

The Kuyper College News

A publication for alumni and friends.

CELEBRATING



1939 — 2014

Vol. 9, Issue 3, Fall, 2014



John, Jillian and Arie Burden

Two as one, together in ministry

John & Jillian (Bos) Burden graduated from Kuyper in 2007 and 2008 respectively. He is from Belding, Michigan, and she is from Burlington, Ontario, Canada. They met at Kuyper, dated throughout Jillian's four years here, and married after her graduation. Today, John is the teaching pastor at Watershed, a church plant of Harderwyk Ministries CRC in Holland, Michigan. Jillian is the author of the well-known "Adding a Burden"—a blog about adoption, infertility, family, faith and a journey to

joy which has 35,000 views per month. This is their story.

John's Story

I grew up in a family that went to church regularly at Oakwood CRC in Belding, MI. My father was the undersheriff of Montcalm County and my mom taught nursing at Grand Rapids Community College.

Burden

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More than a business degree

The business leadership program at Kuyper College could easily be mistaken for one of thousands of programs offered by colleges and universities throughout the United States. However, at Kuyper, the term "business leadership" recognizes that leadership within organizations goes beyond traditional management or business administration. It is not just marketing, finance, accounting or international business—it is much broader, and at Kuyper, it has distinctive features such as competency-based learning, business as Christian ministry, social-enterprise, effective stewardship and Christ-modeled leadership.

Students in this program will be challenged to develop a biblical and Reformed worldview that informs effective business practices in a variety of business and cultural settings—intentionally merging and contextualizing both elements into something significantly different than either alone. The program teaches students how to integrate business into the life of the

civic community and to be good stewards of what God has entrusted to them while encouraging them to view business as a Christian calling and to appreciate the moral character of the entrepreneur's efforts.

Students will also benefit from this competency-based program because they will be able not only to show what they know, but more importantly, what they can do. In communication, ethical and theological soundness, leadership acumen, financial management, strategic thinking, organizational awareness, intercultural knowledge and many other areas, competencies are measured across all four years of the program. Culminating experiences during the students' sophomore year through a competency exhibition and at the end of their senior year via a portfolio review plus business internship opportunities, make the Kuyper business leadership program unique.

For more information on the business leadership program go to our website at kuyper.edu/businessleadership.



Golf—a banner year

In August, the 22nd annual Kuyper International Golf Scramble hosted 128 golfers at the Sunnybrook Country Club. Over \$88,000 was raised toward the Ambassador Scholarship, awarded to international students. Scholarship recipients represent countries such as Nigeria, El Salvador, South Korea, the Dominican Republic and the Philippines. Over the past five years, this event has raised more than \$350,000. This year, the much coveted Presidential Putter was won by Ken VandeGriend with a putt of 36 feet, seven inches. It was a wonderful day of fun to help support spreading God's Word to the farthest corners of the globe.

Kuyper College equips students with a biblical, Reformed worldview to serve effectively Christ's church and His world.



Letter from the president

“New Beginnings” was a capital campaign conducted by the College from 1988 to 1991 as we had the opportunity (once again) to move our campus to a new and better location. Many of you who are reading this newsletter today were contributors to that cause 25 years ago. Your part in New

Beginnings is now “Recent History” as you gave us a legacy upon which we’ve built to help Kuyper be ever-more effective in carrying out our mission.

The start of this school year also marks a new beginning—one which we experience corporately and individually. Friends in other professions tell me how fortunate we are to have new beginning opportunities that characterize the academic calendar. I agree with them; this is a blessing—though beginning anew also entails a lot of extra work and effort.

You will note in this issue of the Kuyper News that many of the articles reflect the author’s sense of having a fresh opportunity and a fresh start. They are stories that reflect lives that have been turned around, relationships formed, purpose discovered and the amazing blessing experienced when a person is given the opportunity to respond to God’s call...and does so.

