



SOUTH
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THE HARDROCK™

SPRING / SUMMER 2025



THE HARDROCK™

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ABOUT THE COVER
President Brian Tande and his wife, Desiree, celebrated their first All School Reunion in July, joining the alumni on their traditional hike up M Hill.

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This past year has brought another wave of positive momentum to South Dakota Mines—progress that’s been made possible, in no small part, by you. Our strong and engaged alumni community continues to help guide these changes with energy and purpose, ensuring that they are not only successful, but also seamless and deeply aligned with the values of our institution.

In January, we welcomed the 20th president in our university’s proud history: Dr. Brian Tande. He succeeds Dr. Jim Rankin, who retired in the summer of 2024 after six years of dedicated leadership. A veteran academic and administrator, Dr. Tande joined us from the University of North Dakota and was appointed by the South Dakota Board of Regents following a rigorous national search. As a member of the presidential search committee, I can say with confidence that while many outstanding candidates stepped forward, Dr. Tande truly stood apart. He was, without question, the best of the best.

Since his arrival, Dr. Tande has immersed himself in Hardrocker life. His approachable nature and willingness to listen and engage with students, alumni, faculty, and community partners is already making a difference. Under his leadership, I have no doubt that South Dakota Mines will continue to rise among the nation’s premier STEM institutions.

We also welcomed another key campus leader this year: Athletic Director David Crum. He brings a wealth of experience in athletics and university leadership. At a time when college sports are rapidly evolving—with new opportunities like NIL (Name, Image, Likeness) and athlete compensation reshaping the landscape—David has already shown a steady hand and a clear vision for navigating these changes. His commitment to balancing athletic excellence with academic integrity makes him a great fit for our Hardrocker community.

Please join me in offering a warm welcome to both Dr. Tande and David Crum!

Of course, one of the year’s true highlights was the 2025 All-School Reunion, which saw record attendance and a fantastic spirit of connection. My wife Trudy, and I had the honor of serving as co-chairs of this year’s event, and we couldn’t be more grateful to the dedicated Reunion Committee, the CARA staff, and the many volunteers from across campus who helped make it all possible. From new activities to time-honored traditions, the reunion struck a perfect balance between celebration and reflection. It was a joy to reconnect with so many friends—both old and new.

As we look ahead, we’re already laying the groundwork for the 2030 All-School Reunion. Mark your calendars for July 10-13, 2030—we’d love to see even more of you there!

Thank you for all you do to support South Dakota Mines. Whether through mentorship, philanthropy, advocacy, or simply staying connected, your continued involvement shapes the future of our university and strengthens the Hardrocker legacy for generations to come.

With gratitude and pride,

Rich Wells (ChE 82)
2025 Board Chair

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Photo By Scott Buss (ChE 89)



Top row, L to R: Director of Alumni Relations Shelli Grinager, Jacob West (CSc 2022), Severin Boe II (EE 2023), Dr. Brian Tande, Calvin Tohm (CE 2021)
Bottom Row, L to R: Reunion Chairs Rich Wells (ChE 82) and Trudy Wells (ChE 84)

Members of the reunion committee and M Hill restoration committee laid the plaque for the 2025 All School Reunion at the top of M Hill.



Looking back on my first six months as president of South Dakota Mines, one thing stands out above all: the people. I've been deeply impressed by the passion and commitment of our faculty, staff, alumni, and — of course — our amazing students. Serving in this role is an honor and I feel privileged to be part of such an inspiring and hardworking community.

We've had a remarkable start to the year. One of the highlights was the dedication of the new Nucor Mineral Industries Building. This facility, which will play a critical role in shaping the future of mineral industries, is the result of strong support from the state, our industry partners, and many of you. I'm incredibly grateful for the investments that have made this possible.

We also celebrated the latest milestone in our \$100 million New Heights campaign, which is now in its final phase. Your support continues to transform our campus and expand opportunities for students. I also had the honor of presiding over my first commencement this spring—a truly humbling moment to see the next generation of Hardrockers step confidently into the world.

We also recently welcomed a new Vice President for Finance, Jason Simmons (IS 2011). Jason comes to Mines with a wealth of finance experience in state government and replaces Bill Spindle, who retired in June. As part of that transition, we also elevated the role of Jerilyn Roberts (ChemE 99, MS E Mgt 2016) to Vice President for Operations. Both Jerilyn and Jason are alums and help make sure the Hardrock spirit is an integral part of all we do.

