

guest column

by Chad Dull, vice president of academic affairs, MSC Southeast

The Power of One

At Minnesota State College Southeast (MSC Southeast), we talk a lot about our culture of caring. It is a way of saying we know the power of a personal connection, and we strive to make those connections with our students so they can be who they want to be in the world. The thing about a culture of caring is it cannot be housed in an office or in a position, it has to be part of who you are. We believe that any person, on any day, can be the difference between a student making it or giving up.

Most of us can name one of those pivotal people or moments in our lives. I would like to tell you a story about one of mine.

It has been over 20 years, but I can access the memory instantly. It was the spring term of what had been a successful return to college — after a couple less successful tries — but I was in a difficult spot. I was simply out of money, and I didn't know what to do. I couldn't add more hours to my work schedule, but I also needed to pay my rent, never mind pay for textbooks. It was embarrassing. I felt like I should have been able to make it through, but maybe the college dream was over. It was my own fault, I thought, because I had not made it work the first time.

If you have ever felt really hopeless, you know where I was that day. But I went to the place on campus I was always scared to go, the financial aid office. Financial aid wasn't scary by definition, but my road had been rocky, and my history with student loans was not always positive, so it was not a place that came to mind when I thought of getting help. However, I didn't know what else to do, so I walked in and asked if I could see somebody.

I waited in the lobby for a few minutes, and then a gentleman invited me into his office. His name was Greg. He sat across his desk from me and asked what he could help with, so I told him

I was out of money and didn't know what to do. I will never forget his demeanor that day. I was waiting for him to ask me how I had let myself get into this predicament, how I could be 28 years old and still not through college, but Greg didn't go there at all. He just started listing possibilities for help. He was supportive, non-judgmental, helpful, and he found some loans I was not aware of to get me through to my degree.

I literally never saw him again, but he changed the entire course of my life. Graduating allowed me to become an educator, which led to working in higher education, which led to my current job as vice president at MSC Southeast. Maybe he was "just doing his job," but this one person treating me the way he did on that one day, changed the entire arc of my life.

There is power in the relatively small actions of one person. It is a lesson I try to bring to my work at MSC Southeast every day. Who has been that one person for you? Who have you been that one person for? When you think about where to go to college, where to pursue your dreams of the life you want, I want you to know we take our role in that very seriously.

At MSC Southeast, we know that we cannot be sure which interaction on which day might be the one you need to keep going. That is why we strive every day to make sure we can be the one place, or the one person, that makes a difference for our students, their families, and our communities. We all have our reasons, but for me it is a way to pay forward the kindness of people like Greg.



letters

Hurray for Hurry Back Productions

From: Dallas D. Cada
Winona

My wife and I had the pleasure of seeing a great concert on a Saturday night earlier this month at the Lake Park Bandshell. Hurry Back Productions brought in a premier, top-notch band.

Chase & Ovation celebrates the music of Prince. If you missed this concert, you missed Tommy Chase portraying and playing Prince's music. It is well known that the artist known as Prince did not like any one impersonating him. But when he seen Tommy, he knew that Tommy wasn't impersonating him, he was celebrating his music. Chase & Ovation has been representing the music of Prince for the last 15 years. They are often joined on stage by some of the former members of Prince, as they respect Tommy's representation. Brown Mark the former bassist for Prince has been a long-time member of the band.

The other musicians that joined Chase are also highly regarded. One of my fav's was Brian Snowman Powers on the saxophone. We also got treated by some music of "The Time" and "Sheila E."

I can't thank the team of Hurry Back Productions enough for bringing us some top talent to Winona. Keep them coming. If you want more information of upcoming events visit www.hurryback.org. You can also visit www.eventbrite.com for nearby concerts and events.

letters

Quality elder care should be a top priority in the U.S.

From: Jenny Kuderer
Goodview

In our nation, it is clear that a significant slice of our consumerist culture is deeply entrenched in youth-obsessed, age-denying advertising. This advertising offers the promise that products will be able to erase any sign of having lived beyond early middle-age. Within this consumerist cultural lens, youth is prized above the wisdom and resilience that often come with living beyond early middle-age — that kind of living that furrows the brow and frames the eyes with hard-won lines. While there is no question that vitality is to be celebrated, vitality and age are not mutually exclusive qualities. However, the youth-obsessed consumerist culture, I'm afraid, extends far beyond billboards and glossy magazines. It extends to how we have shaped

the acceptable models for elder care in our nation with an approach skewed toward an institutionalized model that makes aging and our elders less visible. No doubt, there are many wonderful facilities where those in advanced years are treated with dignity, respect, and kindness. However, within this dominant model of institutionalized care, there are far too many occurrences of neglect and substandard care, as well as a lack of vigilant and effective oversight to address such occurrences as soon as they are reported.

While our nation is rich in monetary resources, we do not always allocate such resources toward ensuring the well-being of those who should be revered, respected, and protected — our elder population. What if our nation committed itself to providing all its elders the resources to age with dignity and grace via a new cultural lens that values the experience and growth that so often accompanies advancing years? What if we could reimagine other models of elder care that are community-centric with regular opportunities for seamless inter-generational relating? What if we as a

society tapped into the collective wisdom and counsel from all those elders willing to share lessons learned through rich and challenging decades of their lived experience? What if we committed to meeting the medical needs of our elders with resolute competence and unwavering compassion?

