









Dear friends of Calvin Seminary,

I recently finished reading Janesville: An American Story by Amy Goldstein. This book takes the reader on a five year journey in telling the story of what happened when the nation's oldest operating General Motors assembly plant shut down in the midst of the Great Recession. I have been to Janesville, Wisconsin. I officiated at a wedding in Janesville. (The couple is still married!)

At the peak of GM employment, there were 7,000 GM jobs at the Janesville plant and the city had a population of 46,000. GM had an impact on Janesville. The closing of the plant had repercussions that resonated through related industries, school systems and families. The closing of the plant had a negative and sometimes devastating impact.

When we share this "Impact Report," I invite you to think about the positive resonate impact that Calvin Theological Seminary has on students, ministries and churches throughout the world and across the street.

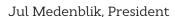
In a world of brokenness, we share a gospel message of healing. In a world of division, we share how unity and identity can be found in Jesus Christ. In a world of diminishing hope, we share a confidence that is founded on the sovereignty and providence of God.

I am sometimes asked what helps me have hope about the future of the church and Christianity. Obviously, my hope is founded on the Triune God. It is also supported and shaped by the privilege of being President of Calvin Seminary. Through the stories of students and graduates, I see that God is at work through us. We are not the perfect Seminary. I am not the perfect Seminary President. At the same time, I invite you to join me in seeing how God has been at work through Calvin Theological Seminary.

Thank you for praying for, supporting and encouraging the work of God! This Impact Report is one way we say THANK YOU. It's truly because of your investment in the impact of Calvin Seminary that we can tell these stories and show the pictures of 2017.

Serving with you,





Writing Workshop Encourages Quality and Collaboration

A group of faculty members participated in a four-day writing workshop in July 2017, led by Professor Ronald Feenstra, professor of systematic theology. The workshop which was funded by the Faculty Heritage Fund had 11 faculty participants. Each participant was encouraged to read "How to Write a Lot: A Practical Guide to Productive Academic Writing, by Paul J. Silvia, and "Writing as a Spiritual Discipline," by Stephanie Paulsell.

The goals of the Faculty Writing Workshop were to encourage faculty members to engage in writing that serves the church and the academy and to encourage a spirit of collaboration and mutual support among faculty around their writing projects. The Faculty Writing Workshop was designed to encourage faculty scholarship and writing as well as a faculty spirit of collaboration and mutual support.

During the workshop, each participant provided a brief (2-3 minute) oral summary of their project, noting the question they are investigating, the challenges they are facing, and the progress they hope to make during the workshop. These summaries were given and discussed with other participants during the lunches.

The participants expressed the benefits they derived for this workshop including progress they made in their writing projects, the benefits of periods of uninterrupted time to think and write, and the benefit of learning about the work being done by other colleagues.



CEP Website Celebrates Record Audience

Thanks to our generous community, Calvin Seminary's Center for Excellence in Preaching continues to support pastors on a daily basis all around the world. The Center's work can be thought of as a kind of inverted pyramid. Along the long top edge are initiatives that reach thousands of people. As you narrow down through the programming there are initiatives that reach hundreds, scores, and sometimes just one pastor at a time through coaching and mentoring.

Along the broadest edge of that pyramid is the Center's website (cep.calvinseminary.edu). In addition to standing resources like Recommended Books, the Center also posts new sermon ideas every week in both English and Spanish. This is the most visited part of the website every week as pastors look for fresh biblical insights, new angles on old truths, and illustration ideas for the sermon they will preach on the upcoming Sunday. In January of 2018 the Center had a record-setting month of activity on its website as over 19,000 different pastors visited the website a total of just over 30,000 times in one month alone. We don't know who all those pastors are of course but once in a while we hear from them. At the most recent Calvin Symposium on Worship, CEP Director Scott Hoezee ran into a pastor from South Africa who said he visits the website every week. Another pastor from California and still another from Nova Scotia said the same.

Preaching is a high and holy challenge for pastors. The Seminary's Center for Excellence in Preaching is thankful to be a tool the Holy Spirit can use to help pastors meet that challenge in new and vibrant ways every week!