I recently attended my first All-School Reunion and thoroughly enjoyed meeting so many alumni and hearing your stories. This issue of The Hardrock is filled with great photos and memories from the reunion. Whether or not we connected during those events, I hope to see you during Rocker Days, Sept. 21–27. I especially invite you to attend my inauguration ceremony on Wednesday, Sept. 24.

Looking ahead, I'm eager to cheer on our Hardrock teams this fall. I'm very excited about what's ahead for Mines Athletics under the leadership of our new athletic director, David Crum — read more about him on page 26. Other events I'm looking forward to include the Rocker Royale on Oct. 11, as well as my travels across the country to meet with alumni and supporters.

Together we're ensuring a strong future for this amazing institution — one rooted in academic excellence, research innovation, and student success. Thank you for all you do for South Dakota Mines.

Brian Tande, PhD
President, South Dakota Mines

ASK THE EXPERT: QUANTUM INFORMATION SCIENCES

Courtesy of Dr. Steve Smith, Head of the Department of Nanoscience & Biomedical Engineering

What is quantum information science, and how does it differ from traditional computing or information technology?

Quantum information science (QIS) encompasses efforts to develop quantum computers, quantum sensors, and secure communications networks, all of which obtain some advantage over their classical counterparts due to the intrinsic properties of quantum mechanics. Quantum information is stored in "qubits", which can be placed in an infinite number of superposition states. Conventional "bits" can only have two states, "0" or "1" and are thus, by comparison, more limited in their ability to represent data. Conventional cryptography is based on the technical difficulty in cracking codes, whereas quantum communications are intrinsically secure based on the laws of physics.

Why is it important for universities like South Dakota Mines to offer a degree in quantum information science now?

QIS and quantum engineering are emerging areas at many engineering and science universities. As the quantum industry grows, our graduates will be prepared to enter the now expanding quantum workforce. As the QIS technology is deployed, "quantum aware" scientists and engineers will be needed in nearly every industry impacted by or utilizing these technologies.

How do quantum technologies and artificial intelligence (AI) intersect, and why are these fields often mentioned together?

Quantum computers demonstrating quantum advantage will speed up AI in a variety of contexts, making AI faster, more efficient and able to handle more complex problems. Quantum computers are moving closer and closer to the point where these

two technologies will begin to merge and QAI could be used, for instance, in autonomous vehicles and other challenging AI applications. There are some engineering challenges to make this happen, but the payoffs are high and likely why these are often mentioned together.

What kinds of careers or industries might graduates with a degree in quantum information science pursue?

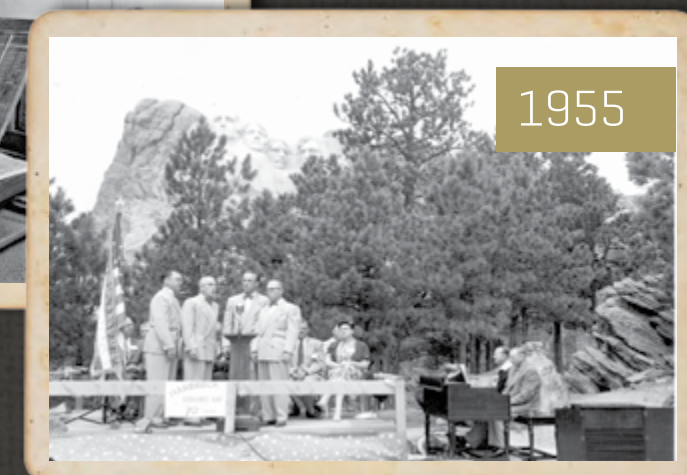
Initially the biggest demand will be in the industries engineering quantum computing hardware and software, for example Microsoft, IBM, Intel and Google. As the technologies are developed and deployed, nearly all industries that rely on information technology will be impacted. Our minor in QIS is designed to produce "quantum aware" engineers and scientists from any discipline, who will understand the basic principles of QIS and will be able to take on roles developing and/or directly or indirectly impacted by QIS technologies.

What advice would you give to students – or even professionals – who want to prepare for the quantum or AI revolutions?

Learning as much as you can about these technologies sounds like good advice to me; it's likely they will touch nearly every aspect of our lives in the future. Nobody predicted the iPhone when they demonstrated the first transistor in a germanium crystal on Christmas Eve 1947, but I think we can all agree that was a game changer. Keeping your eyes and ears open is always good advice, and educating yourself about these technologies seems like good advice indeed.

