They’ve Got Skills

Ridgewater College students Mark Thompson and Dan Madison have won the state-level Cisco Networking Academy® NetRiders Skills Challenge. This interactive competition is designed by the Cisco Networking Academy to give technical education students the opportunity to showcase their IT and networking skills and to recognize excellence among students from across the United States and Canada competing in a variety of activities, including a timed theoretical exam, a Packet Tracer network simulation activity and a Packet Tracer exam.

The 21st Century

The Cisco Networking Academy is a global technology education program that provides students with networking and technical skills to prepare them for careers in the 21st century. Committed to delivering the highest standard of information technology education to students of all nationalities, genders, and economic brackets, the program is designed to offer students real-world skills that will position them for employment and career growth.

“I am very proud of Mark and Dan for competing in the NetRiders competition,” said Jeff Polman, Ridgewater Computer Systems Technology instructor.

Wish Granted

The visit was an outcome of a June 2009 meeting in which the two institutions planned the joint initiative. It also addresses an item in Ridgewater’s 2010 action plan that states one of our goals is to “explore best practices/develop initiatives for the recruitment of international students in conjunction with SCSU.”

They established an “essay” wish program that helps prepare healthcare providers for establishment of a state-of-the-art labor and delivery simulation training program. The grant will aid in the purchase of level one simulation equipment, including the manikins Noelle (mother) and two babies. Noelle is a highly interactive OB simulation manikin that has multiple birthing scenarios that can help prepare healthcare providers in emergency childbirth.

The Irrigation Association Education Foundation named Adam Miller, Ridgewater Ag student from Dawson, MN, as the winner of their essay contest. As a winner, Adam and his instructor, Rick Molenaar, received an all-expenses paid trip to the 2009 Irrigation Show in San Antonio, Texas. Miller’s essay, titled “What’s green about irrigation?” was chosen as the lone winner in the agriculture category. The essay focuses on the responsible use of agricultural irrigation in the northern corn belt, and its positive benefits to both the grower and the environment.

The IAEF vision is to improve the quality of professionals entering into the irrigation industry through advanced educational opportunities. Irrigation specific programs offered by the IAEF through academic institutions will be designed expressly for individuals seeking a career in the green or irrigation industry, as well as practicing professionals interested in improving their technical skills. As the IAEF grows, grants, scholarships, and public awareness campaigns will be phased into the program.

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Making Connections

Dr. Ron Ferguson challenges students to apply sociological concepts to real life.

Whether he’s teaching a class or advising the school’s multicultural club, Ferguson challenges his students to see themselves as people with something unique to offer their communities and the world.

“I look at every class and see a diverse set of students with different backgrounds, experiences [and] traditions,” he says. “It’s a powerful thing when you get that sense that we all have a culture, we all have diversity.”

Hailing from the U.S. Virgin Islands, Ferguson came to the Midwest as a teenager to attend North Dakota State University (NDSU). It was there, as an undergraduate in an unfamiliar city, he discovered a love for learning and a passion for sociology. As a freshman, Ferguson took an introduction to sociology class where the professor lectured on sociological imagination—or the ability to understand broad social issues on a personal level.

“The teacher talked about issues of equality, poverty, gender, race, education and family, [and] how those institutions affect me,” he says. “I dared to think outside my experience, to look at the larger social issues that really affected me.”

From NDSU, Ferguson traveled farther north to Grand Forks and received his master’s degree and doctorate at the University of North Dakota.

Now that he is at the head of the class at Ridgewater College, Ferguson still draws from his years in school, and hopes to help his students connect with today’s social issues.

“I learned early on that education is really about students getting involved and taking ownership of their learning,” he says. “It’s not just about getting the material to test, which is important, but it’s also getting them to apply [concepts] to themselves [so] it becomes real. I see that as the start.”
“For me, it was an eye opener, being around the country in different areas, both rural and urban, just seeing the extent of poverty,” he says. “I believe that poverty is something you can reduce. We can beat it, it just takes folks getting involved.”

From his cross-cultural experience in college to his ongoing efforts to eradicate poverty, Ferguson brings his own life lessons to class, then asks students to think about issues personally, not just academically, and take action outside of the classroom.

“I encourage my students to get involved, and do my best to plug them in,” he says. “My wish is that students see they can be agents of change in their society as well.”

Honored to Teach

Ferguson’s obvious passion for teaching and his dedication in and out of the classroom have not gone unnoticed.