Washington DC Trip Challenges and Teaches

This past semester I had the opportunity to participate in Dr. Gibson's course, *Pastoral Theology* at *The Margins*. The cornerstone of this class was a study tour to Washington, D.C. which took place October 7-10, 2017. After arriving, our first day involved some exploring of the city, but also some reflection as a group for the key days ahead. The next day, Sunday, we spent the entire day at The Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture. Then on Monday we spent the entire day at The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Each evening offered an opportunity to debrief and process our experiences as a group; we sat, shared, listen, reflected, and prayed. Our group departed early on Tuesday morning to make our return trip to Grand Rapids.

The group participating in the trip was comprised of seminary students, staff, faculty, and spouses as well as members of the Grand Rapids community; area pastors and church leaders. It was wonderful and invaluable to have a variety of perspectives and experiences walking through and processing these spaces together. I firmly believe that this class was life changing for me, it opened my eyes and my heart in ways that I could not have anticipated. This experience was heavy and complex, it will be something I'm left reflecting on and processing for awhile, but I firmly believe that it has helped to form and shape my ministry in ways that only a lived experience can.

Written by Bailey Sarver, Master of Theology Student



Seminary Hosts Women in Ministry Book Study

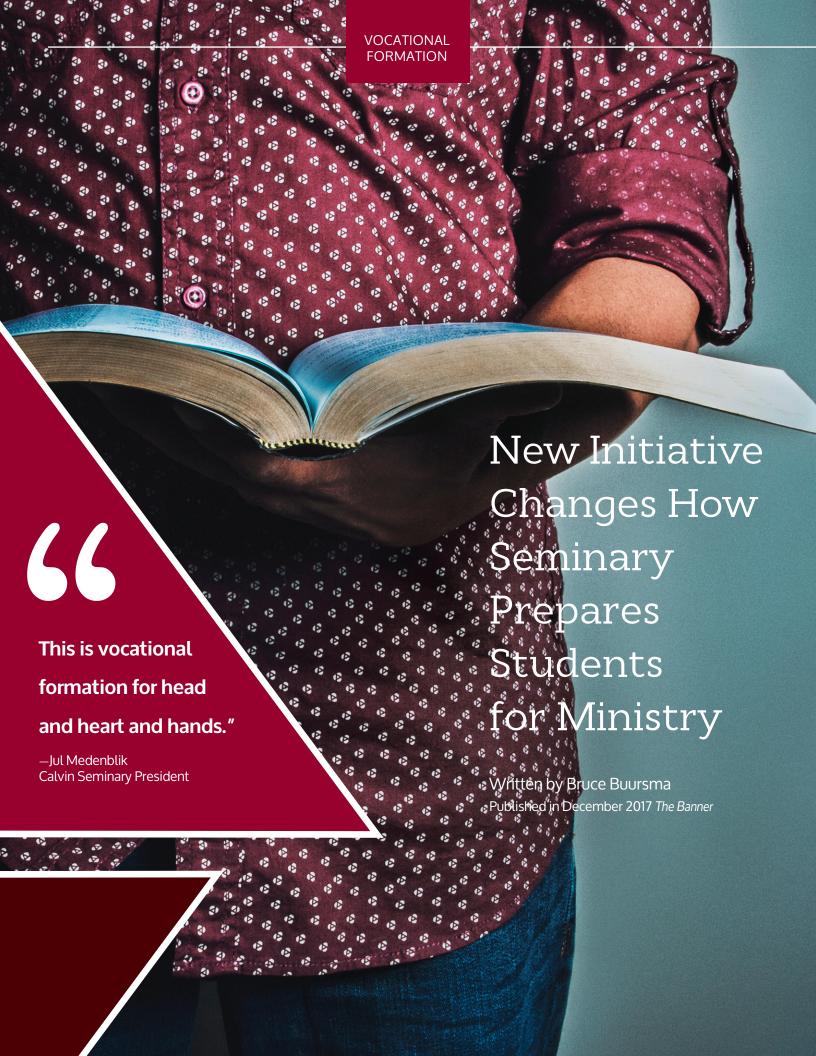
Professors Sarah Schreiber and Amanda Benckhuysen, both Old Testament professors, received Faculty Heritage funds this past year to host a book study on Karoline Lewis' She: Five Keys to Unlock the Power of Women in Ministry. The study was led by Rev. Elizabeth Vander Haagen, a local CRC pastor with over 10 years of experience in ministry, with 10 women students participants.