Looking Back

ALL SCHOOL REUNIONS OF THE YEARS PAST



HIGH-IMPACT HARDROCKER

By Donn D. Lobdell, Ph.D. (ME 58)

Leslie A. Rose was born in Lemmon, South Dakota, in June 1947. Both sides of his family included homesteaders in Dakota Territory in the northwestern portion of what is now South Dakota. His parents started their life together as ranchers in the vicinity of Meadow, South Dakota. His mother had qualified as a teacher and was teaching at a rural school at the time. During World War II, his parents bought the local store in Meadow. Additionally, his mother became the postmaster for the community, a role she filled for 30 years. Following the war, there was a substantial effort in South Dakota for rural electrification.

Les' father started a business of plumbing, electrical, and construction work in the area. His father also served as a county commissioner for over 25 years.

From an early age, Les assisted his father in the electrical and plumbing work. This was in keeping with the norms of ranching and rural traditions, where children learn the family business by participating in it from an early age.

Les attended the Meadow school, which had two rooms. Grades one through four in one room and grades five through eight in the other. There were around 25 total students in this school during most of this time. Les, as did most of the Meadow school students, went on to high school in Lemmon, South Dakota. With the distance and the uncertain winter conditions, this meant boarding in town. Lemmon

High School graduated 35 students in 1965, one of whom was Les. He participated in football and wrestling.

When he graduated from high school, he decided to attend South Dakota Mines. Les was one of six individuals from the Meadow area who attended Mines between 1963

LES ROSE

and 1972, a remarkable achievement for a community that graduated fewer than 30 students during that period.

Based upon his work with his father, he felt that either electrical engineering or mechanical engineering (ME) would be a good fit. Les chose ME. He also elected to participate in the Reserve Officers Training Corps (ROTC) program. In addition to this, Les was on the SDM wrestling team. He also received pilot training through the ROTC program during his undergraduate years. This was a volunteer project and resulted in a private pilot's license.

In his first years at Mines, he again worked with his father in the summers. In his final two years, he worked at Pete Lien and Sons both during the school year and the summer. Following graduation, Les was

commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the US Army Corps of Engineers Reserve. He elected to enter active duty at that time. Following the Engineer Corps Orientation program, Les requested and was assigned to Army Flight School, where he trained as an Army pilot. He qualified to pilot two models of helicopters. He later qualified on fixed-wing aircraft, including Army twin-engine craft. Following his pilot training, Les had a several-year service obligation. During this time, he applied for a regular army commission to supersede his reserve commission. This was awarded. Les had two Army specialties; one as a pilot, the other as an engineer officer. To bring the latter into focus, he applied for advanced training and was approved for an MS program in civil engineering at the University of Michigan.

In the assignment following his MS, Les went to the Army Engineer School at Fort Belvoir, Virginia as an instructor. In this role, he and the team he led were developing an advanced form of instruction for a course. This was successful and they spent the next two years developing and teaching the syllabus for small group experiential-based learning, which was widely adopted in the Engineer Corps.

Les was assigned as construction manager for what was to be the world's largest wind tunnel. This was a Corps of Engineers project for the Air Force. The Air Force had an officer of the same rank as Les assigned to the project in the role of "customer's representative." The overall program manager was a civilian government employee. This is the type of potentially conflicting roles that can greatly encumber a project. In this situation,

the three were able to form a team that functioned extremely well. Les recalled how he and the Air Force officer cut their distinctive respective service shirts in half down the center of the backs, then had the left side of one sewn to the right side of the other and vice versa. Wearing these shirts was a symbolic gesture that demonstrated to the project team a unified leadership of both organizations. The wind tunnel was successfully completed.

Following this project, Les was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and assigned additional projects and duties. When he reached 20 years of service, he decided to retire from the Army. Since he was still young and vigorous, he began looking for his next challenges. He sent three letters of inquiry; one was to the person who had been the overall manager of the wind tunnel program. She was now at a company,

Delta Research, that contracted with various government agencies to provide services often resulting from unanticipated needs. She recommended Les to the company's CEO, who interviewed and hired him. Even though he was employed by three more companies, Les never applied for another job.

Delta Research became part of L-3 Stratis, where Les became president. In turn, L-3 Stratis became part of L-3 National Security Systems, where he continued as president. He remained at the newly merged company to effect the transition. In late 2016, he founded a company, Titan Technologies. It employed a business model initially focused on state rather than federal agencies. In the eight years since its founding, Titan Technologies has grown its revenues by a factor of six. It serves local, state, and federal entities with services that range from emergency response to developing systems to managing and performing regular functions. Titan Technologies currently employs about 800 people.

In September 2024, South Dakota Mines announced that Les made an unrestricted donation of \$6 million to the ME department. This is the largest single donation in university history. The school has named its ME department the Leslie A. Rose Department of Mechanical Engineering as a result of the generous donation.



