



Vigorously Academic · Beautifully Diverse · Thoroughly Christian

Distance Learning at Rehoboth

In early March it was business as usual, parent-teacher conferences, a state basketball game, the joy of an impending spring break. And right around that time, the first coronavirus case was announced in New Mexico, and all NM public schools were announced to be closed for the next three weeks (the closure eventually extended through the remainder of the school year). Thus began some quick planning and preparation for how RCS would respond.

With the geographic and economic diversity of our student body, we had to plan learning opportunities accessible to students facing a variety of challenges. We surveyed our families and found out that about 70% of our students had access to reliable internet and a device to work on. That meant that about 120 students did not. For some students, they simply needed a device to use with their internet service. But for some of our families, even cell service is limited by where they live, so internet-based learning for them was impossible.

Our teachers prepared internet-based lessons for most students, but also prepared lessons on USB drives. Families could pick up USB drives weekly at our breakfast or lunch program, or we delivered it to them on our normal bus routes.

Veteran Kindergarten teacher **Leanne Gillson** shared some reflections on this new way of teaching: “During the first two weeks of on-line learning it was as if I was learning several new languages at one time. Sure I knew how to do the basics on my computer; but Loom, Seesaw, Zoom and recording myself were all brand new for me.”

Despite the challenges, many students were successful learning online and offline. Some teachers offered weekly video chats for students to get to see and hear from one another. Some

families drove to places where they could access free wi-fi from a parking lot to be able to participate. The dedication of staff, students and families was incredible.

In the process, students’ families and staff members faced real challenges. Some students faced challenges of having parents working on the front lines in the fight against coronavirus in our hard-hit community. Others struggled through the hospitalization of loved ones and some even had to face the loss of loved ones. Leanne continues, “Thoughts of quitting would run through my head when hitting yet another stumbling block.” But Leanne’s experience didn’t stop there. Echoing the experience of so many others, God gave her grace at just the right moment. She said in that moment she looked down at her keyboard and saw a verse that a friend had written out for her from 2 Timothy 1:7. It was just the encouragement she needed to continue. She said, “The spirit promised in the verse came through to my thinking clearly, which allowed me to take it step by step, call others for help, and then receive encouragement from teachers, friends and parents.”

Sometimes staff had a plan to contact a student regarding missing work and instead ended up listening and counseling those students through their struggles. We were challenged to be the hands and feet of Christ in every way, not just in educating students. In response to surveys and even teacher evaluation emails, parents replied



with gratitude for the work that the staff put into making this a success.

For some students with working parents, the prospect of learning at home without support was too much. Volunteers **Randy and Linda Buteyn** and **Trudi Ippel** stepped in at just the right moment to support students over the phone and Zoom all the way from Michigan. They provided much-needed motivation to a few students. As the Buteyns said, they were “distance encouragers.” And we thank them for a job well done!

As the school year wraps up, God reminds us that in every challenge, his Spirit is with us. As His word says in 2 Timothy 1:7, the verse that encouraged Leanne in the tough moment, “For God has not given us the spirit of fear: but the spirit of power, love and of a sound mind.”

The Pandemic and Rehoboth

By: Bob Ippel, Executive Director

The reality of the global pandemic has changed Rehoboth. Teachers cleared their rooms and created home offices. Families arrived on campus to gather books and computers for distance learning. The weekly rhythm of creating lessons for both online and offline instruction became the norm. Instead of busy classrooms and teacher lectures, Mondays became the exchange day where offline parents exchanged flash drives at the Fellowship Hall or at their child's bus stop, along one of the 350 miles of routes driven by school vehicles. The Fellowship Hall was empty of students but full of activity as almost 8,000 meals were prepared to serve the community. 570 meals were served to healthcare workers in two Gallup hospitals. Over 500 food boxes and water containers were prepared for distribution as a result of a grant from **World Renew**. Rehoboth staff transported these items to families and churches.

Those who know Rehoboth would not have recognized the campus these last couple months. Rehoboth Chaplain **Kevin Ruthven** joined a team to oversee the work of the **Navajo Nation Christian Response Team** (NNCRT) that created a distribution center in Rehoboth's Keith Kuipers Gym. Rehoboth's Director of Operations **Jonathan Terborg** used his forklift driving skills to unload pallets of food, water and cleaning supplies. Over 1,700 boxes of food and supplies were delivered to families who have been impacted by Covid-19. The NNCRNT supplied the Navajo Nation President, Vice President and police department with items for distribution. The campus volunteer apartments were filled with nurses, doctors and pilots who were serving in the McKinley County area. Advancement Director **Ken**

Zylstra contacted supporters around the country and arranged for the arrival of truck loads of potatoes, oranges, raisins, almonds and dried fruit.

Sadly, the custodial staff saw their roles change as they assisted more and more families, who were connected with the Rehoboth community, with burials at the

Rehoboth cemetery. Since groups were limited to five people, there were often no young people to finish the burial by putting the dirt on the casket. Covid-19 was no longer that virus over there in New York, China or Italy. Now, everyone knows someone who has lost a loved one. Everyone knows of a person who has tested positive. Changes have definitely impacted our small community, but the light has not gone out.

The winds of change have come; however, those of you who know Rehoboth would have noticed that some things did not change. Rehoboth's strong sense of community continued to shine. The drive to work together towards a mission remained intact. The willingness to try new things and wear multiple hats did not lessen. The profound understanding that "we are not our own but belong to our faithful Savior Jesus Christ" solidified. It is true that to the eye, life on Rehoboth campus seemed totally foreign; however,



Camilla Lynch, Autumn Newell, and Deb Chee delivering water to families on the Navajo reservation for **World Renew**;

Rehoboth's true character remained intact as we continued to be the hands and feet of God's love and grace.

A final truth which became clear through this global pandemic is a truth that Rehoboth has experienced again and again. "We are not alone. God is with us." God has always used the body of Christ throughout the world to sustain His mission. When the health and economic chaos was hitting the country, I suddenly felt very alone. I feared for the health of our families and staff. I feared that tuition would not be paid and the donations would decline. I feared that we would not be able to pay our staff. I feared that the doors of Rehoboth may close after 117 years of existence. I should not have been surprised when our brothers and sisters from so many denominations reached out to ask how they could support our families and our school. I should not have been surprised when stimulus checks were donated to Rehoboth. I should not have been surprised that World Renew would issue a \$30,000 grant to help our community with food and water. I should not have been surprised by the words of encouragement and promises of prayer that we received through email and mail. The sacrificial love of the body of Christ had not changed.