We at Kuyper are both humbled and excited to be part of such new beginnings. We may appreciate the technical and psychological aspects of beginning our annual new school year, but we are most profoundly touched in recognizing how God uses us to come alongside each student as he and she experience something new in their lives, one of eternal significance. We also appreciate the reality of the multiplying effect our work has as each alumnus goes out in the power of the Spirit in witness to and expression of the new beginnings we are all offered through Christ Jesus.

So, as we begin this school year with new students, new staff, new faculty, new programs and new opportunities, please keep us in your prayers. As “new” comes together with the wisdom and experience of people and things already here, pray that we may find these to complement each other in creating an atmosphere of refreshing excitement and dedicated effort to serve well Christ’s church and His world. And, as always, thank you for your personal care and support in helping us achieve this mission with ever-growing effectiveness and impact. Happy New Year!

Dr. Nicholas V. Kroeze
President

Two new head coaches at Kuyper

Kuyper’s men’s soccer and women’s basketball teams will enter the coming season under the leadership of two new head coaches.

The women’s basketball team will be welcoming a familiar face as Derrick Owens, former assistant coach to Kuyper’s men’s basketball team, becomes their new head coach.



Derrick Owens

“We have a great group of players, and we expect great things from them this year,” said Owens. Before coming to Kuyper, Owens was an assistant coach at Jackson Community College in Jackson, Michigan. He

played for four years at Siena Heights University, from which he received a bachelor’s degree in business administration. According to Owens, his main goal is to inspire the members of the team to be achievers in both their athletic and academic careers. “The biggest impact I want to make is off the court, where my players will earn their degrees and become successful in whatever they want to accomplish,” he said.

While Owens is familiar to the Kuyper community, the soccer team head coach is truly a new member of the College family. Kern Matthews was born in Trinidad and Tobago, West Indies.



Kern Matthews

He later moved to the United States and attended Cornerstone University in 1996. He graduated with a bachelor’s degree in business marketing. At Cornerstone, he was a team captain, four time All-Conference player, All-Regional player, and earned an All-American honorable mention. After

college, Matthews played semi-professionally for the Grand Rapids Explosion, West Michigan Edge, and three seasons for the Hispanic League. He has also been a counselor and lead instructor for soccer camps hosted by the University of Notre Dame and Cornerstone University. Matthews’ goal for the team is simple, but noteworthy: “I desire to guide this team to exemplify what it means to be a Christian athlete. Like Kuyper, I believe that God comes first, then everything else,” he said.



In My Words: Renewed Hope

Teresa Janzen—Senior Development Representative/Annual Fund Coordinator

I was discouraged with the world around me before I came to work at Kuyper. Watching the evening news it seemed there was no shortage of evil and no standard for truth in modern culture. But after seven years of serving this

institution, Kuyper students have helped me see that there is a remnant dedicated to putting Christ first and serving others with the gifts and talents God's given them.

I am blessed to serve in a unique role in the Advancement Office. While some may think of fund development as challenging, or even a little scary, I see it as a calling and a thrilling way to serve Christ's kingdom. I get to tell people about the exciting things happening on campus and encourage them to be a part of it through their giving. I visit with our supporters who help fuel the work of the College, and I get to interact with the students who are using the opportunity to study at Kuyper to prepare themselves for what God has in store for them.

One of the best parts of my job is managing our Phonathon campaign—it's one of the few opportunities students and donors have to connect with one another directly. Students will often talk to an alumnus, a parent or a friend of the College

who has a story to share. They'll inevitably be so interested in what they heard that they'll come to my office to tell me about it. Sometimes a student reaches someone at a difficult time, and I've heard students stop and pray with the person over the phone. I really enjoy the camaraderie that develops during a Phonathon as students see that the Kuyper community is much larger than students, staff and faculty; it includes thousands of others around the world who support them with prayers and their gifts.