“Dr. Ferguson is very passionate about his work and passionate about life,” says Betty Strishow, Ridgewater’s vice president of academic affairs and student services. “He puts students first. He connects personally with them because he is truly interested in them and their well-being, and because he is passionate about making a difference.”

His commitment has also garnered praise in the form of awards. In just under six years at Ridgewater, Ferguson has received two Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System Awards of Excellence to complete on- and off-campus projects, and a Golden Apple Teaching Award. The latter was particularly meaningful to Ferguson because it came from his students.

“That was an awesome thing to hear that something you’ve done in the classroom or outside of the classroom has been notable to them,” he says. “It encourages you to keep on keeping on, as they say.”

Ferguson also recently coauthored a book titled “What’s Up With the Brothers? Essays and Studies on African American Masculinities,” which explores what it means to be a black man in today’s society, and how the understanding and perception of African American males has evolved over the decades. The work is set to be published this May.

The most rewarding part of Ferguson’s job, though, is getting students to dig deep, think about big issues and never stop learning.

“Looking back [at] all the people that helped support me and my education, I just hope to give back. I want to do that for students,” he says. “I’m very thankful for the acknowledgements, but the most notable of all have been the things that happen in the classroom every day.”

Ferguson’s recently published book titled, “What’s Up With the Brothers? Essays and Studies on African American Masculinities”
Practical Advice

Need a part-time job to help pay for school? We can help. Want someone to critique your resume? We have you covered. Need to refresh your job interview skills? We can help you practice!

Want to seek out that perfect career after graduation? We’re there for you. As long as you are a Ridgewater College student or alumnus, we can aid you finding and keeping a job.

“There is a wide variety of resources available through Career Services,” explains Sally Kerfeld, director of Admissions and Career Services. There are many general resources online and with various agencies that assist with employment, but connecting with Ridgewater Career Services has its benefits.

“We gear all our efforts to Ridgewater Career Services students and graduates,” Kerfeld says. “There are employers who want to fill their positions with Ridgewater graduates. The college has built relationships with businesses who hire our graduates, and we continue to seek out employment opportunities for our students and graduates.”

The primary tool Ridgewater students, graduates, alumni, and employers are using is a partner website, www.collegecentral.com/ridgewater. “It’s the best investment we’ve made for Career Services,” Kerfeld said. Career Services staff members oversee all job postings placed on this website by pre-approved employers. In many cases, registered students and alumni can apply directly to a posting while they review this information. “Those employers are committed to hiring Ridgewater graduates,” Kerfeld says. “It’s getting better all the time with more students and alumni registering and looking for jobs.”

With the flood of workforce layoffs during the last two to three years, Ridgewater alumni have the most to gain by reconnecting with Career Services. Job searching is incredibly different than it was even a few years ago.

“Don’t let technology be a barrier during your job search,” says Ardith Ampe, Career Services specialist. Career Services is able to provide graduates with free use of our office’s fax, copier, computers, printers, phone and electronic scanners. “Just contact us and let us know what we can help you accomplish as it relates to your job search.”

Ampe has worked with job-seekers for two decades now and knows what works for people.

“It is very important to be timely in response to any ad you see,” Ampe said. “Do your homework and learn about a company before applying and, especially before the interview, get familiar with company specifics.” It is important to follow up with an employer after you have applied to make sure they received your materials.

Students and alumni are also able to post their resumes at www.collegecentral.com/ridgewater for employers who have posted their company’s jobs online with us to review. “Employers really want students to post their resumes,” Kerfeld says. “You can’t just look in the newspaper ads anymore. Some employers aren’t spending as much money on advertising, and yet they might be hiring. You really have to be assertive. Being creative in your job search is very important.”

Ridgewater wants to help upcoming graduates and alumni connect with all of the avenues they have available to support a successful job search.

Let Us Help YOU!
Career Services Helps Ridgewater Students and Alumni:
- Register at www.collegecentral.com/ridgewater
- Check out Career Services on either campus:
  - WILLMAR
    Students Services Building Room A110
    ardith.ampe@ridgewater.edu
    320-222-8044
  - HUTCHINSON
    Front Reception Area
    amy.mathews@ridgewater.edu
    310-254-8502
- Get organized — Gather your relevant job history, skills, and educational information
- Learn about and use the resources available to you
- Develop a job search game plan

Rave Reviews

“Move over Elmo and Barney – Pickles has arrived! With his green, furry charm, Pickles listens to children’s books and watches finger play and fun activities. He is the star of the show for the new, fun and educational video series, ‘Pickles’ Place.’”