The chaos of this little bug impacted the world, and to some, the person next to you. However, through the grace of God and his unconditional love, I cannot fear being alone. For with people like you, our volunteers, and the dedicated faculty and staff here on God's campus, I know Rehoboth is not alone.

"I feared that the doors of Rehoboth may close after 117 years of existence. I should not have been surprised when our brothers and sisters from so many denominations reached out to ask how they could support our families and our school."

A Tribute to Jim and Short Holwerda

As the coronavirus devastates plans for graduation and those end of the year closures, a couple of master teachers will slip into retirement without all the hoopla that is due them. “I really don’t like to think of this as retirement. I like the idea of re-purposing my life,” Jim Holwerda remarks.

Jim and Short Holwerda's lives have always been full of purpose. They came to Rehoboth, at Bob Ippel's invitation, to teach for just a year but stretched it into 22 years. They came, sight unseen but fell in love with the sheer beauty of the land around them and the people they served. Were there difficulties? Yes! Did they entertain ideas of moving back to family near their beloved Michigan lakes? Yes! Did they ever doubt that this is where they belonged? NO!

Jim wore many hats in his tenure at Rehoboth. As teacher, he shepherded elementary and mid school students primarily with creativity and wisdom. In his years as an administrator, he guided Rehoboth elementary and middle school staff and students effectively with a heart of compassion for each person who came into his office and with a fierce loyalty for his teachers. His last years were given to students that he passionately advocated for while keeping the educational focus on the needs of all students regardless of ability.

Short (by the way, unbeknownst to most, her given name is Sheryl) has had one over-riding passion: giving each and every student the gift of reading. She began the Title IX reading program at Rehoboth, forever changing the methods by which Rehoboth teaches reading. How many students

have sat at her small kidney shaped table listening to stories that came alive with her expression-filled voice. When the task of teaching became bigger than her small group setting, she brought the FAST (phonics based reading) program to Rehoboth. It has benefitted at least 600 students in her program and many more in elementary classrooms as well.

The Holwerda's have given invaluable guidance to our volunteer program at Rehoboth. “Volunteers are the secret weapon of Rehoboth. It would be difficult to see us function effectively without them,” says Short. Our precious volunteers have given in countless ways to our school. As volunteer coordinator throughout the elementary school, Short has watched our volunteer army come back year after year because, in part, of the connection she and Jim have built with them. Jim and Short are such an integral part of the community of Rehoboth, a community in which they have tirelessly shared their time and talent! “We live in such a close community,” Short says. “We wept together when Chris Johnson was killed in Afghanistan. We wept together as German exchange student, Maria Holscher, died in a horrific traffic accident that seriously injured a number of RCS students. Those times of grief drew us together. On the other hand, we enjoyed chili cook-offs, picnics, vacations and trips with students and staff who became like family to us.” She reflects the views of so many when she says, “Rehoboth is a place of love. I am so proud of our community outreach. At this school, relationships are paramount and we take that seriously.”

The Holwerdas raised four children, Erin, Jamie, Lia and Joshua. All four children, all graduates of Rehoboth Christian High School, contributed to the Rehoboth community in many outstanding ways. The exciting news for the Rehoboth community is that daughter Jamie and her husband, Phil (Fredericksen) along with their three children will return from a four year teaching stretch in Prague, Czechoslovakia, and Jamie will step into her mother's position as the Title IX reading teacher at Rehoboth Elementary.

The Holwerdas feel that the Rehoboth community has grown in so many ways. The staff is so committed, so open, so encouraging. They have found Rehoboth to be a safe but stimulating place to work. Jim credits former superintendent, Ron Polinder, with the vision that has brought Rehoboth to where it is today. Jim asserts,



“Rehoboth has grown and I hope we’ve been part of that growth. In a sense, Rehoboth is still a mission school and through the efforts of our tours, service opportunities for volunteer groups, media, etc., we are making Rehoboth known as a valued school in education and in our community.” A personal faith builder for both Jim and Short has been the treasured opportunity to experience the body of Christ in a different, diverse and rich blend of cultures. Short reflects the school theme in adding to Jim's comments: “We are part of the story. We are living the story. Jesus is at the forefront of how we live life.”

Jim and Short are both prolific letter and card writers. Many have been blessed by their wise words. As we say thank you to this beloved couple, we offer the words that Short so often writes to others from Romans 5:5: “God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit”.... and Short in her notes would add her own thoughtful words: “God has poured his love for His kids and staff through you.”

What a fitting way to end by giving those words back to the Holwerdas: Thank you, Jim and Short for your overflowing cups of love you have poured out to this Rehoboth community....you have touched our lives and helped us to see Jesus through your lives and your love!



Jim was “famous” for playing the air guitar during elementary chapels.



Artwork by: Emily Becenti 9th grade

Psalm of Lament

By Ryan Jim, 9th Grade Rehoboth Student

Oh Lord, how long will you let us suffer!
How long will you watch us tear each other apart.
How long will you watch me wait for hope!
I have prayed so much for this pandemic to be cured
I've been forced to live a new life in order to survive this disease.
Day after day, I've seen this virus infect and kill people every day!
Our leaders are struggling to keep their people in line!
People are paranoid, some are angry!
People are losing their minds everywhere, bless their souls.
What will we do after this disease, will we all be poor?
Will we be suffering from more catastrophes?
Please oh Lord, help your people to see your ways to turn to you.
Let our enemies be as kind as our neighbor.
I trust in you Lord that you will save the world from this disease
And the world will see what you are Lord!

Student Reflections on Covid - 19



Shelby Arviso

I believe that places as rural as the Navajo Nation are susceptible to disease because there aren't

many options to go to for food, and health. People are having to go to places where it's necessary to go, but isn't safe because everyone else is there as well. For example the Navajo Nation lives off of 13 grocery stores, whereas in Albuquerque alone there are 80 plus stores. The point to social distancing is to slow the spread of Covid-19, and to do that you should avoid coming into close contact with anyone outside your household. Although that is hard to accomplish if there is only one store in a 40 mile radius. We are vulnerable because there are only six hospitals in the Navajo Nation, whereas in Albuquerque alone there are 20 hospitals where you can get checked. The ratio between acres of land and necessities such as grocery stores, and hospitals needs to be evaluated for years to come, because the numbers are not helping to keep My people safe and alive.