As I watch students learn and grow through their experiences at Kuyper, I know that they are going to go into the world with a strong faith, a healthy perspective on their part in the kingdom, and the energy and passion to bring God's grace into whatever venue they serve. I never tire of telling others about Kuyper students and how they've renewed my hope for the future. Through my work in the Advancement Office and in partnership with our students, I can invest in transforming communities around the world. It's the ultimate in multiplication; and that gets me excited.

"In My Words" is a feature of The Kuyper College News highlighting first-person stories by Kuyper College faculty and staff.

Stewardship: Extending Grace

At Kuyper College we strive to live by and exemplify our purpose statement, "Bringing God's Grace into Today's Culture." We endeavor to extend God's grace to everyone we meet, everyone we work with, and everyone we serve. And while all of us on staff, with God's help, do our best to serve each other and our students on a daily basis, there is another large group of the Kuyper community which also extends that grace on a daily basis—the many whose gifts to Kuyper benefit the staff and faculty and most importantly, our students.

Intellectual & Spiritual Impact

As a result of their selfless giving, members of this community extend grace to every one of our students—by helping them to attend Kuyper. Here, students receive an integrated education built upon a solid academic core curriculum and the foundation of biblical and Reformed theology course work. From daily classroom experiences to voluntary chapel, and from the athletic fields to life in the residence halls, Kuyper's giving community is helping to train

our students to use the lens of biblical faith to:

- Take responsibility for who they are
- Accept where God has placed them
- Use the skills He's given them
- Make a godly impact on those around them

Students receive an educational training which completely embraces faith and brings it into all aspects of their student experience—reinforcing Christ's lordship over all things, affirming that all people are made in the image of God, and equipping them to respond to the call to serve all peoples and cultures, making an impact in the world after they graduate.

More than 98 percent of Kuyper students receive financial aid and scholarships—this could never happen except for God's grace, given by Him through the many who then extend it to Kuyper students by their gifts.

For information on how to more effectively support the mission of Kuyper College, contact Ken Capisciolto at 616-988-3676 or at keapisciolto@kuyper.edu.

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

Burden

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During my early high school years, my youth pastor at Oakwood CRC, an RBC graduate, was a huge influence in my life. I was a passionate Christian early on in high school. When I was 15, I took a job at a restaurant, and I remember doing devotions and reading the Bible during my breaks. I would talk to my co-workers frequently about Jesus. However, during my senior year I fell away completely from my faith, and I went off to college wanting nothing to do with Christianity.

I enrolled in a secular college. I wanted to party. During my sophomore year, my life pretty much bottomed out, and I realized that I wasn't living for anything at all. One night, I found myself praying for the first time in years and remembered my youth pastor and the school he graduated from, so I went to Kuyper's faculty page and emailed Brian Telzerow. I'm not sure why, but

When I came to Kuyper I found professors who were passionate about the Bible and passionate about connecting with students. I remember when Dan Kroeze taught us about covenants in *Old Testament Survey*. I remember when Telzerow shared the verse that defined his ministry: "Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well" (1 Thessalonians 2:8). That became the verse that defines my ministry to this day. I remember Jessica Maddox crying over the power of the Holy Spirit. I remember Doug Felch drinking a Coke while sitting on the edge of his desk when he wanted to make theology personal. I found a community that was pursuing deep questions: What does it mean to seek God's kingdom first? What does it mean to really follow Jesus? What is the church? What can it become? We spent many late nights sharing our hearts and our lives. My experience at Kuyper has shaped my ministry more than any other thing that I have done...

way beyond my experience at seminary. Kuyper brings clarity to ministry. It is about God's Word and relationships. Love God and love people—pretty simple. Another gift the Lord gave me through Kuyper is my wife, Jillian. We met there and married after she graduated.

