USD Celebrates MLK Day of Service Jan. 16

In celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day on Jan. 16, the University of South Dakota will join in the nationwide MLK Day of Service, showing its support in making this holiday “A Day On, Not a Day Off.”

USD has been a part of honoring the legacy of Dr. King, with hundreds of students volunteering over the past several years. Some of the programs and organizations that USD has worked with in the past for MLK Day include the Vermillion Backpack Program, SESDAC, Vermillion Public Library, Heartland Humane Society, Sanford Care Center, Yankton Boys and Girls Club and Yankton Homeless Shelter.

“There is a strong culture of volunteerism and community service here at USD in general,” said Kim Albracht, assistant director of academic engagement, “so I think that we naturally get energized about being part of this very important national event. The MLK Day of Service is about people across the nation not only honoring King, but saying and demonstrating that we do care and want to work together to address core social issues our communities face.”

“What I truly love about the MLK Day of Service is the immersion with local organizations that participants are able to be involved with,” said Raven Blahnik, a student at USD. “This day of volunteering allows students to learn about their community and the people and problems within it. Alongside this, MLK Day allows participants to use their skills and knowledge to make a difference within their community.”

The Center for Diversity and Community and the Center for Academic and Global Engagement will present the MLK Day keynote speaker, Arthur C. Jones, Ph.D., on Jan. 17 in Farber Hall.

Jones founded The Spirituals Project, a nonprofit organization with a mission of preserving and revitalizing music and social justice teachings. Jones’ keynote will focus on the "Legacy of the Spirituals in the Resiliency of the Struggle for Freedom.”

Jones received a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from the University of Iowa in 1974; he is currently professor in the Department of Musicology, Ethnomusicology and Theory with the Lamont School of Music at the University of Denver.
Hackemer Named A&S Interim Dean

Professor Kurt Hackemer, chair of the Department of History at the University of South Dakota, will serve as interim dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, starting Feb. 27. “Kurt has the knowledge and background to lead USD’s largest college while we conduct a formal search for a new dean,” said Provost Jim Moran.

Matthew Moen, current dean of Arts & Sciences, is leaving USD in March to become president of the Gettysburg Foundation in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

Hackemer came to USD in 1996 and has previously served as associate dean of Arts & Sciences for nine years as well as interim registrar, interim diversity officer and interim provost and vice president for academic affairs.

Hackemer has served as chair of the Department of History since 2013, and he also coordinates the Native Studies Program at USD. His research interests include the American Civil War, the military-industrial complex and American naval history.

He received his bachelor’s degree in history at the University of Chicago, and master’s and doctorate degrees in history from Texas A&M University.

Phi Beta Kappa Visiting Scholar

USD’s Phi Beta Kappa Alpha chapter welcomes Visiting Scholar William Bialek, John Archibald Wheeler/Battelle Professor in physics at Princeton University.

Bialek will present a lecture open to the public, "More perfect than we imagined: A physicist’s view of life," on Tuesday, Feb. 7, at 4 p.m. in the Akeley-Lawrence Science Center auditorium, Room 125.

Bialek is a member of the multi-disciplinary Lewis-Sigler Institute for Integrative Genomics, as well as the recipient of two distinguished teaching awards at Princeton. He is also founding director of the Initiative for the Theoretical Sciences, The Graduate Center, CUNY. A theoretical physicist interested in the phenomena of life, he is known for work emphasizing the approach of biological systems to the fundamental physical limits on their performance; in particular, his research has contributed to our understanding of coding and computation in the brain. He is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, a fellow of the American Physical Society and recipient of the 2013 Swartz Prize for Theoretical and Computational Neuroscience of the Society for Neuroscience. Among his publications is a recent textbook, *Biophysics: Searching for Principles*.

If you change position, office location or phone number on campus, please take a moment to update your contact information in the myU portal. Follow the prompts at https://apps.usd.edu/accounts/address/.
Michael Two Bulls will present a visiting artist lecture in the College of Fine Arts on Jan. 12 at 2 p.m., in Room 172. Two Bulls is a Lakota artist involved in the Bad Art Press project in Rapid City. He studied in Santa Fe, New Mexico, before returning to South Dakota to start Bad Art Press. He won a 2015 Artist and Business Leadership fellowship from the First People’s Fund and served as the Northern Plains Artist-in-Residence at USD in the summer of 2016.

The USD Coyote men’s and women’s basketball teams would like to welcome USD faculty and staff and their families to our USD Faculty and Staff Appreciation Nights in January and February.

The first of these events is Wednesday, Jan. 11, at the Sanford Coyote Sports Center. The USD men’s basketball team will play North Dakota State University at 7 p.m. Faculty and staff can bring their IDs for half-price admission ($8 adults, $4 youth).

The second event is Wednesday, Feb. 15, at the Sanford Coyote Sports Center. The USD women’s basketball team plays Oral Roberts University at 7 p.m. Again, faculty and staff can bring their IDs for half-price admission ($8 adults, $4 youth). This is also the student-athlete academic recognition night, in which we honor our highest-performing student-athletes from an academic perspective.