The strength of the study was that it gave female students an opportunity to identify and name various experiences and challenges they are facing as women pursuing ministry and provided an opportunity to talk through these things with others who have faced similar situations. What emerged out of these conversations was a clearer understanding of the way gender impacts one's experience of pastoral ministry and the sharing of wisdom about how best to navigate these experiences. We also spent time reflecting more deeply on our sense of call as a way to further develop the spiritual and emotional resources required to handle challenging situations with grace. Finally, we celebrated how our gender has shaped us in positive ways and what we as women uniquely bring to our callings. In the end, the feedback from the students was that they would like more of this sort of thing-more opportunities for encouraging each other, sharing stories, and growing as women in leadership."







For churches and clergy alike, forging a mutually satisfying and long-term "fit between congregation and pastor is a matter of considerable art and science, not to mention continuous supplication.

At Calvin Theological Seminary, faculty and administrators are putting sharper focus on preparing students to not only explore and respond to their call to ministry but to seek their particular pathway and passion to serve the local church with gifted leadership even while pursuing their education.

"This is vocational formation for head and heart and hands," said Calvin Seminary President Jul Medenblik. "Having the seminary classroom and the local church in partnership and in dialogue together to prepare the next generation of leaders and pastors will continue a positive trajectory for a more hopeful relationship between pastors and congregations."

Added Geoff Vandermolen, the newly installed Director of Vocational Formation at the seminary: "There is a well-documented, perceived lack of leadership (in the church today). I have a passion to encourage and form emerging leaders. We want to place students at the intersection of academic learning and real-time ministry as a crucible for their formation as leaders. We want our emerging leaders to live at this crossroads with a seasoned, engaged leader to help them so that when they are on their own they are better equipped to be well prepared and successful."

The move toward concurrent, contextual learning means that seminarians will be spending time in the classroom and in real-life ministry settings, benefiting not only from academic learning but also from practical, intensive experiences in congrega-

tional life and other hands-on ministry venues. The new vocational formation program is designed to help seminary students better discern their needs and gifts at the dawn of their education. What's more, throughout their years at Calvin Seminary, all MDiv and M.A. students now will be matched semester after semester with gifted and experienced mentors in the Partner Churches and Ministries—not merely in short-term summer internships as before.

Vandermolen, who came to the seminary posting after 20 years in ministry, primarily as a church planter, is hopeful that fresh approach to vocational and leadership formation will help Calvin Seminary graduates serve more effectively in today's North American culture.

"We have great academic learning happening already, but academic won't always win the day by itself," he said. "Ministry today is too hard to simply lead or preach out of your head alone—you need a well-formed mind, heart and character. With the plurality of religious life right now, it's not enough to only say we have the right answers. We have to lead out of more than knowledge and theological acumen, beautiful and important though they are."

During the inaugural academic year for the new vocational formation initiative, Vandermolen has engaged about 40 congregations and mentors for the first cohort of seminarians. His goal for the future is to have incoming first-year students meet their local church pastor-mentor before they crack open a book in any classroom on the Calvin Seminary campus.

"This is all about partnering in education for the seminary," said Vandermolen. "I hope that churches understand the deep need and desire that we have for partnership. In fact, we need the local church to help shape emerging leaders with us. We simply cannot do it alone."



When I started at Calvin Theological Seminary, I was nervous. I was nervous about starting seminary and I was nervous about joining a new church. Not only was I attending this new church, but I also would be serving at the church as an intern, which is part of my Master of Divinity program at Calvin Seminary. Before this, the only church I had ever worked at was my home church, Fourteenth Street Christian Reformed Church. I had grown up at Fourteenth Street, so leading there had been easy and fun. I knew everyone and everyone knew me. There wasn't much pressure, particularly because I served in a voluntary role.

I learned my internship placement was Mayfair Church and suddenly I felt the weight of this new reality. I was worried that I wouldn't be able to succeed, that I wouldn't be able to do what Mayfair wanted or needed me to do. Then I met Elaine May (Class of 2015).