Natalia Sabal

It's been really lonely these past weeks, I really miss

everyone and it's not like I dislike seeing and staying with my parents 24/7, I think I need people around my age with me. There isn't a day when I don't think about my fellow classmates and teachers, the fun times we would have at lunch and during class time, I miss hearing our band and choir making music and praises to God. I can do what I can to try and help the people in the world, but the most powerful thing I can do for everybody in the world suffering from this virus, is praying to God. I've noticed that during these times praying to God is such a powerful tool that he gave us humans, we should use it and glorify God through times like this on earth.



Duane Yazza

To each and every one of you, I would like to say thank you.

From cleaning the Rehoboth school to teaching each and every one of us. As well, during these tough times, you are still able to teach in an effective manner and way; I want to say thank you from the bottom of my heart. As well for the other people who run the business and operation, this can be the Principals and Administrators that keep Rehoboth running smoothly and efficiently. Each and everyone of you, thank you for making this last school year of mine awesome and an adventure. I will be keeping each one of you in my prayers... Again God Bless!

Hooghan Nimazí

By Hiro Tsosie

What makes a home?

Stone, wood, and earth makes a perfect Navajo home. The round home. The Hogan.

Made of and shaped by the same dirt that surrounds it.

Love surrounds the Hogan, just like it surrounds our family.

As special events and songs fill the home, the sounds travel inside

Then leave out the door

Are here. Our home is our

Makes us whole. It is a place

Go of. We know every last bit

A nap is. Where the fire poker is

And shared together. Our home is

Morning to let first light in. It brings

to let our holy people know we

shelter, it brings us together and

we keep in our hearts and never let

of our home. Where the best place for

kept. And all the good food is cooked

happy. We open the door to the east each

the blessings. There is no place like home.

Alumni Fighting Covid- 19

Many Rehoboth graduates this year selected a medical profession as a career they would like to pursue. When asked why so many students choose this path, High School Biology and Anatomy teacher Tim Brunius said, "I think it's a combination of biology being intrinsically interesting and our community having a lot of needs. The students are well aware of the health issues of our community and a lot of them would like to give back."

Several times a month Mr. Brunius brings doctors into the classroom which students find inspiring. Current medical student and alumnus Casey Smith has spoken to classes and mentioned that it was in part having a person of color speak to his high school class that allowed him to think that he too could be a doctor. Rehoboth continues to challenge students to know the Triune God and equip them to love, serve and transform the world. During this worldwide pandemic, we want to acknowledge all Rehoboth alumni who have chosen healthcare careers as a way to love, serve, and transform the world.

Whoever dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

How is a life of devotion to God and service to His children developed and cultivated in a Rehoboth student? Perhaps it was the influence of a godly mother, Daisy Slim, in the tiny community of Sanders, AZ. Perhaps it was the eyes of a dorm student as she watched her dorm parents, Jerry and Lena Lineweaver. Perhaps it was in the interactions with teachers by the name of Pikaart, Postma and De Young. Perhaps it was in the friendship of students like LJ (Laura Johnson). "The people and situations at Rehoboth set an example for where my life should go," says 1997 graduate, **Mechem Slim**. "Doing God's work was instilled in me and helped me to understand God's calling in my life."

Surely he will save you from the fowler's snare and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart. You will not fear the terror of night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the plague that destroys at midday.

God's calling in Mechem's life following her graduation led her to Georgetown University in nursing and continued higher education at George Washington University where she received a Masters in Business Administration in 2001.

Over a year ago, Presbyterian Hospital administration in Albuquerque recognized Mechem's unique gifts and asked her to become

head of all Presbyterian urgent care facilities in Albuquerque and Santa Fe. There are seven facilities in Albuquerque and two in Santa Fe. She supervised urgent care operations especially during cold and flu season and supervised the initiation of online telehealth communication between patient and caregiver. And then in March 2020, coronavirus hit...

"We were initially asked to do screening through online services. However, when the need for testing became apparent, we were given 24 hours to erect a site for Covid-19 tests to be administered. The first one was at Presbyterian hospital on Coors Blvd. "In that first day, we saw 700 people who came with both physical symptoms and emotional trauma," Mechem recalls. "People were scared." Hospital administrators realized that the initial site was not adequate to meet the demands and Mechem was once again asked to develop the permanent home base for testing in Albuquerque at Balloon Fiesta Park where thousands of tests have been administered.

Next, Mechem's area of service grew to resident home testing where there were outbreaks within elderly care facilities. It was at this point that the idea of a mobile testing unit was conceived and once again, Mechem was put in charge. In that first day, the mobile unit tested 500 people. The Department of Health contacted Mechem and asked her to reach out to pueblos and reservations around New Mexico. She worked at San Felipe Pueblo, helping to stave off an outbreak there. Other pueblos followed and she soon found herself in the Pueblo of Zuni. There, she connected with a former RCS classmate, **Sean Tsebatsaye** and his wife, Jessica, who is a Physician Assistant. While there, over



1000 people were tested. On the day of this interview, Mechem was travelling to test refugee and immigrant groups at the Cesar Chavez Community Center.

Mechem also is sought after for both TV and newspaper interviews appearing on all Albuquerque news stations as well as in the Albuquerque Journal.

If you say, "*The Lord is my refuge,*" and you make the Most High your dwelling, no harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent. For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.

Mechem's "tent", consists of her husband, Carson, and her twin 5 year olds, a boy and a girl. Carson is a military analyst working from home. Their twins spend weekdays with Grandma Daisy in Sanders. Daisy Slim, a former RCS teacher home-schools the children

Cont. on Page 8

Alumnus **Kris Pikaart '88** is on the Board of Rehoboth Christian School and is a chaplain at Rehoboth McKinley Christian Hospital (RMCH) where she has been in the middle of the fight with the corona virus pandemic in Gallup and the surrounding communities. Recently she wrote on Facebook in response to an article about PTSD and burnout by medical workers:

“And this, right here, is what fills my head almost every day. We, especially those of us here in the epicenter of this wicked, unpredictable virus, are moving at an incredible pace. We move from one atrocity to the next, talking to patients, to families, to our coworkers, hearing stories that we can't begin to process emotionally. And I constantly ask myself how we (all of us, everywhere) will process and heal when we finally have a chance to stop.”