Jillian's Story

I grew up in a Christian home with my parents and two younger siblings. When I was 5 years old, I began to have severe back and hip pain. I underwent two bone biopsies to test for bone cancer. In the spirit of Hannah (1 Samuel 1:11), my mom prayed to the LORD asking Him to spare me from cancer and promising she would do everything in her power to raise me to serve Him. By His grace, I was diagnosed with a treatable bone infection. My mom stood by her promise to the LORD and, together with my dad, raised me to love and serve the LORD.



John preaching at Watershed

I shared with him my whole journey, and that although I didn't know where I was going anymore, I did know God was pulling on my heart. When I sent the email I thought it was a huge mistake. He replied to that email the next morning and invited me to visit Kuyper. So I did. When I arrived I had no idea what I was doing there, but by the end of the day I knew I was going to transfer to Kuyper and become a pastor. It was crazy. It was an awakening. I believe God set a fire in my soul that night when I wrote the email. I have never been the same.



John as a pirate in Watershed's summer VBS

It wasn't until I began attending college that my mom told me about the prayer she'd prayed so many years before.

My teenage years were typical and fairly uneventful. I had good friends, grew steadily in the faith, and completed my high school studies. The one area of my life where I felt like I stood out from the crowd was in English class, specifically writing. I received positive affirmation from my teachers whenever I wrote and began to understand that God had given me a unique love for the written word. I was in seventh grade when I truly began to understand what it meant to make the Christian faith that already saturated my life my own. A friend of mine attended a youth conference and came back with a passion for the faith that I never before had seen. I hungered to discover that same passion, and one year later when I attended the same conference, I did! I began to read the Scriptures, to ask questions, and to seek answers from various pastors, youth leaders and Christian books. As I entered the teenage years a new desire began to grow in me: a hunger to use my life in some meaningful way, to make Christ known.

Why? In her poem "The Summer Day," Mary Oliver asks a question that resounds in my mind: "Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?" I knew the answer to that question in a general way: I wanted to make Christ known! How exactly God was calling me

“I remember when Telzerow shared the verse that defined his ministry: ‘Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well’ (1 Thessalonians 2:8). That became the verse that defines my ministry to this day.”

— John Burden, Class of 2007

to do that, I wasn’t sure. However, I knew that I wanted to attend a Christian college to find the answer. When I chose Kuyper I did not have a profound experience; it was more of a quiet assurance. I had visited a few other colleges on my list of possibilities, and none seemed to fit. When I visited Kuyper, I appreciated their ministry focus.

The two most important things I found at Kuyper were two people: my future husband and an incredible mentor and friend. I met my husband, John, right away; we dated throughout my time at Kuyper and married after my graduation. In addition to falling in love with him, I saw in him a partner in life and in ministry. I also met Professor Jessica Maddox. She took me under her wing and helped me see myself in a new light. She taught me that I was capable. Her mentorship awakened a confidence in me I had not previously claimed. One of the most important things she taught me was that just because I never had seen something done before, this didn’t mean I couldn’t be the first. She taught me not to be afraid of uncharted territories, but to trust in the LORD’s provision for each step of every new journey.

Kuyper gave me an excellent education through professors who were bold followers of Christ. They were people I wanted to be like! They didn’t just care about my mind; they cared about my heart. I was one to stress over my grades and seek perfection, but they taught me that it was more important to be a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ than a perfect student. Perhaps more important, Kuyper gave me eyes to see how I could use my particular gifts for ministry. Where I previously thought of “ministry” as something done by pastors and missionaries, I now see “ministry” as both

the responsibility and joy of every person who calls Jesus “LORD.” I left Kuyper knowing what my specific gifts were, and I was hungry to put them to use!