After making his debut last fall, Pickles now has a supporting cast of nearly 40 Ridgewater College students in the Early Childhood Education and Educational Assistant programs. Together they got comfy at Pickles’ Place at Ridgewater to share a popular children’s story that the students read for preschool audiences and their parents or daycare providers. Afterwards they demonstrate a fun activity that complements the story that was read and offer a parenting tip.

“Pickles’ Place” evolved from the Read-Along program in the Willmar area, according to Cindy Saller, Ridgewater Early Childhood Education instructor.

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Love Working with Kids? Ridgewater Has Options for YOU!

Educational Assistant AAS Degree
- Prepares you to assist in birth-12th-grade classes or environments or work with adults of differing abilities.

Early Childhood Education AAS Degree
- Gives you the option to transfer those credits to a bachelor’s degree or allows you to work in such places as preschools, Early Childhood Family Education programs, Head Start, and infant/toddler programs.

Early Childhood Education BS Degree
- Allows you to teach children birth through grade three in public or private programs or schools. Available thanks to an articulation agreement with Southwest Minnesota State University.

The Pickles’ project gives the college students a chance to see their work benefit children prior to their actually being employed in the field,” she said. “It also provides them with an educational opportunity to practice what is being taught in the classroom using a practical and hands-on method.”

Reader Laura Erickson of Cokato agreed. “This experience helped me to gain more confidence in myself and the skills that I am acquiring to be a teacher,” said the Early Childhood Education program student. “I am hoping to be a pre-K or Kindergarten teacher, so it would be something that I would be doing all the time.”

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Reader Laura Erickson of Cokato agreed. “This experience helped me to gain more confidence in myself and the skills that I am acquiring to be a teacher,” said the Early Childhood Education program student. “I am hoping to be a pre-K or Kindergarten teacher, so it would be something that I would be doing all the time.”

“The interaction with the children, seeing their reactions to Pickles and wanting to learn about him and learning with him is priceless,” said reader Jennifer Bruhn, Educational Assistant student. “Pickles’ Place is so much fun. Children really react to Pickles in a very positive way.”

“One of the missions of the students in the Educational Assistant and Early Childhood Education programs is to give back to the community through a variety of service learning projects,” Salfer explained. In addition to “Pickles’ Place,” Ridgewater Early Childhood Education students wrote curriculum for the popular Growmobile in Kandiyohi County. The Growmobile is a community service also supported by the United Way Empower program whereby about 80 Literacy Totes filled with books, related activities and snacks are shared with county home-based childcare providers in an effort to better prepare children for kindergarten. Both have been great projects, according to Salfer, but in different ways.

“(We’re) continually looking for ways to offer quality programming to our students...”
It’s all about You

You can feel it in the air. Reflection. Change. Empowerment. All subjects students can apply to their lives on a daily basis. These students are lucky to have an instructor who passionately lives and breathes these subjects to build awareness and empower others.

“I get excited when I teach – it doesn’t matter what topic because I know there’s someone in class it’s going to resonate with.”

“Psychology is a field that is not only personal, but also has a focus on society. So when you take this course, you should have insights about yourself, how you want to live your life, and information to make social change possible because it’s all tied together.”

The Road to the Classroom

Haglin wasn’t always going to be a college instructor but had a college instructor who turned her on to neuroscience and cognitive science. Soon the Cannon Falls native was majoring in psychology and earning her master’s degree from St. Mary’s University in counseling and psychological services. First she did employee assistance phone counseling. Then she experienced face-to-face counseling with families, mostly with children with disorders such as autism and Asperger’s disorder. It was rewarding, but frustrating at times. “Others expected me to give them their mental health,” she said. “They didn’t realize how much work they also had to put into it.”

In 2001, Haglin began teaching psychology. “I love the interaction with students,” Haglin said. “I learn from them as well. I really think of it as a reciprocal relationship. Their thought processes, input are valuable, and I love it when students challenge me.”

While she loves teaching and plans to do it for many years, Haglin also strives for more. She is currently working on her doctorate degree to take her to the next level academically, but there’s also that community aspect of empowering families that tugs at her heart strings.

Reaching Out

It is that passion to initiate change that motivates Haglin to also reach outside the classroom. Andrea is a co-facilitator for the Hutchinson area Parent Connection support group. She has also been involved in the Minnesota Thrive Initiative to educate Minnesota communities about early childhood development. It’s through those connections that Haglin developed curriculum for First Responders dealing with childhood trauma. She now shares those ideas with regional rescue teams to enable them to have a positive impact. “I try to impress on (rescue workers) that they are proactive problem-solvers instead of reactive agents,” Haglin said. “That seems to be an ‘aha!’ moment and that is empowering.”