Elaine May is the lead pastor at Mayfair Church and she has been my mentor these past few months. She is an amazing leader, who was able to take my timid self and pushes me to start stepping out of my comfort zone. Elaine is the type of leader who can see my strengths even before I can see them. Not only does she see them, but she

is passionate about helping me nurture and grow into my strengths. Elaine has been an amazing encourager, always reminding me of the gifts God has given me and God's calling for me. She constantly reminds me that having humble confidence in the strengths and gifts God has given me gives glory to Him. I have loved working at Mayfair and I have especially loved working with Elaine. I am so grateful that God used the Vocational Office at Calvin to lead me here and I am excited to see where God is taking Elaine and I this next year and a half.

—Hannah Saxton, MDiv



My name is Derek Ellens and I am in my 2nd year of the M.Div program at Calvin Seminary. I started working part time at Fuller Avenue CRC soon after I began taking classes as part of my internship. Taking an internship while also taking coursework as been integral to my learning. I am able to quickly contextualize things that we discuss in class into my job. For example, we discussed contextualizing sermons in preaching class and within a month I was preaching a sermon that was part of a series at Fuller. My audience was one I had gotten to know well so I was able to consider themes that would speak directly to their situation. There have also been valuable learning

scenarios that I can only imagine happening in an internship setting. For example, I was helping lead through the liturgy one Sunday morning and when I arrived at church I heard news that a member passed away unexpectedly the night before. I was able to observe Pastor Nate McCarron (Class of 2009) make the announcement and lead an impromptu prayer. I then lead the congregational prayer later in the service, adjusting my prepared words in light of the situation.

Some less measurable, but just as important, ways my time at Fuller Ave. has shaped me is in ministry teamwork and the process of change. I have been working with

committees but also with another seminary intern, Matt Mulder. Working with Matt has taught me how to work well with others who have different gifts than you. Lastly, Fuller Ave. CRC has been going through a long process of visioning and changing to better serve their community. I have learned that change takes time, may be painful, and often surprises us in its impact. Through all these academic or informal learning experiences I have also had an amazing mentor in Pastor Nate. Processing my ministry journey at Fuller with Nate gives me invaluable guidance in discerning what ministry I am called to.

-Derek Ellens, MDiv



JANUARY

During the inaugural 2017 Stob Lecture Colloquium hosted at Calvin Seminary and supported by an endowment from the Stob family, N.T. Wright, a renown New Testament scholar, discussed Christ's crucifixion as a great force of love that not only absolved the world and its people from sin but also "opened the door to the full transformation of creation." The discussion was a Q & A presentation moderated by John Witvliet, director of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship.

JAN. FEB. MAR.



MARCH

Commemorating the 500th anniversary of the reformation, President Jul Medenblik of Calvin Seminary and President Michael Leroy of Calvin College jointly hosted a Reformation Tour of Germany and Switzerland. This group photo was taken in Worms where Martin Luther appeared before the Diet of Worms in 1521, where he refused to recant his writing when faced with charges of heresy.



FEBRUARY

Milestone Marked at Handlon The Calvin Prison Initiative (CPI) celebrated with students on the completion of one and a half years of education. Students received a certificate at Convocation to mark this milestone - one of the three major milestones to earning a B.A. Professor Ronald Feenstra presented the Convocation Address. Jul Medenblik, Calvin Seminary President and Professor Lee Hardy leading the procession.





APRIL

Guided by Calvin Seminary's Life Together: Celebrating Our Unity, Honoring Our Differences framework, a listening and educating session led by ALEC (Advocating, Listening, Education, Cultivating), a student organization, invited Prof. Amanda Benckhuysen, Professor John Cooper, and Professor Matthew Tuininga to share exegetical perspectives and their own experiences of interacting with biblical texts on women in ministry. The session was moderated by Laura De Jong, a CTS alum and now Pastor, Second CRC Grand Haven and attended by students, staff, and faculty.

APR. MAY JUN.

MAY

Each of our two Spanish-language certificate programs had a cohort of students graduate in May. Professor Mariano Avila, professor of New Testament and director of the Certificate Program, celebrates with the students.