John and Jillian’s Story

John: Today, Jillian and I are the proud parents of our adopted son—Artem (Arie). I am the teaching pastor of Watershed in Holland, Michigan. It is a church plant on the same campus as Harderwyk Ministries CRC. The church began 15 years ago for the purpose of reaching the unchurched in Holland. It is casual. We meet in the gym of the youth building of Harderwyk Ministries. Watershed used to meet around tables, but as it grew we brought in more chairs. There are still several tables in the front. We have no stage because we believe that all Christians should be on the same level. We are passionate about following Jesus, and we strive to be authentic as we challenge people to take the next step in their spiritual journeys. Over the years Watershed has grown and has more than 600 people attend our two services. As part of Harderwyk Ministries, we are passionate about missions, and we send short-term mission teams to Honduras, the Dominican Republic, Rehoboth, NM, and Roseland (Chicago) every year. We are also passionate about local missions; we have a community development agency which is part of our ministry that services the Holland area. I love the challenge of reaching people who have given up on church. We believe God has called us to

reach the lakeshore, so we wake up every day doing that. In addition, Jillian and I are on the orphan care team of Harderwyk Ministries, which has done some great things in our congregation. We are now training other churches in Holland as they begin orphan care ministries. As we look ahead we believe God is calling us to bring our orphan care ministry beyond Watershed and Harderwyk to Holland as a whole. I am currently on a Holland orphan care team made up of people from five different churches in Holland!

Jillian: When John and I were in the process of adopting our son I started writing a blog which grew to include our subsequent infertility journey. Both experiences come with lots of doubt, frustration, fear and grief, as well as God’s amazing provision, unspeakable joy, and deep sense of presence. As I write about these topics in “Adding a Burden” (www.addingaburden.com), I do not write from a place of experience or as any kind of spiritual leader; rather I write from a place of honesty and vulnerability



Jillian and Arie in Moscow before she and John brought him home

about my life and faith as it happens. I share both joys and hardships and how my faith works itself out in each. Somehow God has used my brokenness to minister to other women and families experiencing infertility, loss or other hardship. I believe God has called me to bring these somewhat taboo subjects out of the darkness and into the light in

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New faculty & staff members

This fall the Kuyper community welcomes two new members to their academic team—Marc Andreas and Kyle Wigboldy.

Andreas is the new professor and director of the business leadership



Marc Andreas

program. In his position he will be responsible for developing, overseeing and evaluating the program to ensure it is forward thinking in the latest business trends and

innovations while maintaining the core biblical principles of a Reformed worldview and the uniqueness of a competency-based program. In addition, he will teach, mentor program students, and oversee the work of adjunct professors in the program while designing, implementing and supervising a business leadership student internship program. Prior to joining Kuyper, Andreas held various executive positions with companies such as Pella Corporation, NetValue Sports

and Bethany Christian Services, where he served as vice president of marketing & communications. He was also an adjunct professor of business at Cornerstone University.

Andreas said that he loves incorporating Christian values and ethics in the business world and views it as his way of following the Great Commission. “After 20 years of successful business experience, I’ve reached a season of life where I’m ready to give back and share from the wealth of experience I have gained in corporate America, non-profits and starting a business,” he added. Andreas holds both B.A. and M.B.A. degrees from the University of Iowa.

Wigboldy has assumed the position of registrar. Among his various duties, he is responsible for the development and publishing of the academic calendar, course offerings, course schedules, and the direction of the registration processes in collaboration



Kyle Wigboldy

with the provost and the faculty. His office oversees the preparation of enrollment verification, academic transcripts, the creation and evaluation of degree audits, and the certification of graduates. In addition, he evaluates and determines transfer credit, equivalencies, and articulation policies, while managing and coordinating consortium and collaborative programs. As chair of the Assessment Committee, he will provide leadership in establishing and managing student learning outcomes and program assessments. Prior to coming to Kuyper, he served as assistant director of financial aid at Trinity Christian College in Chicago, Illinois.

According to Wigboldy, his objective at Kuyper is to help students develop and grow in a college environment. “I believe there is a lot to be learned, not just in the classroom, but outside the classroom on how we interact with one another, how we learn about the world and about one another, and how we build community,” he said. Wigboldy holds a B.A. in English & Philosophy from Calvin College and a M.Ed. in Higher Education from Loyola University.