Right now Kris does not have the luxury to stop. Kris needs to meet with families and staff each day as difficult decisions are made regarding patient care and end of life decisions. She sets up iPad meetings with family members who are going to say tearful goodbyes, blessings and prayers in Navajo to grandmas and grandpas. She counsels health workers who are emotionally and physically exhausted and who are burdened with the safety of their own children and spouses at home. She meets with the RMCH Response Team to arrange shelter at hotels for the homeless and the Ethics Committee to talk about choices that might need to be made if there are not enough ventilators. We are thankful for the endless hours of service that Kris and other chaplains are providing during this time. Please pray that they too will be provided protection and healing.



Rehoboth Alums have certainly played important roles in responding to the overwhelming needs of Gallup and the Navajo Nation in countless and amazing ways. But perhaps none have come quite so face-to-face with the virus as these three recent graduates: **Ben Kruis '17 (lower right)**, **Ivan Vestal '19**, and **Dandro Fralinger '20 (lower left)**. These three didn't expected to be Covid-19 response heroes just a few months ago, but they have been essential cogs in the local healthcare response.

In late March, it became clear that there was a major outbreak of the virus within our local homeless population. In the course of one day, we learned that upwards of 150 people might have been exposed while staying overnight at our local detox/homeless shelter, NA NIZHOOZHI CENTER (NCI). Healthcare workers knew that if we did not act quickly, we would have an enormous public health crisis on our hands and lose many precious lives. An amazing coalition grew quickly to house a huge number of these vulnerable folks in hotel rooms, so that they could effectively quarantine themselves, as so many had no way to do so otherwise. Funds came in. Volunteers came in: nurses, doctors, and others. But there was one problem that we could not figure out how to fix: how do we transport these folks from the hospitals to their hotel rooms. None of the city transport options worked out, and call after call failed to bring up any solution. Finally, we just figured that we would need to find an individual who was both brave enough and reliable enough to do the transport. Enter Ben Kruis.

Ben spent weeks driving day and night, transporting people who were either Covid-19 positive or awaiting results to safe shelter. When Ben became too busy, and decided that sleep was a great idea, we added

Ivan Vestal, newly home from college. As Ben had done, Ivan quickly learned his way around PPE, wearing n95s, gloves, gowns, and getting into a routine of sanitizing his vehicle between each rider to ensure safety for himself and for the next riders. A few weeks and many rides later, a third driver was needed. Dandro Fralinger joined the ranks. The three have carried out a round-the-clock schedule of transporting a population of men and women that others much older have been afraid to help. Many of those they have helped are in rough shape--intoxicated, worried, confused--but Ben, Ivan, and Dandro have found beautiful ways to treat all with respect and dignity. It cannot be overstated how integral these three young men have been to the very public health of our community. The Rehoboth community immensely proud of the courage, respect, reliability, and compassion shown by Ben, Ivan, and Dandro.



Cont. Mechem Slim....

at her home. Mechem says, “God is in control of the circumstances of my life. He created my mom to meet my need in my circumstances right now. Carson and I begin our day with prayer and devotions and, along with fasting, these fundamentals of life, help me with the sanity of my work and job. As a leader, I have to fall back into my faith.”

Her broader “tent” and people are the Dine’, the Navajo people in eastern Arizona. She fears for her tribe and the devastation this Coronavirus has taken. Mechem believes that more must be done to coordinate the volunteers and others who supervise the distribution of supplies. “Elderly folks in the deep parts of the reservation are not getting supplies. Chapter houses that distribute food readily hand out supplies. However, younger people with vehicles are going through distribution lines multiple times and then selling the supplies to other people. Food is going into the hands of the wrong people,” Mechem laments.

Currently, the Covid-19 virus is out of control on the Navajo Reservation. There are more deaths per capita than New York or New Jersey. Mechem was asked what can be done to help. She replied, “It is hard. Navajo people are natural movers and they love to congregate for meals and other events. It is hard to simply stay at home. How do you teach a culture to change, to live differently. Native people have endured other pandemics but we are so out in the open. It is hard to convey to especially the elderly due to the fact that there are both language barriers and technology barriers.” Wi-fi connections so vital to testing are very limited.

Because he loves me,” says the Lord, “I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name. He will call on me, and I will answer him; I will be with

him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.”

“As a leader, I have had to depend on my faith,” says Mechem. “I have led teams of professionals to the reservation and they are overwhelmed by the poverty they witness. I have had to depend on God for everything. My husband, my church (Calvary Chapel) have kept light on my purpose.”

As Mechem talked, she returned to her foundation at Rehoboth for the lessons that have guided her today. She was moved by the lives of her teachers and dorm parents that left their homes and families to lead a life of service. “There was a greater mission and that mission of serving others especially in difficult circumstances has been foundational to my life. Even now, the mission philosophy of Presbyterian hospital is to serve those who are disadvantaged. It was instilled in me at Rehoboth.”

Mechem had words of advice for the class of 2020. She thought back to times that were difficult in her own schooling. “Yes, there were times that we thought were unfair. There were times that it seemed the teachers had it out for us. But those painful lessons have taught me perseverance and to keep going when times are tough. It has prepared me for the future and what I am doing now.”

One final question for Mechem: Do you fear? In the face of death surrounding you...for the lives of your children....for your people...for your life.... “I don’t fear,” Mechem quickly replies. “Because I know who holds tomorrow.”

The words of Psalm 91 are interspersed in this article. It is a chapter that Mechem reads almost daily.

-Interview & Article by Gail DeYoung

Thank you, Food Service Staff

Our dedicated food service staff served over 8,000 hot and nutritious meals during our school closure. In addition, they spent their “days off” preparing meals for first responders.