Leslie A. Rose
Department of
Mechanical Engineering

Even though his career has had little resemblance to the traditional role of a mechanical engineer, Les stated that he took from his Mines training the understanding of problem-solving methods and the impetus to follow analysis with action. He anticipates that his gift will enhance such training for current and future mechanical engineering students.

Acknowledgements:
I thank Les Rose (ME 70) for devoting several hours to discussions.

Thanks also to Gary Christman (ChemE 74), one of the several Hardrockers from Meadow, South Dakota, for sharing his recollections of its people.



When Brian Killion (EE 93) met his future wife, Ana, he didn't just fall for her—he fell for Ecuadorian food. The smells, spices, and stories behind each dish were unlike anything the South Dakota native had known. As Ana shared childhood recipes passed

“We engineered everything ourselves—from the power system to the kitchen workflow,” Brian explained. “We installed solar panels, built high-capacity battery systems, and completely eliminated the need for a generator.”

ENGINEERING FLAVOR: How One Mines Alum Turned a Food Truck into a Sustainable Work of Art

down through generations, Brian began recreating them, blending culture with curiosity. That curiosity came naturally. As a South Dakota Mines grad and electrical engineer, Brian thought in systems. “Whether perfecting a recipe or designing a power system, I approached it methodically,” he said. That mindset led to Patas Azules—a solar-powered Ecuadorian food truck engineered for sustainability and flavor. “We didn't just want to serve food,” Brian said. “We wanted a mobile experience that's sustainable, efficient, and rooted in heritage.”

The name Patas Azules—Spanish for “Blue Feet”—pays homage to the blue-footed boobies of the Galápagos Islands, a symbol of Ecuador's unique biodiversity. “These birds are iconic to Ecuador and can't be found anywhere else,” he said. “That's how we see our food truck—distinctive, rooted in a sense of place, and intentionally rare.”



A Food Truck Built by Engineers

For Brian and Ana, building the food truck was a full-scale engineering project that took over a year and required every bit of their technical training—Brian in electrical systems and Ana in software engineering.

Inside, Ana applied her software background to design a seamless kitchen flow, minimizing steps and maximizing output. “We applied systems thinking—treating the food truck as an integrated system where every component affects the others. When we hit challenges, the engineering training kicked in. By researching, testing solutions, and iterating, solutions were found quickly. Mines taught me to approach things systematically,” Brian said.

The result? A self-sustaining mobile kitchen that doesn't just meet code—it redefines it.

Engineering Principles in Action

From the start, the couple approached the food truck as a system. “Every component affects the others,” Brian said. “We used load calculations, redundancy planning, and environmental modeling to ensure efficiency—even in peak summer heat.”

From kitchen layout to inventory, the truck runs like a well-oiled machine—constantly refined through real-time data. “We use analytics to track sales, manage inventory, and fine-tune the menu,” Brian said. “Engineering isn't just our background—it's how we think.”

A Family Affair with Cultural Roots

Despite the high-tech design, people come to Patas Azules for the food.

“Our menu started with Ana's childhood dishes, which became my favorites too—dishes that told the story of Ecuador's diverse regions,” Brian said. “We had to experiment with workflow to make things efficient but the food remains authentic.”



Their 13-year-old son has even taken up a starring role—earning the nickname *empanada extraordinaire* thanks to his expert folding technique. “Customers love watching him work,” Brian recalled.

Sharing the Spark

Since launching, Patas Azules has garnered attention not just for its food but for its ingenuity. Other food truck operators have approached the couple for advice on sustainable energy systems, and they're now helping others design similar setups.

“We're proving that you don't have to compromise sustainability for success,” Brian said. “In fact, it can be your competitive edge.”

They've even begun exploring the possibility of franchising their truck model and launching a separate venture to help mobile vendors transition to solar.

“Engineering principles apply to everything—whether you're building software, designing circuits, or creating a food business. The problem-solving mindset you develop at Mines is incredibly valuable in any field.”

A Bright Future

The response from the community has been overwhelming. “People are curious when they see a silent food truck, and then they're hooked by the food,” Brian said. “We've had customers who'd never heard of Ecuadorian cuisine before who are now planning trips there.”

And it's not just about delicious meals—it's about inspiration. “When someone tells us they're rethinking how they run their own business after seeing what we've done, that's the best compliment we could get,” Brian said.

From solar panels to empanadas, from Galápagos birds to family recipes, Patas Azules is more than a food truck. It's a blueprint for how engineering and entrepreneurship can combine to create something truly extraordinary.