Burden

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order that His faithfulness and healing love may be made known.

With respect to John’s calling as a pastor and my related call as a pastor’s spouse, writing my blog has been a unique experience in that it has meant that I live my life with great openness and vulnerability before our congregation. Sometimes I hear pastors’ spouses talk about the pressure of being “put on a pedestal,” but because I share so intimately about both my faith and my doubt on my blog, I don’t have to worry about being on a pedestal. Everyone already knows I’m just standing on the ground like the rest of them! Incredibly, I’ve been nothing but blessed because of this. In our ministry at our churches, John and I have enjoyed close friendships, grown in our faith, made mistakes, been forgiven, loved and been loved, prayed and been prayed over, and learned what it means to be in Christian community. We’ve learned that having a good ministry doesn’t mean our faith has to look perfect from the outside. Instead, having a good ministry means sharing what faith looks like in good times and in bad and trusting that God will work it all out to accomplish His purposes. We are all standing on the same ground; for us, being in ministry hasn’t meant getting up on a pedestal. It meant turning to our brothers and sisters and reminding one another to take off our shoes because that ground we’re standing on is holy.

Bradshaw

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Kuyper has given me not only the inspiration and the tools, but also the confidence to grow and live my faith, and to share it with others along the way. Furthermore, Kuyper has helped me to find the direction that I want to go in life.

In the future, Erin and I look forward to my attending seminary and receiving a master’s degree in theology. After graduation, we plan to go into the mission field. We are prayerfully considering where the Lord desires us to go—but we know our two passions are Bible translation for me and midwifery for Erin. We have hoped and prayed that when the time comes, the Lord will show us a path that will allow us to pursue both of these passions and will enable us to best serve His world, where He sees fit, with the skills we have both acquired during our time here at Kuyper College.

Class Notes

Marriages:

Sam Cambell and **Elizabeth Cain** (2011) were married on November 23, 2013.

Vladimir Hernández and **Sara Keegstra** (2008) were married on August 3, 2014.

Josh Rumbarger (2012) and **Sara Hoogeboom** (2013) were married on August 16, 2014.

Births:

Jeffrey Kroondyk (2008) and his wife, Katy, welcomed baby LillyAnn Ruth on February 13, 2014.

David (2011) and **Rachael (Lefeber) Zigterman** (2010) welcomed baby Evelyn Bonnie on May 30, 2014.

Alex (2005) and **Allison (Denk) Brito** (2005), along with big brother Abel, welcomed baby Aurelia Pamela Joy on June 1, 2014.

Ethan Ezikian (2011) and his wife, Dana, welcomed baby Ellis Marisia on July 3, 2014.

Luke (2008) and **Lia (Goedegebuure) Youngs** (2008) along with big brother Isaiah, welcomed baby Julian George on July 14, 2014.

Daniel and **Danielle (Westmaas) Hoekstra** (2011), welcomed baby Josiah Gerald on July 31, 2014.

Professional Developments:

The following Kuyper College graduates have been approved by the Christian Reformed Church Synod 2014 as candidates for Ministry of the Word: **Kyle Sanford**, class of 2004; **Richard Boomsma** and **Jeremy Kreuze**, class of 2005; and **Brady Mulder**, class of 2011.

Ryan Arentsen (2009) is the new director of youth ministries at First Reformed Church in Sibley, Iowa.

Sympathy:

The Kuyper College family extends our sympathy to Scott and **Alicia (Touhy) DeBois** (2012) as their son, Aiden Solomon DuBois, was born into the arms of Jesus on June 10, 2014.