Alumni Transforming the World Through Medical Careers



1950's

Jack Kamps, Family Medicine
Virginia Cometsevah, Nurse
Phil Kamps, OBGYN
Shirley Henry, Nurse

1960's

Sally Denbleyker Vink, RN
Jan DenBleyker Berkompas, RN
Rick Kruis, MD

1970's

Rhonda Clichee
Bryan Kamps, MD Orthopedics

1980's

Phil Kruis, MD
Carla Huber, RN
Darla Lee, Radiology Technician
Angie Holtsoi, Flabotomist
Jeff Holtsoi, Fire Chief
John Chapman
Marla Lee, Flabotomist
Ferlin Manuelito, Flabotomist
Michelle Stam-McClaren, Pediatrician
Barbara Kamps, Nurse Anesthetist
Kris Pikaart, Chaplain

1990's

MaryJo Boot, PharmD, MHA, PhC
Jonathan Kamps, Labratory Tech
Sheila Begay, RN Flight Nurse
Dawn Yazzie, Nurse
Mechem Slim, Administration

2000's

Ruth Ippel, RN
Ronald Charles, MD
Josh Fredriksen, MD
Kari Ippel, RN
Naomi Kruis, RN
John Harvey, CRNA
Kay Louis, Trauma Therapist
Sandi Morrison, RN
Janelle Jackson, DPT
Lindsey Lyson, DPT
Sean Rivera, MD
Terri Williams, Health Administration
Kyle Cherney, DPT
Caleb Fairey, DPT
Lia Jaspers, PharmD
Nicole Tom, RN (BSN)
Muriel Arrowsmith, NP
Dawn Cherney, Nurse
Lia Holwerda, RN
Casey Smith, MD
Kelly Chapman Jones, DPT

2010's

Nicole Deleeuw, RN
Karthik Anandan, MD
Michael Ippel, RN
Kimberly Sam, RN
Flo Jarvison, Nurse
Jenny Situ, Medical Assistant
Amanda McNiel, BSN (in college)
Deirdra Bia, RN
Laurel Hibbard, RN
Kristen Holtsoi, Lab Tech
Gina Kamps, RN
Paul Ratmeyer, MD
Celine Bia, RN
Amber Kruis, RN
Haelee Horace, BSN (in college)
Jordan Ide,BSN (in college)
Glenn Ratmeyer, MD (in college)
Dandro Fralinger, BA/MD

Currently serving in the medical field or on the front lines?

If your name is not on this list of our alumni in the medical field (past or present), please let us know by emailing advancement@rcsnm.org.

A Tribute to Pete Goudzwaard

“Call Pete!” “Call Pete!”

This short phrase has probably been spoken more often on the Rehoboth campus than any other phrase over the last 40 years. If it didn’t flush, didn’t drain, didn’t light up, didn’t heat up, or didn’t flow, the first thing always spoken was “Call Pete!” Beside his responsibilities of maintaining old infrastructures of water, gas, sewer, and the campus electrical system, Pete’s other responsibilities included such enviable tasks of running off cattle, horses, catching rez dogs, skunks, and an occasional rattlesnake! And we should mention that he was the primary cemetery grave digger. “That’s the ‘other responsibilities as needed’ clause that was always written at the end of most Rehoboth contracts.” Pete remarked with a chuckle.



Pete Goudzwaard, the Rehoboth Campus Engineer for the last 40 years began his long career at Rehoboth in 1980, along with his wife Dorothy (Dot) who taught 6th grade and retired a few years ago. Before arriving at Rehoboth, Pete and his family (son Michael and daughter Suzie) worked for the Board of Home Missions at Friendship House in San Francisco. In 1978 when Pete heard about a possible job opening in the Rehoboth Industrial Department when Art Bosscher was about to retire, Pete applied for the job but was later told that Mr. Bosscher wanted to stay on for another couple of years, so the Goudzwaards’ plans to move to New Mexico had to be put on hold.

Upon hearing this news, Pete moved his family back to Grand Rapids where he worked in

maintenance at the Grand Rapids Christian Rest Home. While working in Grand Rapids he earned his Boiler’s license. In 1980 when Art Bosscher finally decided to retire, the Rehoboth campus manager, Ed Oppenhuizen, called Pete and asked if he was still interested in the Rehoboth Campus Engineer position. In November of 1980 Pete agreed and moved his family to the southwest.

Growing up in Seattle and living in Michigan, Pete’s first impression of the area was “Whoa, what a lot of desert!” But it did not take long for everyone in the family to appreciate and love the open spaces and red rock landscapes.

When Pete first came on board the industrial staff was not under the school administration. The Industrial Department actually worked for the Christian Reformed Board of Home Missions which was not only responsible for campus maintenance, but also responsible for all the other CRC mission stations throughout the reservation. Pete enjoyed those early years travelling to these mission stations with Ted Tibboel, Juke DenBleyker, and his mentor Art Bosscher. “I had some pretty big shoes to fill since all of these men had between 25-35 years of experience in this area.” Pete remarked.

Since Pete was the young guy on the crew he was often volunteered whenever crawling into small spaces was required. One vivid memory he recalled was when some work was required under the old high school where there was a long low tunnel where the water and steam pipes ran. “It was about two feet wide and four feet high. Art tied a rope around my ankle in case something happened and he needed to pull me out.” Pete laughed and continued, “This was a time before cell phones and small hand held radios. So if you needed something you communicated it to the other person with short tugs on the rope.”

It’s what Pete did behind the scenes that made all the difference for others in staying ahead in campus maintenance. For example, in the summers he would clean out the two large steam boilers in the shop and check all the steam lines to make sure they were running well when the system was ready to be fired up for campus heating in late October. He knew when to turn on the system when several campus mothers would come to him with young children wrapped in multiple blankets asking “Pete, when are you going to turn on the heat?” In talking about running this heating system for all those years, Pete reflected “The toughest years were back in the late 1980’s when we had several winters with temps going down to -20 and -30 degrees. If a building went offline during the

night then there would be an even bigger problem of frozen water pipes bursting.”

Pete also was responsible for maintenance on the 1700 ft. deep well system that provided water to the campus. He vigilantly checked the system for bacteria, dissolved solids, and a whole host of other things regulated by the state for independent well systems. He was an active member of the New Mexico Rural Water Association and enjoyed attending annual meetings to learn from others in the business. This water system is now shut down after Rehoboth was annexed by the city of Gallup a few years back and the campus was able to tap into the city water system.

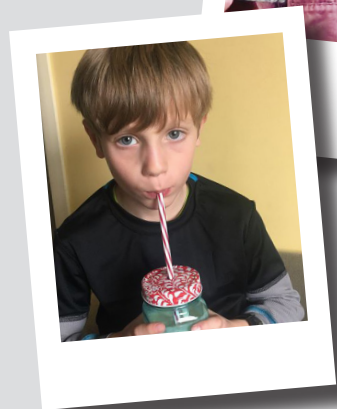
Other changes on campus during the last 15-20 years helped to lighten the burden of responsibility from Pete’s very full plate. Those changes included the closing of the dorm program; the installation of new water, gas, and sewer infrastructure systems; each building and house receiving its own independent heating system so the old campus steam boiler system could finally be shut off; and finally, establishing Rehoboth Village as independent of Rehoboth Christian School by selling many of the homes so the school could get out of the housing and utility business. Maintenance and repairs are now the responsibility of each individual homeowner. As new buildings are constructed on campus, older ones are torn down thus eliminating old maintenance headaches that Pete has had to deal with during his tenure.

