

Dear Alumni and Friends,

January 27th through the 31st marks **National Lutheran Schools Week**, a time for us to reflect on the many ways our Lutheran educator alumni and friends have blessed our community.

From our humble beginnings as Concordia Teachers College to today, we proudly continue to *Stand Tall for Excellence in Education*. Our **Lutheran Teacher Education (LTE) program** has been around since the founding of Addison Teachers Seminary in 1864, and still today we remain boldly committed to preparing teachers to serve in our Lutheran Schools around the world.

Throughout this week, we'll be sharing special content on our social media pages. We invite you to follow along and join us in celebrating how our educators continue to transform lives.

Thank you for your ongoing support of Concordia University Chicago. This month's alumni feature highlights an influential Lutheran educator, **Donna Coppersmith BA '72**, and we are deeply grateful for the many alums who *Stand Tall* in their vocation of Lutheran teaching. Please share these stories with friends, family, and fellow alumni!

Blessings,

Jeff Hynes
University Foundation President/CEO
Sr. Vice President University Advancement

Alumni Spotlight



Donna Coppersmith, Class of 1972

From humble beginnings on a family farm to a life of impactful service, '72 alum **Donna Coppersmith's** journey is a testament to God's divine providence. As the first college graduate in her family, Donna's story is one of courage, faith, and trusting in God's plan. The faculty and staff at Concordia saw her potential and poured into her both academically and spiritually.

"I had support from many different staff members. They let their faith shine through them and encouraged me and prayed for me. Shirley Morgenthaler took me under her wing and was such a blessing - always encouraging me. The wonderful professors there who tutored me intentionally took the time to understand my background. My parents were farmers and they weren't educated, but they took us to church every Sunday, and that was a priority for them, which became a priority to me."

Music also became a cornerstone of Donna's Concordia experience.

"Dr. Carl Shalk was one of my favorite professors. That was a big part of how I ended up continuing to do music and choir throughout my life."

A key turning point came when Dr. Morgenthaler encouraged Donna to participate in Concordia's internship program. This led her to Trinity Lutheran in Edwardsville, IL, where she taught second grade.

"It was there that I realized I loved teaching, and I knew that's what God had in store for my life."

After graduation, Donna's first call was to St. John's Lutheran in Oxnard, California, where she taught from 1973 to 1977 while earning her master's degree. She later served at Holy Cross Lutheran in Collinsville, Illinois.

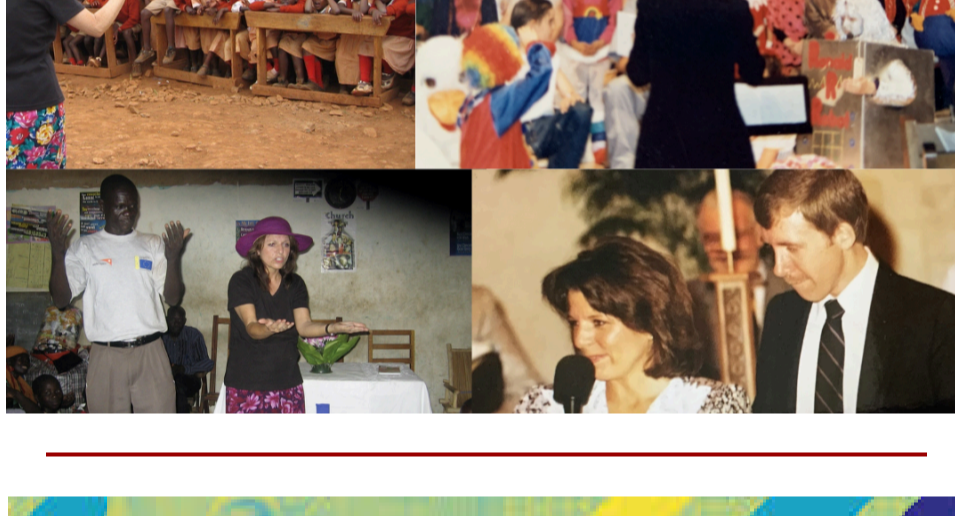
Donna became deeply involved in missions. She co-led Ongoing Ambassadors for Christ (OAFIC), a program equipping youth to witness for their faith.

In 2015, Donna's passion for service and missions culminated in her book, *Seven Skirts for Seven Sisters: Real-Life Lessons on Prayer and Listening to God*. The book chronicles her mission trip to Africa, where she distributed skirts to women in orphanages, homes, churches and refugee camps. Every skirt turned into a "God Story," offering meaningful and practical insights on how to deepen your journey of praying, listening, and responding to God.

"The team I went to Africa with requested that we give away our clothes each day. I had 30 outfits to give away...Through talking with these people, I would pray and ask the Lord to show me or what outfit to wear each day. And so the book became something that just happened by that simple act of praying and giving. The stories and lives of these women were incredible, and to witness God's hand upon them."

Looking back, Donna credits her time at Concordia for shaping her life and ministry. She encourages today's students to take advantage of every opportunity to grow spiritually, whether through mission trips, dorm devotions, or volunteering.

"We're not just a small school in Chicago—we're part of God's global mission. And stepping into that mission will bless your life in ways you can't imagine."