JUNE

The third annual Calvin Seminary Golf classic was held at Stonewater Country Club where 100 golfers competed for fun prizes. The event raised \$171,000 towards the Annual Formation Fund.





AUGUST

A first of its kind at Calvin Seminary, the Sporting Clays Classic event hosted approximately 100 guests. Mitchell Schroder, Calvin Seminary Annual Fund leader, drives Sidney J. Jansma, Jr. to the walking course.



JULY

Calvin Seminary welcomed 24 high school students from the U.S. and Canada to Dig (formerly Facing Your Future), for a three-week summer program designed to help students uncover their future as they explore how a calling to ministry can be lived out in any vocation.

JUL. AUG. SEP.

SEPTEMBER

We welcomed new and returning students in September and marked the 2017/18 academic year kick-off with convocations at the Calvin Seminary chapel.





At Handlon's Calvin Prison Initiative program, the convocation was graced by the CPI student choir and a time of food and fellowship afterwards.



NOVEMBER

President Medenblik here pictured with Rev Christian Oh during a trip to South Korea. During his time there, President Medenblik spoke at a number of colleges, seminaries and churches. Calvin Seminary has been blessed with a global influence, and the partnerships and connections made on trips like these are important for the future of the seminary and the church in South Korea.

OCTOBER

In partnership with Calvin College and the CRCNA, Calvin Seminary hosted SheLeads, a Missio Alliance Summit for women and men to reimagine God's vision of shared leadership in ministry and in the church.



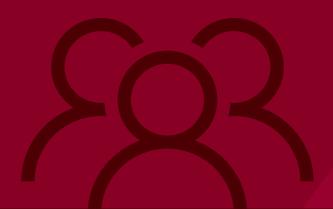
OGT. NOV. DEC

DECEMBER

The annual Christmas luncheon is an anticipated time of reflection, worship, conversation, and laughter. Not only does the community gather to reflect on the season and to enjoy each other's company, but the annual Christmas Program rarely disappoints.



OUR IMPACT IN 2017



3124

People supported by foundation or donor partners

OUR STUDENTS

M.Div - 125

Ph.D. - 28

Handlon Prison (with Calvin College) - 82

M.A. - 23

EPMC - 30

Timothy School in Florida - 2

M.T.S. - 19

Other - 13

Grand Rapids Hispanic Pastors - 64

Th.M. - 39

72

OUR FACULTY & STAFF

562

Pastors and parishioners learning with Calvin Seminary Church Renewal Lab 17

Center for Excellence in Preaching (CEP) Seminars

163

Lilly-CEP preaching groups

1500

Worship Symposium (with Calvin College)

46

SheLeads Summit

279

Regional Pastor Seminars and Workshops

THANK YOU!

On behalf of the Calvin Seminary Development Office, I would like to thank you for supporting the Seminary so generously. We have been blessed by your contributions!

Your partnership is crucial. Please join us as we remember and reflect on the ways God continues to bless Calvin Seminary.



Robert Knoor Director of Development

SCHOLARSHIPS

Celebrate with us the approval of nine new scholarships this year.

- The Sunlight CRC Distance Learning Scholarship
- The Deppe Family Doctoral Chair in New Testament
- The Lee and Jean DeVries Family Doctoral Student Support Endowed Scholarship
- The Dorothy Duthler Scholarship in Biblical Preaching and Pastoral Care
- The Good Shepherd Scholarship for ECO Students
- The Dennis and Jeni Hoekstra Timothy Leadership
 Training Institute Scholarship
- The Herman and Lena Keizer, Sr. Chaplaincy Scholarship
- The Trinity Christian College Presidential Scholarship
- The Veldhuizen-Kaldenberg Scholarship



The Annual Scholarship and Donor Appreciation Dinner

In October of 2017, nearly 400 people gathered for the Annual Scholarship and Donor Appreciation Dinner. Students and donors connected with one another at Frederick Meijer Gardens to share delicious food and a breathtaking view of fall time in Michigan. The evening's highlights included video presentations about the establishment and impact of the Distance Learning Program. Additionally, Calvin Seminary students Arthur De Cou, Lisa De Young, and Luke Carrig shared inspiring testimonials and messages of appreciation. Once again, a delightful and impactful evening!