Because of the many “hats of responsibility” worn by Pete over the years he relied a lot on the expertise of volunteers. Pete remarked “I could not have kept up with all the jobs, both large and small, that needed to be done if it had not been for capable volunteers who would show up and I could hand them my running list of campus projects. These were wonderful people who I really enjoyed working with over the years.”

Finally, Pete’s quiet and gentle spirit of helping others in times of need fit well on a campus with many job demands and the many personalities asking for his help and expertise. He never said a harsh word to others and always did his best to help when called. After 40 years, that familiar phrase, “Call Pete!” will live on in the memories of those whose lives were blessed by this humble servant.

-Interview and article written by Mike DeYoung

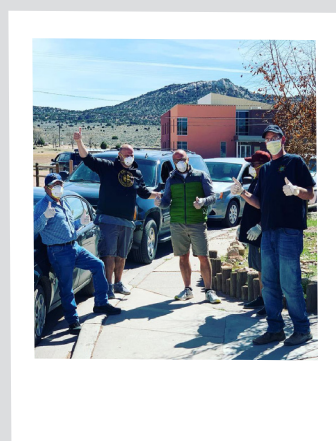
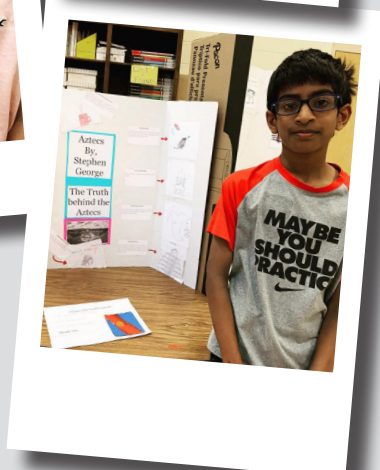
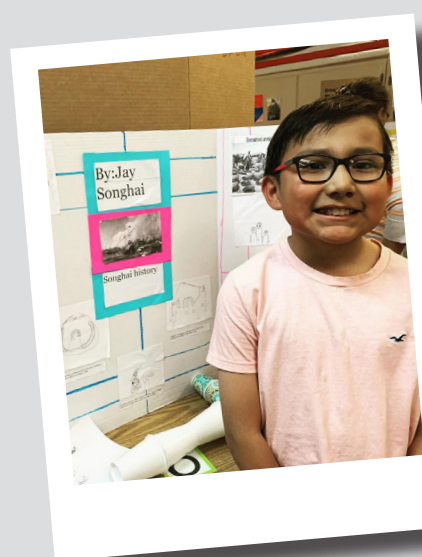
Snapshots of Early Spring



Elementary Read All Day was a fun day of reading all over Rehoboth's campus and for some classes, around the world.

Save the Planet Challenge!

The third grade class participated in a save the planet challenge for the month of February. They picked up trash, started using metal straws, and found creative ways to reduce, reuse and recycle!



World Culture Project

The 4th and 5th grade social studies classes of Rehoboth Elementary held an Early World Cultures exhibit.

Distance Learning was difficult to coordinate, but our administrator and teachers did not back away from the challenge. Thank you, families, for coming to campus. We hope the toilet paper came in handy.

Our Blessings & Needs

This unique season we are traveling through has provided its share of challenges for our school and ministry. Many of these challenges have been shared throughout this newsletter. We are filled with gratitude for the generous gifts and prayers of so many faithful supporters around the country. We are so thankful that our lack of finances have not been one of those areas that have provided additional stress during this season.

Almost weekly, we have shared about Rehoboth's needs and the extra needs for families in our community, and you have generously responded. Some of these have been gifts of food, some for our Jubilee fund to help with the tuition needs of our families, and other gifts were given to help with our long term transportation needs. It has been humbling to see, over and over, how God continues to use you to provide for Rehoboth so that Rehoboth can continue to be a light within this community.

In Mid-March, when the financial stimulus was made public, our finance office, along with a faithful volunteer, immediately made preparations to apply for the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) loan funding. We were concerned about our ability to continue to employ our staff as we projected the collection of less tuition and fewer donations due to the economic devastation in our community and around the country. After receiving this PPP funding, we were able to provide a 10% tuition credit to all of our Rehoboth families. Some of our families had prepaid their tuition, and in turn donated back the credits to help other families that were experiencing financial hardships due to the loss of income. It has been amazing to see how the body of Christ provides for each other during times like this!

One gift that was received in April came with a wonderful note that paints a picture of how God uses each of us to help show His love and plant seeds of faith in others. Over the past 117 years, Rehoboth has hosted many volunteers and groups (including an ElderHostel program) that have come to learn, serve, and support our teachers and staff. The note below was shared with our staff to help lift our spirits, and the family encouraged us to share this story with you as well:

"The circumstances surrounding this gift are a bit unknown to the family. We do know that probably a decade or more ago, Mary visited Rehoboth as part of an elder hostile [sic] trip with a group from Seattle. She was quite antagonistic to the Gospel at that point in her life but something or someone during that visit touched her. Subsequently, she designated a gift to your school in her will. Mary went home to be with the Lord some months ago at the age of 97 having given her life to Christ a day before her death. We rejoice in this happy ending and in being able to support your ministry."

Thank you again for your willingness to be used by God to provide for the needs of our community. Should you wish to give to Rehoboth, please send a gift in the envelope provided or give online at:
<https://rehobothchristianschool.factsmgtadmin.com/give/>



Thank You, Volunteers!

SHORT-TERM VOLUNTEERS

Trudi Ippel
Randall and Linda Buteyn

LOCAL AND LONG - TERM VOLUNTEERS

Jack and Cindy Ippel
Denny and Ruth VanAndel
Paul Brink
Elsa Doornbos

DESTINATION REHOBOTH GROUPS

Grace CRC (Kalamazoo, MI)
PLIA-Dordt College (Sioux Center, Iowa)



Tuition Assistance Update:

Through May 26, we have received gifts to our tuition assistance fund totalling \$1,763,658. This represents 95% of our budgeted need of \$1,850,000. Please give by June 30 to help with the remaining need of \$86,342. Thank you for giving generously so that 78% of our students can receive assistance averaging over \$4,490 for this current school year!