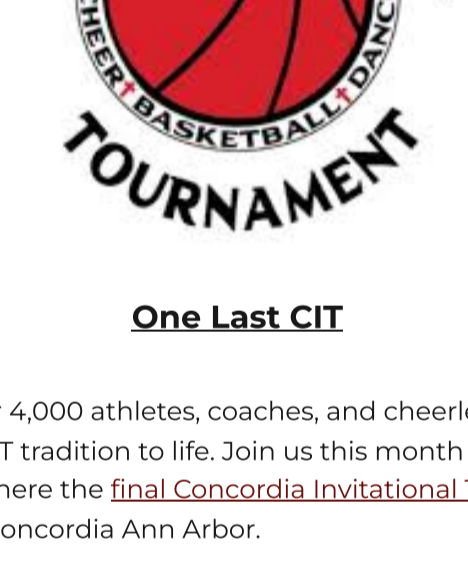
NLSW 2025!

We're excited to spotlight the incredible work of Lutheran school teachers in our Concordia community! If you're a Lutheran school teacher, we'd love to feature you.

Simply send us a photo of you teaching, along with your name, class year, and a brief description. Email your submission to alumni@cuchicago.edu.

We can't wait to hear from you and share your story!

[Send your photo!](#)



One Last CIT

Since 1951, over 4,000 athletes, coaches, and cheerleaders have brought the CIT tradition to life. Join us this month from **January 24-25, 2025**, where the [final Concordia Invitational Tournament](#) will be hosted by Concordia Ann Arbor.

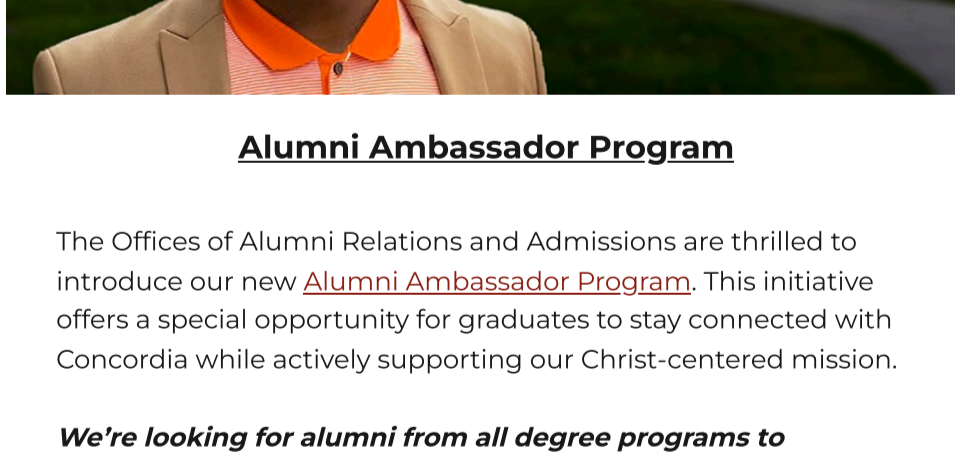
Alumni are invited to a **CUC social** during CIT!

- Friday, January 24th
- 4:30 - 6 pm
- Earhart Manor at Concordia Ann Arbor
- Email Alumni@cuchicago.edu to RSVP

While we are sad to see this 72 year tradition come to an end, we encourage the CUC family to cheer on Cougars in person one last time!

Don't miss it! Plan a visit to our sister institution in Ann Arbor and visit CUCougars.com/CIT for additional details.

[Read more](#)



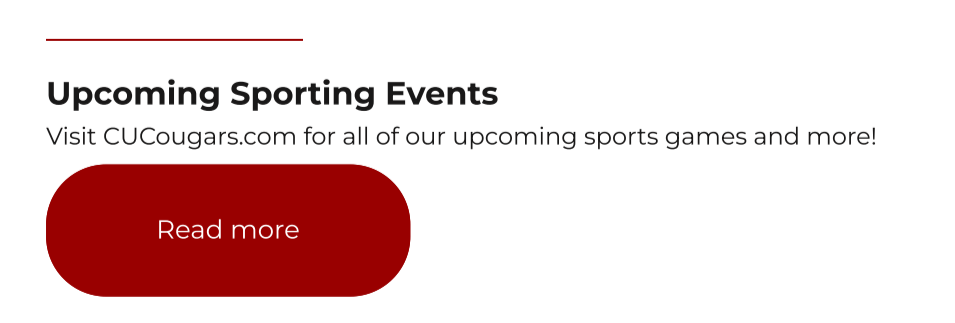
Alumni Ambassador Program

The Offices of Alumni Relations and Admissions are thrilled to introduce our new [Alumni Ambassador Program](#). This initiative offers a special opportunity for graduates to stay connected with Concordia while actively supporting our Christ-centered mission.

We're looking for alumni from all degree programs to volunteer as Alumni Ambassadors—people who are passionate about sharing their Concordia story and helping others stay engaged with the University.

If you're interested in learning more or applying to become an Ambassador, please visit CUCChicago.edu/alumni or click the link below! We'd love to have you be part of this exciting new chapter.

[Become an Ambassador](#)



Upcoming Events

Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Campus will be closed for MLK Day.
Date: Monday, January 20, 2025

Upcoming Sporting Events
Visit CUCougars.com for all of our upcoming sports games and more!

[Read more](#)

Best Practices for Ministry Conference
Visit our booth at the 2025 BPM Conference and join us for an **alumni social** at [The Porch](#) that Friday evening!
Date: Friday, February 14th from 7-9 PM
Location: The Porch
4017 E Indian School Rd, Phoenix, AZ 85018

[Read more](#)

National Lutheran Schools Week 2025
Celebrate Lutheran Schools Week with us! Stay tuned for updates and inspiration on social media, and don't forget to fill out the form to submit your teaching photo!
Date: January 27-31

[NLSW Photo Submission](#)



Alumni Relations