Inaugural Distance Learning Scholarship and Donor Appreciation Luncheon

For the first time, Distance Learning Program Students were given an opportunity to talk about their journey into, and experience with, Seminary education offered through the Distance Learning program. All the students noted with gratitude that the Distance Learning Program provided an opportunity for them to enroll at the Seminary and to balance their family, ministry, and educational responsibilities.

LEGACY

A Presidents' Legacy Society Member Offers a Testimonial

James and Dolly Strikwerda's love for the Lord is evidenced by their 62 years of Christ-centered marriage. They often reflect on their post-college days when they first met.

Both graduates of Calvin College, James and Dolly were later introduced by mutual friends. Their relationship began in 1951 on a blind date, with James hitch-hiking from Ann Arbor—where he was attending the University of Michigan School of Dentistry—to Grand Rapids where Dolly was teaching at Oakdale Christian School. They have since been blessed with three children, 11 grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

While in dental school, James joined the Reserve Officer Training Corps and spent 16 months in Asia during the Korean War. After completing his duty, they were married and moved to Holland, Michigan, where James began his own dental practice. Over the years, Dolly has learned different aspects of dentistry and helps out when needed. James still shares the practice with his son, Richard, and daughter-in-law, Susan, and he and Dolly enjoy their scaled-back involvement with the business.

They are grateful for their extended family's fervent engagement with the Christian Reformed Church. Dolly's oldest brother, Ty Hofman—a 1951 graduate of Calvin Seminary—was the first born-Canadian to be ordained in the CRC. Her niece, Ruth Hofman, was the first woman ordained in the CRC in 1996. Several other relatives have since graduated from Calvin Seminary.

To continue their family's legacy in the CRC, James and Dolly have included Calvin Seminary in their estate plan. They both see the need to spread God's Word and want to help students financially as they prepare for ministry.

Reflecting on their lifelong memberships in the CRC—now members of Bethany CRC in Holland, Michigan—James and Dolly seek to set a good example for their children and grandchildren on how to live a God-centered, disciplined Christian life. They are grateful for God's blessings in their lives and are so thankful to be able to help in spreading the Good News of the Gospel.

James and Dolly Strikwerda



Dr. Karin Maag speaks at the Presidents' Legacy Society Luncheon



Dr. Alvin Plantinga with his daughter Ann Plantinga Kapteyn

The Presidents' Legacy Society Luncheon

Calvin Seminary once again hosted the Annual Presidents' Legacy Society Luncheon in May 2017. This year, our honored guests enjoyed a presentation by Dr. Karin Maag, Director of the Henry H. Meeter Center for Calvin Studies and Professor of History at Calvin College, as well as Adjunct Professor of the History of Christianity at Calvin Seminary. Maag gave a characteristically engaging talk about the Reformation with an upbeat description of how Ministers of the Word earned that title and were placed in churches at the time of the Reformation. All were enlightened and entertained by her speech. Guests also walked a pictorial timeline exhibit about the rise of Calvinism and they received a copy of Maag's book, Does the Reformation Still Matter? Thank you Legacy Society Members and other donors!

A Conversation with Al Plantinga

Presidents' Legacy Society Members and guests gathered in October to celebrate Dr. Alvin Plantinga's work and his Templeton Prize. A video highlighting Plantinga's influence in Philosophical circles along with expressions of congratulations from colleagues was shown at his acceptance ceremony and shared at the Seminary's congratulatory event. Family members Ann Plantinga Kapteyn (Al's daughter, and Lee S. Huizenga Distinguished Missionary in Residence at Calvin Theological Seminary) and Dr. Neal Plantinga (Al's brother and President Emeritus of Calvin Theological Seminary) shared stories of Al's life and spoke with him about his lifetime of achievement and influence in the world of Philosophy.

At the event, Kapteyn asked a concluding question about the importance of church in Dr. Plantinga's life. Not surprisingly, he stressed the importance of church, but then kindly shared his thoughts on Calvin Seminary. "And as far as Calvin Seminary, I think it is one of the finest, if not the finest, seminaries around."

Thank you and congratulations Al!