Alumni Nursing/Allied Medical Scholarships:

Rehoboth supporters have generously provided funding for scholarships to help Alumni in Nursing or Allied Medical fields. Scholarships ranging from \$1,000 - \$2,500 per year are available to students currently enrolled in programs. See our Alumni Scholarship page on our website for more information and applications:

<https://www.rcsnm.org/advancement/alumni/alumni-scholarships.cfm>



Summer Phonathon:

Our phonathon students are back to work! Accept a phone call sometime this summer to help with next year's tuition assistance need. Thank you for your support!



Calendar Error:

Before you make that August 2020 appointment, please be reminded that we made a mistake in the Rehoboth Calendar for that month. The days are offset by two days. Please make the correction. Our apologies!



Transportation Campaign Update:

Even through this crazy season of life, we continue to receive generous gifts to help with our current transportation needs. Through May 26, \$226,649 has been committed from supporters across the country. On April 20, we received news of a grant award from the VW Settlement Trust which covers the cost of 25% of each new bus for a total of \$143,918. Our remaining need is \$229,435 to complete the initial goal of six propane fueled buses and a fueling station.



Food Distribution:

A special thank you for generous food donations: **Martin and Sue Kimm** (Manhattan, MT), **Sunkist Growers & Porterville Citrus** (Terra Bella, CA), **Superior Almonds** (Shafter, CA), **Sunmaid Growers of California** (Kingsburg, CA), and **Gleanings For The Hungry** (Dinuba, CA).



Memorial Gifts & In Honor Of Gifts:

Due to one of our staff members contracting COVID-19 and needing to be hospitalized, we were unable to include a listing of the Memorial/In Honor Gifts in this issue. We will be sure to include the listing in the fall newsletter.

Please reach out to us if you have any questions, concerns, or would like to help in any way.

Ken Zylstra, Director of Advancement
kzylstra@rcsnm.org, or (505) 488-3900

Dave Sytsma, Advancement Officer
dsytsma@rcsnm.org or (616) 283-4495

Rehoboth Christian School emphasizes community during strange times

By Cody Begaye. GallupSun Correspondent

Even after the campus was closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the staff at Rehoboth Christian School is doing everything possible to keep in touch with students and their families.

Bob Ippel, the executive director of the school, said this is a strength that comes from being a smaller private school.

“[Fewer students] gives you more agility in terms of being able to respond to their needs more quickly,” Ippel said April 10.

COMING TOGETHER

Ippel said Rehoboth has always been known for being seen as more of a family than just a school, a fact he wants to celebrate.

The bonds shared between students, teachers, and their families would face a big test when the pandemic arrived at their doors and forced them apart.

Part of being able to respond to student needs quickly was being able to quickly set up distance learning programs.

“We don’t want students to just have the option of not doing it. It’s an expectation of all of them,” Ippel said.

He added that students can lose a lot of what they learn when they are not in school. But the combination of distance learning and committed staff at Rehoboth helps to alleviate those concerns.

The bond with students was also emphasized by Rehoboth high school history teacher Kellie Wright.

“The smaller classes allow us as teachers to really get to know our students well,” Wright said. “I love being a teacher here because of the small community feel it has.”

Wright has been teaching underclassmen history courses at Rehoboth for four years. She is originally from Pennsylvania.

She also teaches a number of upperclassmen courses, which means she could have some

of the same students from prior courses. This quality helps make Rehoboth unique, she added. “You get to watch kids grow on their journey in high school. You can interact with them in a tangible way,” Wright said. “We all look out for each other’s needs.”

LEARNING FROM AFAR

Providing students with a good education is important for Rehoboth, Ippel said.

“We want to have our kids be people who go out into the world and transform it,” he said. “We don’t want them to just make a good paycheck, but to make a good difference in the world.”

Part of achieving this goal is a program at Rehoboth called Teaching for Transformation.

“The question we ask there is, ‘How do you give the kids experiences in real life, real world projects to help them make a difference in their community?’” Ippel said.

Becca Hibbler, who has taught third grade history at Rehoboth for six years, is one of the teachers involved in this program. She recalled a project last November in which her students thought about endangered species on the Navajo Nation and got to learn about them from local experts.

“We went to Navajo Zoo and learned about various species. The kids from there each chose a species to study,” Hibbler said.

As part of the project, the students researched information about what the species was, about why they’re endangered, and how the students can help.

“The kids learned a lot of great research skills, how to find good sources, how to take notes,” Hibbler said.

But even though the project was supposed to end with the students giving a presentation on their findings, Hibbler said the class wanted to take their findings much further and share them with a larger audience.

“After the Christmas break, we started doing more research on why the species are losing their

habitats, and why pollution is a big deal for those species,” she said.

As her students researched these topics and became even more interested, Hibbler said the class held a “Save the Planet” challenge in February. The challenge involved students sharing how they can do their part to reduce pollution and preserve the areas where the endangered species live.

“It’s amazing, the amount of work they put into challenges, or their missions as they called it,” she said.

Right before spring break, and before the pandemic would upset the community, the students held a gathering at Churchrock Chapter House to show what Gallup could do to solve the various problems. Hibbler said they invited families, community members, and some local officials, some of whom even attended the gathering.

“It was such a cool experience,” she said.

ADAPTING TO CHANGES

Once the pandemic arrived in Gallup in mid-March, all local schools were closed indefinitely and the students were told to stay home for their safety.

“It’s hard to not be with my class of 21 students,” Hibbler said. “We are currently communicating via phone, or video chats, but it’s also cool to know they can do quite great work on their own.”

Elmer Yazzie, whose teaching career spans 44 years as well as coaching numerous sports including cross country at Rehoboth, said the transition to distance learning required multiple changes and directions.

“It’s a different way of thinking,” he said. “It is a whole collaborative effort by Rehoboth to take the learning experience that’s normally in the classroom out to the community we live in, Gallup and McKinley County.”

Part of this effort involves keeping the students aware of their weekly, monthly, and semester

Cont. on page 15

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goals, which Yazzie said was in place before the schools closed.