In many ways, Haglin is living out her destiny to positively influence families daily. Time will tell how far her contributions will span beyond Ridgewater and Central Minnesota.
Sabrina started her postsecondary education at Ridgewater College in the fall of 2001 taking liberal arts courses to explore career possibilities. "It helped because I didn't know exactly what I wanted to do," she said. "Just ask Lisa Wagoner, the counselor. "I told her I wanted to be a professional cheerleader and she told me it wasn't going to happen."

"Ridgewater was affordable and 10 minutes from my home, and absolutely the right choice for me."

Taking general education courses allowed Sabrina time to think about all the possibilities while still advancing herself academically for many possibilities. Sabrina felt comfortable at Ridgewater. She became so involved in Student Senate that she was named Outstanding Student Senator of the Year for the Hutchinson campus in 2002.

Sabrina then took a break from college for a bit for family. It wasn’t long, however, and further education beckoned. She earned a cosmetology diploma and worked in the field for a while, but her previous positive Ridgewater experience and family circumstances inspired her to reach even farther with her education. When the single mom’s 6-year-old daughter was younger, she worked with a speech pathologist. Sabrina witnessed first-hand the incredible impact a caring professional can have on a child and decided she wanted to have a similar impact.

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Soon after, the mother of a 3-year-old son also, moved closer to her own family to pursue education degrees for learning and physical disabilities in Winona. Transferring credits went quite smoothly and having the additional financial support from the scholarship reinforced that others believe in her and her dreams as well, she said. "Not just anybody can be a special education teacher,” Sabrina said, but she feels she now has the opportunity before her and wants to be someone who can change people’s lives. “As long as I can help others along the way,” she said, “life will be good.”

Sabrina Hatten is a winner when it comes to taking a chance on free money. And all she had to do was believe in herself.

Until her Ridgewater College liberal arts instructors encouraged her to do so, Sabrina had never before applied for any scholarship. "I thought, ‘yah, right, nobody ever gets those scholarships,” explained Hatten, a 2001 Hutchinson High School graduate. "I figured it was kind of like a lottery."

But she took a chance and applied for the Transfer Times Scholarship for Minnesota and Wisconsin students and found herself the happy recipient of a $500 scholarship last fall. She’s now applying it to her special education double degree pursuit at Winona State University.

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The Board of Directors has named Kelly Magnuson as the Executive Director of the Ridgewater College Foundation. She began her new duties in November 2009.

Magnuson has a Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration from St. Cloud State University. She has served as Ridgewater’s Foundation Specialist since 2006. She has been instrumental in implementing improved processes in the Foundation’s scholarship program, financial accounting and database systems.

Additionally, she is active in the Willmar community, serving as a volunteer for the Willmar Booster Basketball Association and Vinje Lutheran Church, and as a member of Cardinal Pride, Eagle Creek Golf Club and the YMCA. She has been a planner and organizer of the Jodi’s Network of Hope annual golf fundraiser since 2005.

She is passionate about the mission of the Ridgewater College Foundation, which seeks to expand educational opportunities and enhance academic excellence for Ridgewater College and its students. The Foundation awards approximately $200,000 in scholarships and $30,000 in program support annually. She is excited about working to raise money to support students, programs, staff/faculty and Ridgewater College as a whole.

The Executive Director is responsible for the supervision, direction and implementation of the Foundation’s scholarship program, new initiatives, and fund-raising programs. Specific responsibilities include managing the day-to-day operations of the Foundation as well as designing and directing a comprehensive development plan to reach Foundation goals and objectives and providing leadership and management to all college fund-raising efforts.

Magnuson’s move to Executive Director meant that her previous job of Foundation Specialist was left vacant. That position has been filled by Gwen Krebsbach.

Krebsbach has over 29 years of proven administrative assistant experience, including twelve years at Ridgewater College, most recently as the assistant to the dean of student services and dean of instruction. She is a graduate of Willmar Area Vocational Technical Institute (now Ridgewater College) and has completed continuing education courses on leadership and office procedures throughout the years.

Gwen has been an active participant in numerous church, school and community activities throughout the years, including church council, Lakeland Conference, ACCGC School Board and the Kandiyohi County Fair Board (currently).

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