

From the Desk of the Executive Director:

“We are not in Jerusalem any more. We need to prepare our kids to live in Babylon.” – David Kinnaman, President of the Barna Group

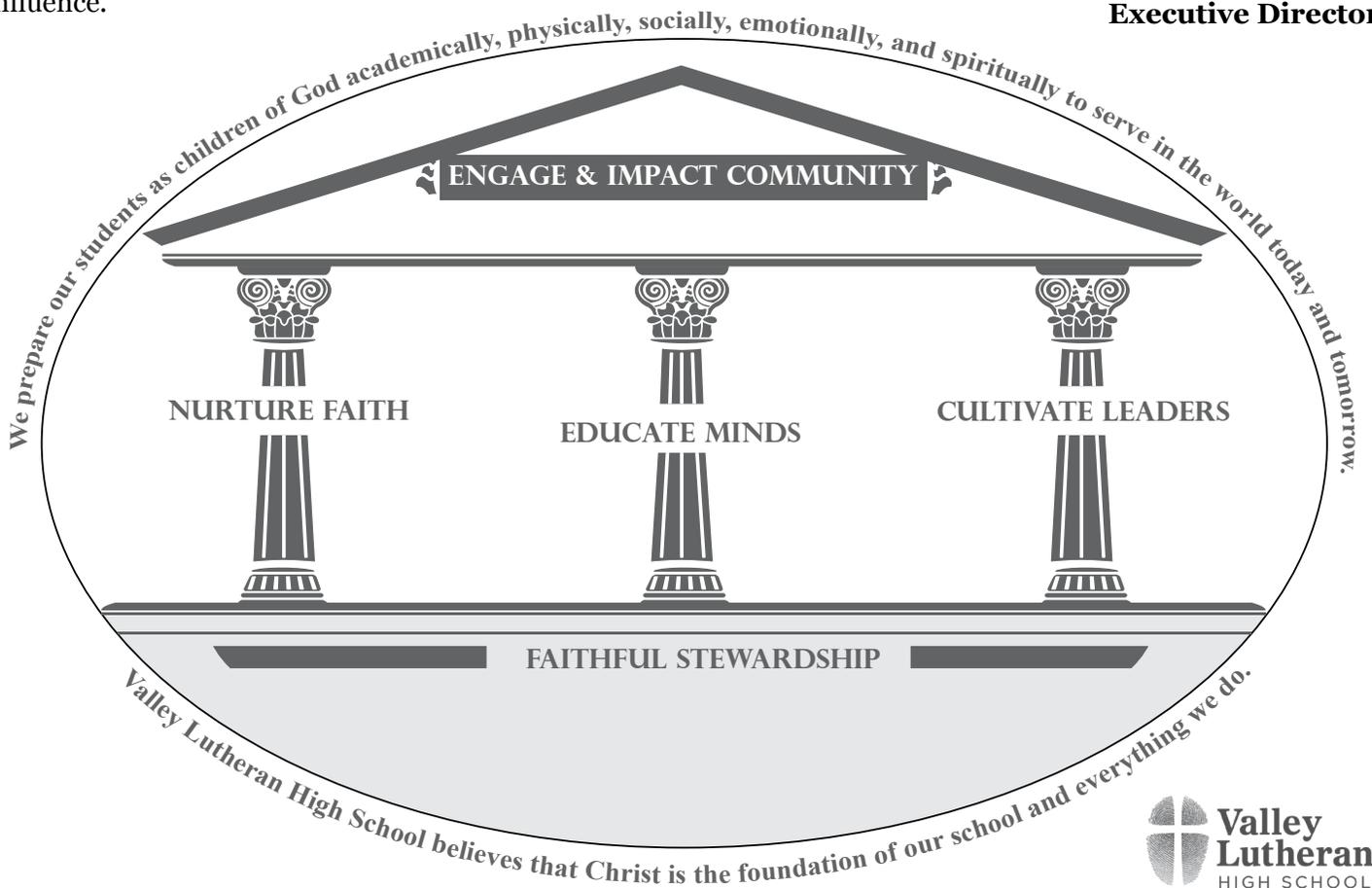
Kinnaman, a leading researcher in trends inside and outside Christianity, observes that we no longer live in relatively isolated safe Christian communities where faith is encouraged and expected. Instead we live in a diverse culture where faith is often marginalized. One of the great heroes of the Bible, Daniel, lived in Babylon where he not only persevered, but also prospered. And so did God’s people.

Daniel “knew” God, and he knew much more. In fact he is described as “. . . *showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king’s palace.*” (Daniel 1:4) He was prepared to assume a position of influence.