We ought not settle for a model of elder care where too many institutions are understaffed places where we would never wish to live ourselves, though we send our loved ones there due to financial pressures and lack of other viable 24/7 caregiving options. We need to continually reimagine the possibilities for superb elder care models and prioritize needs to bring such models to life. Our moral wealth as a nation would increase substantially if we would commit to earmarking a greater fraction of our monetary wealth to create more models of well-resourced care that profoundly value our elders in ways that allow for greater dignity, grace, and interconnectedness to extend into the sunset years.

What faith can condone

From: John Rupkey
Winona

From the 19th century until the 1970s, thousands of Indigenous children in Canada were taken from their parents and placed in Christian residential schools, nearly three-fourths of which were Catholic. Christian indoctrinators, firmly believing they were doing God's will, attempted to make them act more like Canadians and convert them into Christians.

Hundreds of bodies of those children are now being found in unmarked graves.

Now civil and religious authorities are trying to understand how this could possibly have happened. They are calling for investigations, apologies, and reconciliation.

But nobody is calling for a reconsideration of the essence of the problem that allowed this to happen, which is the traditional Christian moral theology. Traditional Christians are not allowed to reconsider their moral theology, because they must believe it comes directly from God through the Pope and/or the Bible. When it comes to moral issues, traditional Christians are required to believe that they can never be wrong.

Down through the centuries, Christians have done immeasurable good. But sometimes their arrogant moral theology that requires them to believe that they are always

right has enabled them to be blind to their behavior we now consider to be immoral.

Civil authorities no longer allow Christians to torture and murder heretics, promote slavery, or abuse Indigenous children. But the self-righteous theology that enabled those atrocities to happen remains untouched.

The immoral practices that this untouchable moral theology enables traditional Christians to blindly engage in today will be revealed in the future. This will happen when lay people with an enlightened understanding will make Christian leaders stop engaging in those behaviors, and it will become just another chapter in the history of the immoral aspects of Christianity.

Online learning

continued from page 1a

in place before approval. The district does not yet have a sense of when it might hear about the turnaround time on the application from MDE, Superintendent Annette Freiheit said.

Initially, WAPS teachers won't be involved with the district's online learning. Winter said the district's plan for providing online learning includes using the teachers and curriculum from an existing online learning service, Edgenuity, for one year. In the following year, the district would hope to use Edgenuity's curriculum but have WAPS teachers give the lessons on it. In the third year, WAPS would have a goal of implementing its own curriculum with its own teachers.

Currently, schools statewide plan on

in-person learning for the fall. The state legislature did not agree to allow schools to provide distance learning in the 2021-2022 school year without an official green light from MDE.

The submission also followed some slight pressure from several School Board members. School Board Chair Nancy Denzer voiced concerns at the June 17 board meeting about the application not yet being submitted, as some other area schools are now approved online learning providers. Several of those schools are based in Albert Lea, Wabasha, Houston and Owatonna, Minn., according to MDE. She and School Board member Karl Sonneman also said they would have liked the district to have online learning in place for the fall semester, with Denzer noting that she felt the district would lose students without providing online learning. District administrators had initially told the board in March of this year that they would like

to submit an application, with an apparent goal of being an online learning provider by this fall.

Sonneman asked at the School Board's July meeting what the district's plan would be for students who want to be in distance learning in the upcoming school year, if it has not received approval from MDE at that time, and whether WAPS had something to offer those students. "No, because we cannot offer distance learning," Freiheit said. "That wasn't approved through the legislature."

Sonneman encouraged the district to look for another plan and said one idea was collaborating with other Big 9 schools to assure that they don't retain any WAPS students that enroll in their online programming. "I just feel if we let it go, we're going to lose people," Sonneman said.

Education@winonapost.com

winona's twice-weekly newspaper since 1971

winonapost

email: winpost@winonapost.com | [winonapost.com](https://www.winonapost.com)

507.452.1262 800.353.2126
fax: 507.454.6409
P.O. Box 27, 64 E. 2nd St.
Winona, MN 55987

www.cvcaudit.com

Publisher: Patrick Marek
Editor: Chris Rogers
Finance/Operations Director: Dana Cierzan
Advertising Director: Patrick Marek
Sales: Kim Farkas, Bob Shattuck, Les Guderian
Inside Sales/Classified: Amanda Sattler

Reporters: Alexandra Retter, Zach Kayser
Columnist/Proofreader: Fran Edstrom
Circulation: Mary Veraguth
Creative Director: Ashley Blum

Composition Editor: Monica Veraguth
Creative Designer: Andy Boysen
Editorial Assistant: Cyndi Wehlage
Pressmen: Jim Bethke, Jesse J. Brandes
Mailroom: John Payne

Winona First, Winona Proud, winonapost

www.winonapost.com

SPEAK!

Voice Your Opinion.
Mail your **signed** letters to the editor to:
P.O. Box 27, Winona, MN 55987 or
e-mail winpost@winonapost.com

winonapost