

# AUGUSTANA COLLEGE

SIoux FALLS, SD

*A report to the Congregations of the ELCA in South Dakota, Southwest Minnesota, Western Iowa, and Nebraska*

By Bruce Halverson, President

CHRISTIAN • LIBERAL ARTS • EXCELLENCE • COMMUNITY • SERVICE

On Augustana's seal, the motto "The word of God endures forever" is boldly printed. We believe it is the college's responsibility to proclaim these words as part of the everyday life of our campus. This motto is captured in our mission as an institution of the ELCA and in our core values: Christian, Liberal Arts, Excellence, Community, and Service.

Our campus worship life is active and engaging. We are fortunate to have a dedicated and talented faculty and staff who nurture students as they explore and deepen their faith. Among our sister colleges in the ELCA, Augustana continues to attract one of the highest percentages of Lutheran students, with 50% of our students indicating their religious affiliation as Lutheran. However, as the number of young people in our rural region declines, **it is vital that caring adults in congregations encourage high school students to go beyond "sticker shock" and explore Augustana. There is no cost in looking, and our financial aid makes us very competitive with state universities and other private institutions.**

Our students are primarily drawn from the four states where the synods that own Augustana are located: South Dakota (45%), Minnesota (28%), Iowa (10%) and Nebraska (6%). Augie is close to home for these students, but we offer the world. Our students can enroll in foreign studies programs that take them to every part of the globe and internship programs that take them to the major cities of the United States.

Communities in this region and national entities alike recognize Augustana as a place with distinguished academics. In recent years Augustana has been recognized as a "College of Distinction," named to the Templeton Foundation's "Honor Roll for Character-Building Colleges," and ranked among the top-ten

comprehensive colleges in the Midwest by *US News and World Report*.

We are in the midst of several campus enhancement projects. The Elmen Center expansion project nears completion of new locker rooms, classrooms, fitness and weight training rooms, and new opportunities for the athletic training program. A series of improvements to the Mikkelsen Library began last summer with the construction of a fully accessible main entrance. Finally, and most significantly, our campus will be complete in appearance with the addition of a Center for the Visual Arts. We have plans for a \$4 million building, and construction will proceed when a naming gift is found.

Sioux Falls - a progressive city of 130,000 - is a huge asset for Augie. Not only do we enjoy the support of great local congregations, but the opportunities for internships, jobs, activities, entertainment, medical support, and so much more are readily available. Several thousand alumni in the city provide a wonderful base of support for our students and recent grads.

Finally, a word about Augustana as a mission of our church. To have a strong church, we must have strong colleges. The church needs colleges that raise up leaders and teach members to think critically and compassionately about difficult issues. The college needs churches that pray for and encourage its ministry, enroll their sons and daughters, and offer financial support. We rejoice in working with you to share the truth we hold dear: "The word of God endures forever!"