Today more students are studying science. Although the list of scientists who confess Christ is long, too often it seems as if the Creator is pushed out of their field of study. Interest in science has grown among our students as well. As they study science at Valley Lutheran, they are also nurturing their faith, a combination that will offer them special opportunities. The Great Lakes Bay Region is an especially exciting place to study science as Dow Chemical, Nexteer, Saginaw Valley State University, and Delta College are leading the way and we are right there preparing “Daniels” and “Danielles” to take their place.

Valley Lutheran High School, preparing “Daniels and Danielles” by Educating Minds, Nurturing Faith, and Cultivating Leaders – in Science, Math, Social Studies, Language Arts, Music, Athletics and the list goes on.

John Brandt, Ed.D.
Executive Director



Each day faith is nurtured in countless ways: formally in theology classes and chapel, and more often, informally through conversation and acts of kindness. Grace comes in many shapes and sizes.



Research by the theology faculty of Orange (California) Lutheran High School identified the need for a greater depth of biblical study by Christian high school students. Their work led to the development of a theology curriculum which we have adopted along with Lutheran high schools from across the country. The curriculum's goal is to prepare students to not only "survive in Babylon" but to be able

By the Numbers

- **315** – Students attending Valley Lutheran
- **59** – Christian churches in the student body

to winsomely share the gospel. Helping students "dig deeper" into the Bible is rewarding. Anticipating where these efforts might lead is exciting.

Excellence in student academic performance is a highlight for any school. Valedictorians **Sarah Giglio** and **Elise Holcomb**, along with salutatorian **Sarah Kempin**, lead the way. Holcomb and **Taylor Brechtelsbauer** were recognized as National Merit Commended Scholars for their excellent test scores.



both in and out of the classroom, as well as in the community. They earned excellent grades in challenging classes, participated in numerous school activities, and actively engaged the community as learners and servants.

Teachers experience satisfaction in the success of their students. Often, their work goes unrecognized. So, it was encouraging that two Valley teachers were recognized with special honors this year.

Math teacher **Barb Doyle** received the Lutheran Education Association Distinguished Secondary Educator Award for instilling positive collaborative learning in her lessons. In addition, she authored a book on her philosophy and strategies – *Greater Expectations*.

Spanish teacher, **Renee**

By the Numbers

- **14 and 3** – Faculty members with masters degrees or doctorates
- **2** – 3D printers built and used by Heath Vincent and Doug Guenther

Brenner, was recognized by the Michigan District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod as the Lutheran High School Teacher of the Year. She challenges students to excellence as evident by their exceptional success on the Advanced Placement Spanish test, where it is not uncommon for a 100 percent "pass" rate! She regularly leads mission trips to Spanish-speaking countries where students can test their language skills and their faith.

Athletic Director and baseball coach **Kurt Hofmeister** takes the task of cultivating leaders seriously. He expects his players to grow as baseball players, Christians, and leaders every day. At a recent practice, Hofmeister asked his players to identify a baseball hero; As expected, names like Miguel Cabrera and Justin Verlander were offered. Then the coach asked



which of those names would help us win a game? And finally, who on our team is a hero to you? The answer was overwhelming – **Zachery Smith** – a young man who had recently lost his father. His teammates saw important "stuff" in Zachery's mourning. Recognizing qualities in others is an important attribute of leadership, as is working through big problems while taking care of daily routines.

Shakespeare can be daunting, but not for the actors and actresses who, under **Jeanette Weilnau's** direction, performed his "Twelfth Night." However, this performance opened, not with a

By the Numbers

- **246** – Christmas presents packaged for Operation Christmas Child
- **135** – Blankets made by the Global Awareness Club for Wellspring Lutheran Services

line from Shakespeare, but rather from **Rachel Diehl**. Using poetry and prose in the style of Shakespeare, Rachel used humor to "set the stage" for a performance that tested the actors and entertained the audience. Her initiative, with a bit of a nudge from Weilnau, made a special production all the better.

ENGAGE AND IMPACT THE COMMUNITY

Several years ago a friend of Valley Lutheran encouraged us with these words – “Valley Lutheran impacts the community when its alumni are great employees, serve in their churches, and lead their families.” And based on that definition, the community spreads well beyond the Great Lakes Bay Region.

Another challenged us with these words, “Valley Lutheran must be the school where kids get a great Christian education, and people need to know it!” While we seek to provide a “great Christian education” as we educate minds, nurture faith and cultivate leaders; it has been more difficult meeting the challenge “and people need to know it.”