“The goals make the learning experience and the progress from it visible to the students,” Yazzie said.

Yazzie added, so far the students have responded positively to the change to learning online, which shows personal growth and self-discipline on their part.

Meanwhile, Wright said figuring out how to make distance learning work has revolved around one central challenge.

“We have so many families of students that have internet access, but we also have some families that don’t have it,” she said. “It’s about figuring out how to teach students equally and provide the same academic experience wherever they are.”

The shift to distance learning was a big learning curve for the teachers, Wright emphasized. It also showed many of them that people can take in-person communication for granted.

“I feel like this situation has made the teachers and some of the students more grateful for the community we have,” she added.

As another part of the sense of community, Wright spoke about how an upcoming Student Alternative Curriculum Week had to be canceled because of the new circumstances, which she said upset many students.

The SAC Week, as it is also called, is a week where either the Rehoboth choir or band head out on tour for a week, and the rest of the students at the school are given a week of class that is different from their normal curriculum.

In the past, students have been given lessons in self-defense, learning how to make podcasts, how



The Keith Kuipers gym has been transformed into a food distribution center

to do coding, cooking, playing a guitar, or doing automotive repair, according to Wright.

“That’s a week of school in the spring that’s so much fun, because there are so many things the kids can do,” Wright said.

More than being able to learn a number of alternative skills, Wright said the students feel the SAC Week is a chance to break up the routine and occasional drudgery of a school year.

“The SAC Week makes them think, ‘School’s fun, we like to be here.’ It gives them energy to keep going,” she said.

These alternate curriculums are another chance for students to bond and learn something about themselves and others, Wright added.

“We’re always looking for ways to build that school community, so kids feel like they’re a vital part of it,” she said. “We don’t want anybody to feel left out, which I think is one of Rehoboth’s biggest strengths.”

FOR THE COMMUNITY

More than just students and their families, Ippel and the various teachers have emphasized repeatedly they want to help the community.

To that end, Ippel also described some of the relief efforts Rehoboth is performing to help people affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

“We’re housing pilots who are flying PPE and food for the Navajo Nation,” Ippel said. “We’re a distribution center for the Eastern Agency of Navajo Nation.”

Ippel also discussed how Rehoboth received a grant from World Renew, a church based out of Grand Rapids, Mich., that they have used to provide and transport water and groceries for families who cannot make it to Rehoboth.

This is in addition to providing hot meals for students and faculty members, he added.

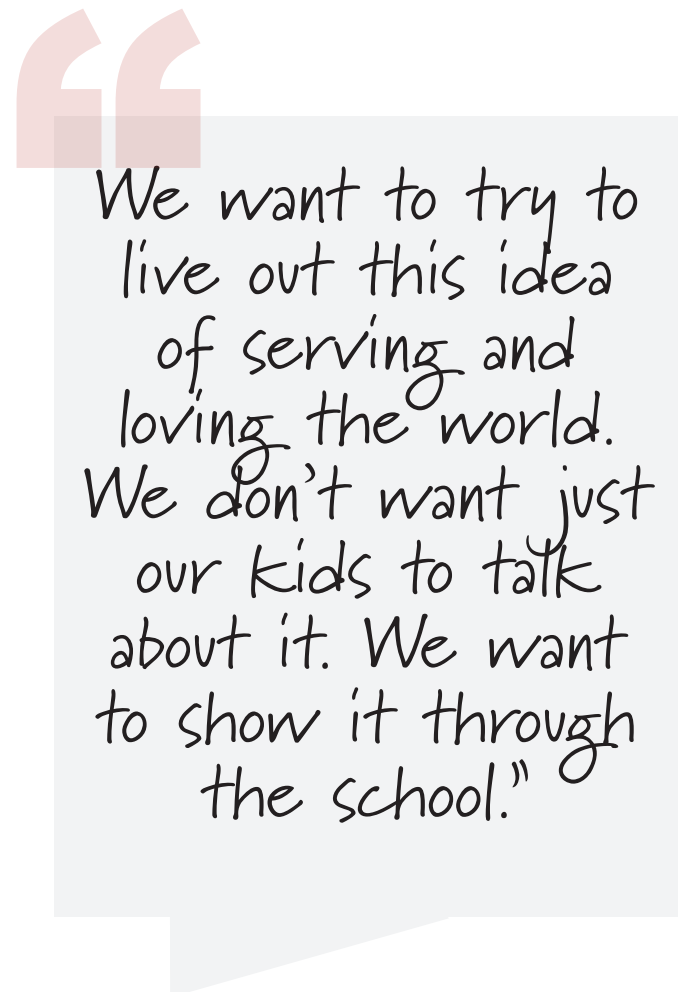
“We want to try to live out this idea of serving and loving the world,” Ippel said. “We don’t want just our kids to talk about it. We want to show it through the school.”

The teachers shared Ippel’s sentiments.

“We can have fun, and have good academics, but at the end of the day, it’s how we are building the

students up and making sure students are in that positive circle,” Wright said.

Hibbler hopes the students can learn from the faculty and staff’s actions and apply them on their own.



“The way we’re seeing it now is we’re a part of the community, and that we’re here to support the community and they support us,” she said.

Yazzie said the work Rehoboth has done for the surrounding community and the Navajo Nation is something to be proud of, especially since they have continued to have people wanting to volunteer.

“We have people come to us, and they don’t want to get paid. They want to serve others,” he said. “It is a great story of life and how we should be all the time.”



Page 1
Distance Learning at Rehoboth



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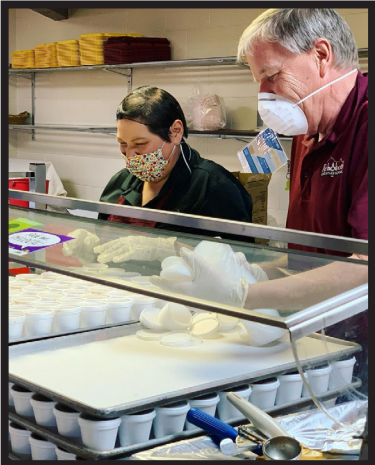
Page 3 & 10
Tribute to
Jim and Short Holwerda &
Pete Gouzwaard



Page 4-5
Student Reflections
on Covid- 19



Page 6 - 9
Alumni Serving in
Healthcare



Page 11
Snapshots of Spring



Page 12 - 13
Our Blessings & Needs

In This Issue...