Events

Annual Scholarship Dinner

Monday, October 20, at 6:00 p.m. in the Walters Dining Hall

Career Services Presents Fall Seminary Fair

Wednesday, October 29, from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. in the Second Floor Atrium

Social Work Program Presents MSW Fair

Wednesday, November 5, from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. in the First Floor Atrium

Thanksgiving Break

Thursday, November 27 – Friday, November 28

December Graduate Recognition

Monday, December 1, at 10:10 a.m. in the Vos Chapel

Fall Recital

Monday, December 1, at 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. in the Vos Chapel and Tuesday, December 2, at 7:00 p.m. in the Vos Chapel

Men's Soccer

Find roster and schedule at www.kuyper.edu/mens_soccer

Women's Volleyball

Find roster and schedule at www.kuyper.edu/womens_volleyball

Men's and Women's Cross Country

Find roster and schedule at www.kuyper.edu/crosscountry

Kuyper Experience Days

Schedule can be found at www.kuyper.edu/visit

Chapel

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 10:10 a.m. in the Vos Chapel

News

- Dr. Judi Ravenhorst Meerman, professor of social work, together with Dr. Mackenzi Huyser, professor and academic dean at Trinity Christian College, co-authored two articles—*Resident Perceptions of Redevelopment and Gentrification in the Heartside Neighborhood: Lessons for the Social Work Profession and Organizational Strategy in a Gentrifying Neighborhood*. They are respectively scheduled for publication in the Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare and the Human Service Organization's Management, Leadership & Governance Journal.

Address service requested



Students to Watch

Douglas Bradshaw

Grand Rapids, MI

Class of 2015

Major: Pre-Seminary Studies

I grew up in a non-church-going family. Because we didn't go to church, we were not a very spiritually involved family. I was the middle child with an older brother and a younger sister. While a teenager, I found interests in comic books and running. I started long distance running at the age of 13 and continued until I was in my 20s. For the most part I enjoyed a small group of friends. However, while in high school, my friends and I started making poor choices that resulted in me developing unhealthy addictions.

I became a Christian in April of 2009 (on my 22nd birthday) with the help and prayers of five of my friends with whom I had started drinking with in high school—in the intervening years, they had given their lives to Christ and had been praying as a group for me. I had not done so, until that night. Over the next several months I learned that this one-time decision would not change my life; that would only happen through ongoing effort and dedication, as well as a consistent, intentional pursuit of Christ. In the matter of only a few weeks, I sought treatment for my addictions and began the long, slow process of changing my lifestyle. I started to attend church regularly; seeking wisdom from older, wiser Christians; and started the process of healing from my addictions. While I can still say that at the end of a long day, I think of having a drink, I can also say that those first months taught me when those times come, it's best to seek good friends and confide in them. While following that advice, I met a young woman named Erin VandenHoek. I knew early on that I really liked her, but had little to no idea how much she would change my life. I spent three years being friends with

Erin before we began dating and eventually became engaged and married.

God chose for my friendship with Erin to start shortly before she graduated from Kuyper in 2010. That prompted me to begin thinking of attending college. So, in the fall of 2012, having worked for two years to save money, I began attending Kuyper. Why Kuyper? Because I knew that if I was going to be successful in my college experience and if I was going to grow in the ways that I needed to grow as a Christian, I would need to be at a Christian school. And not any Christian school, but one that would provide opportunities to form close relationships with wiser Christians who had gone before me, namely professors and staff. Everything I heard of and saw at Kuyper told me that this was the place that could make that happen.

While at Kuyper, I've found that not only am I being motivated and encouraged, but also equipped to make informed and healthy decisions that are molding me into a stronger, smarter, more capable person, as well as a more dedicated Christian.

Here, professors such as Lisa Hoogeboom, an amazing professor and a caring mother figure who doesn't want us to ever give up, have helped to shape me into someone that I could have never imagined I could become. It is the same with Dr. Felch, who finds new and creative ways to illustrate his teachings and connect on a level students can relate to. Then there is Dr. Kroeze, who did the premarital counseling with Erin and me and then presided over our wedding and who, to this day, finds time to ask me how our marriage is going and how we are doing. These and many other professors have changed me forever and filled me with love, knowledge and a passion to serve others in the same way they do.

Bradshaw

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