This year we launched the “Ready, Set, Grow” campaign. Banners and posters placed in the community is the first of several phases over several years to help meet the “people need to know it” challenge. A second

phase utilizing internet “banner ads” takes the message even further into the community. This effort is exciting and yet the most effective means for getting people to “know it” remains the positive words shared among friends and family.

This year the community came to Valley Lutheran in a big way as 73 speakers shared their experiences, encouragement and even a couple of internship opportunities on our biennial career day coordinated by Guidance Counselor **Lindsay Mueller**.

The board of directors found a new way to engage the community by establishing a “think tank” comprised of representatives from Dow Chemical, Nexteer, Morley Companies, Covenant HealthCare, and Saginaw Valley State University. The “think tank” meets periodically to hear and respond to new ideas as we work to prepare our students for their futures.

FAITHFUL STEWARDSHIP

On the surface, faithful stewardship describes the proper management of financial resources. Yet, the Christian understanding of stewardship is greater – extending to time, talents, and treasures.

Kurt Hofmeister has served as Athletic Director, Dean of Students, coach, and theology teacher at Valley for 17 of his 39 years of ministry in Lutheran schools. An

athletic director’s task involves seemingly countless moving parts – competition, location, referees, buses, concessions and the list goes on. He not only met these challenges but far exceeded even the highest standards. Baseball is his sport, and it not only was evident in the quality of our teams but even the baseball diamond. As Dean of Students he practiced the “proper

application of Law and Gospel” as he helped students develop positive relationships and habits.

Faithful “financial” stewardship is important as well. The statements below show consistently good financial management. They also show the impact of the first year of the GROWING campaign, a five-year effort to grow our campus and long-term sustainability.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note: The GROWING campaign has resulted in significantly more gifts and pledges being recognized than in previous years.

Operating Revenue

Revenue	2014-2015	2015-2016
Total	3,220,153	4,706,277
Tuition	2,035,740	2,078,871
Association Congregation Assessment	245,232	241,273
School Programs	273,182	275,276
Gifts	462,975	2,211,132
VL Foundation and Investments	203,024	221,005

Operating Expense

Expense	2014-2105	2015-2016
Total	2,878,439	2,775,497
Instruction	1,102,029	1,107,890
Administration	337,631	352,275
Employee Benefits	449,047	443,924
Financial Aid	290,588	330,593
Facility Operations	274,624	330,383
Student Activities	300,978	314,854
Fund Development	111,067	224,832
Debt Service	12,475	1,339

Balance Sheet: Three-Year History

As of June 30 Audit by Yeo&Yeo CPA

Category	2014	2015	2016
Cash and Equivalents	665,040	1,070,535	663,175
Investments (Operations)	1,368,273	1,181,532	2,012,681
Investments (Foundation)	2,600,507	2,502,339	2,391,816
Land/Building (less accumulated depreciation)	1,260,110	1,266,577	1,283,266
All Other	559,511	590,870	2,104,193
Total Assets	6,453,441	6,611,853	8,455,131
Liabilities	366,217	217,635	252,322
Long-Term Debt	0	0	0
Total Liabilities	366,217	217,635	252,322
Total Net Assets	6,087,224	6,394,218	8,202,809

By The Numbers

\$1,957,356 – Scholarships and grants earned (by VL2016)

93 – Members of the Class of 2016

29 – Universities and colleges entered by the Class of 2016

5 – Concordia Universities entered by the Class of 2016
(Ann Arbor, Wisconsin, Chicago, Nebraska, New York)

5 – Certified Advanced Placement courses (English
Language, Calculus, Spanish, Biology, U.S. History)

10 – Subjects in which advanced placement tests were given

3 – Blood drives coordinated by the National Honor Society

1 – Play performed in the “Round” (*Twelfth Night* – a first
at Valley Lutheran)

4 – College athletes in the Class of 2017

8 – Tomato plants in the Environment Club’s garden with
the harvest donated to Hidden Harvest

11 – Presentations by Valley Lutheran faculty members at the
International Lutheran Education Association Convocation

1 – Symphonic Band’s rating at the District Festival

11 – Online college courses offered through Concordia
University

4 – States visited by Golden Voice and Symphonic Band on
the Lenten Tour (Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Michigan)

7,304 – Athletic contests scheduled by Athletic Director
Kurt Hofmeister during 17 years of service (probably more)

22 – Students and adults who traveled to France for a
mission trip led by Cris Urbytes

762 – Individuals who donated to Valley Lutheran in 2016

36 – Home zip codes in the student body

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