EVENTS

Annual Golf Classic

The Third Annual Calvin Seminary Golf Classic was held at Stonewater Country Club where one hundred golfers played through the course and competed for fun prizes.

Participating donors helped Calvin Seminary raise a staggering \$171,000 to support the Annual Formation Fund.

Mitch Schroder (Annual Fund Leader) reports: "We were delighted to count this as one of our most successful fundraisers ever." Calvin Seminary hosts a great day of golf and fellowship and our donors love to join together and play on four-person teams.

The team of Jackson and Nick Haveman with Jon and Sam Kuiper (sponsored by grandparents Jess and Jerry Vander Wall) took home the winning title this year with a team score that was 15 under par!

Mark your calendars: The Fourth Annual Calvin Seminary Golf Classic will be held at Thousand Oaks Country Club on June 11, 2018.

Inaugural Sporting Clays Classic

For the first time, Calvin Seminary hosted a Sporting Clays Classic at the Kent County Conservation League (KCCL) on August 16, 2017 and attracted close to one-hundred participants.

A sporting clays event was chosen as an opportunity that would attract a new demographic of supporters—all of whom share their love of Calvin Seminary. "One of the best outcomes of the Sporting Clays Classic was the number of new faces at a Seminary event," said Mitch Schroder (Annual Fund Leader).

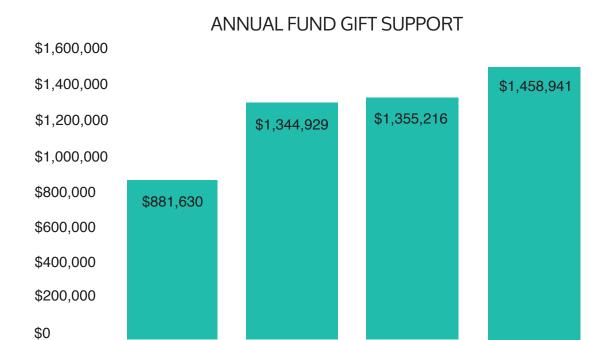
Guests were treated to a 14 station sporting clays walking course through the woods and an additional game of trap or skeet. The shooting was followed by a wonderful dinner and awards ceremony. The feeling of camaraderie in the room was tangible, and guests left with smiles from ear to ear! The future is bright for the Sporting Clays Classic as it looks to become a staple of our summer fundraising efforts.

We look forward to getting outside again in August of 2018!

Annual Day One ArtPrize and Annual Formation Fund Event

Cate and Sidney J. Jansma, Jr. along with President Jul and Jackie Medenblik hosted our third Annual Formation Fund kick-off event on the opening night of ArtPrize at the Grand Rapids Art Museum (GRAM). Guests were inspired by Rob Hogendoorn (Calvin Seminary Graduate and Senior Pastor of Forest Community Church in London, Ontario) who spoke about the central role of leadership in the church and the critical part that Calvin Seminary plays in training and forming leaders for the church. Since the event, many have answered Jansma's call to build the Matching Gift Fund that drives Annual Formation Fund giving toward our goal of \$1.5 million for the 2017-2018 fiscal year.



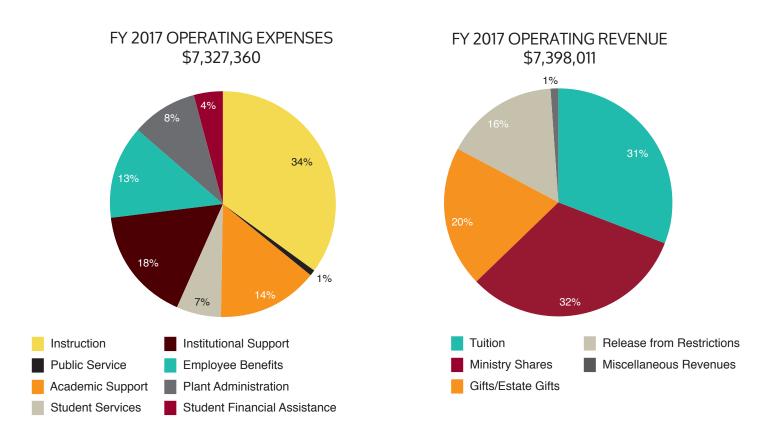


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FY 2017





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