For more information, contact the USD ticket office at 677-5959.
University Center Offers New Two-Year Degree

South Dakota’s biotechnology industries are projecting substantial growth for the next several years, and the University Center is responding with programs that will train skilled workers to handle chemical and biological research.

“In the last five years, South Dakota has grown its bioscience jobs by 11 percent,” said Joni Johnson, executive director of South Dakota Biotech. “Employment is projected to increase 10.8 percent through 2020.” South Dakota Biotech is a nonprofit membership organization focused on developing the bioscience industry in the state.

Among the programs created to meet the critical need for biotech companies is a new undergraduate associate of science degree in integrated science, which joins two certificate programs currently offered at the University of South Dakota’s Department of Biomedical Engineering at University Center.

The new degree is aimed at students who want to develop skills related to chemical and biochemical research, medical device and pharmaceutical development, industrial operations and life sciences. Courses completed in the associate and certificate programs also can be applied toward earning a bachelor’s degree in related areas.

Last fall, students began enrolling to earn a certificate in regulatory affairs and a certificate in laboratory science. Students in both programs take eight credit hours in integrated science and good laboratory practices. The certificate in regulatory affairs also includes a three-credit regulatory affairs course, and the laboratory science certificate requires four credits of microbiology.

Those students – and new enrollees – can pursue the new associate degree starting in the fall of 2017. Students will study chemistry, biology and physics, combined with courses on subjects such as biomedical technologies and medical device design, for a total of 60 credits.

Relay for Life is Feb. 12

Hate cancer? We do, too.

USD Colleges Against Cancer would like to invite you to join our mission to save lives.

As an organization, Colleges Against Cancer works with the American Cancer Society to help raise money for lifesaving programs, services and research efforts to end cancer.

Visit RelayForLife.org to register for the 2017 Clay County and USD Relay for Life. Let’s rally friends and family to walk the DakotaDome track on Feb. 12, 2017. Together, we can support the American Cancer Society and the groundbreaking research and patient programs it fuels.

Contact Rebecca.Buechler@coyotes.usd.edu with any questions.
Students Tackle Social Issues Over Break

As a college student, spending a day playing with dogs at an animal shelter is a great stress reliever; knowing you are doing service work to benefit the community makes it even more valuable. It’s one of the many reasons Jenny Welu became involved with the University of South Dakota’s Alternative Week of Off-campus Learning (AWOL).

"I thought it sounded like a great way to meet new people and experience new things," said Welu, who volunteered for a weekend at a local animal shelter. "I ended up loving it. AWOL gave me an experience I wouldn’t happen upon in everyday life. I immersed myself in an unfamiliar place, surrounded by people I didn’t know, and I was glad I did."

AWOL was founded at USD in 2004. The program focuses on service-learning, meaning students learn about social issues facing the country and the world while doing service work. Participants are provided with basic education about site-specific issues prior to the trip, learn about those issues through first-hand experiences on the trip and are challenged to synthesize their experiences afterward. Service trips are taken on weekends throughout the year and over winter, spring and summer breaks.

Kim Albracht, AWOL adviser at the University of South Dakota, said the program broadens horizons. "Our student leaders make really great opportunities happen at USD that help expose their peers to service-learning. These are experiences that broaden participants’ perspectives on social issues and how to drive change by making community involvement a priority in their life choices."

This winter break, 85 USD students participated in eight different trips, with each focusing on a different social issue, including:
- Urban poverty in Kansas City, Missouri
- Health and food insecurity in Charlotte, North Carolina and Jacksonville, Florida
- Housing in San Raymundo, Guatemala
- Environment and animal protection in New Orleans, Louisiana
- Homelessness in Detroit, Michigan
- Education in Chicago, Illinois
- Suicide prevention in Missoula, Montana

The current president of AWOL, Andrew Koch, joined the group his freshman year. "Joining AWOL is a chance to learn about yourself, develop leadership skills and become part of a larger movement of people across the nation who are committed to improving their communities. AWOL has been the defining experience of my undergraduate career at USD," he said.

Michael Ewald Named Manager of Media Relations

USD alumnus Michael J. Ewald is the new manager of media relations within Marketing Communications & University Relations. Ewald is a 2014 graduate of USD with a bachelor’s degree in political science.

As manager of media relations Ewald will work to raise the visibility of USD in the news media and help manage the university’s reputation on the regional and national stage. He will issue press releases, help arrange press conferences and press events and host reporters who come to campus. He will maintain the list of USD experts who are available for media interviews. He also will contribute to the newsfeed on the USD website and provide media training for faculty and staff who may be interviewed by reporters.

Ewald served as the communications director for the Hawks for U.S. House campaign during 2016. Previous to that he worked for the South Dakota Democratic Party. He also has experience as a legal secretary and as director of debate for the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools.

Ewald, 29, is a native of Watertown, South Dakota.