At South Dakota Mines, students apply science and engineering in real-world settings—often far beyond the classroom and even international borders. This summer, John Brickey (Chemical Engineering) and Cambell Thompson (Mechanical Engineering, 2025) traveled to Liberia with Engineers and Scientists Abroad (ESA) to help expand education access and improve infrastructure at a rural school, while fully immersing in the local culture.

“I am always looking for ways to combine my engineering skills with my other interests,” said Cambell, who is the current president of ESA. “ESA really fulfilled this, mixing my passion for travel and community service with my education. As an engineer, I want to use my skills for good, and this is an opportunity to do that.”

During their nine-day trip to the west African country, John and Cambell tackled three projects: installing a Starlink system to provide reliable internet access for students, teachers and administrators; conducted hands-on science labs for 7th – 11th-grade students who have little access to experiential learning; and developed a utility map of the village's plumbing, electrical and sewage systems to support future development.

“This trip really showed me how much engineering problems exist in other nations largely because they don't have the resources or expertise,” John



ENGINEERING A BRIGHTER FUTURE: Mines Students Help Transform a Rural School in Liberia

said. “As an engineering student, I am learning how to solve problems and innovate solutions. With these trips, I can put these to practice while working with limited resources and various people's backgrounds.”

This is the fifth time Mines students have gone to Liberia, partnering with the nonprofit Bridges of Hope, which has been working in Liberia for two decades.

Prior to traveling to Liberia, John and Cambell developed a plan on what they wanted to accomplish and how to do it. “We even went out to get things that would be harder to get in Liberia, so we could bring them with us,” John said. The two met with the school's principal, Elijah Kobbia, to coordinate their projects and timeline.

Despite some initial challenges with the internet installation, John and Cambell created a fast and reliable connection for the school and are still brainstorming possible improvements.

“As of now, it still has some troubles with connection strength, range, and power, but hopefully in the future, it can be upgraded to be on solar panels and have a way to give the signal to more places, maybe even throughout the village,” John said.

The administration and students are grateful for the improved technology. “The idea of the dish was pretty foreign to a lot of the community members,” Cambell said. “Most were impressed and grateful to have such cool technology on their campus.” For John and Cambell, one of the most rewarding parts of the trip was interacting with the students during the labs. The two included a lecture with each lab to explain the

concepts to the students. “They were incredibly engaged and found the labs fascinating,” John said.

The duo facilitated two to three labs in chemistry, biology, and physics. “We got to see firsthand how the labs invigorated the students and their passion toward science,” Cambell said.

“They performed the labs in small groups and watched the concepts they learned illustrated in real life. It was awesome to see how resourceful the students are and how fast they could pick up the concepts we were teaching.”

One of Cambell's most memorable moments from the trip wasn't about engineering at all—it was about connection. “Some local guys invited John and me to join their soccer match against another church team. We thought it would be a relaxed, informal game,” he said. “Next thing we knew, they were handing us jerseys and assigning positions. We weren't exactly skilled players, but we gave it our all.”

Both Cambell and John said the experience in Liberia opened their eyes to new possibilities, both professionally and personally, and showed them how their skills could have a global impact.

“I truly think experiences like this, especially at a young age, inform and expand the values and priorities that young professionals take forward throughout their lives and careers,” Cambell said. “As engineers, scientists, and humans, we have a responsibility to use our skills and knowledge in a positive way.”

COMING FULL CIRCLE:

How Dick and Mary Schlumpberger Found—and Gave Back to—Their Home at Mines

When Dick Schlumpberger (CE 65) first arrived in Rapid City, he had no idea how deeply South Dakota Mines would shape his life—or how he and his wife Mary would later give back.

Dick had early ties to the Black Hills through visits to an aunt in Rapid City. As a high school



student in the National Guard, a summer stationed there sparked his interest in the city. Though college plans came late, Mines stood out. "I had friends at South Dakota State, but I felt drawn out here," he said. "It just felt right."

He started at Mines in the late 1950s, joined the football team, and—like many students—struggled financially. After his first year, he left to work construction and later met Mary through a mutual friend. When he returned to Rapid City, she followed.

"We decided to get married, and I told her I wanted to go back to school," Dick said. "She said, 'Fine,' and that was it."

The couple's early married life revolved around perseverance. Mary worked as an X-ray technician while Dick took heavy course loads and worked part time as a janitor. "We didn't see a lot of each other," Mary recalled. "He was busy with school; I was busy with our son."

Despite the challenges, the Schlumpbergers felt supported at every turn.

"There were so many people who helped us," Dick said. The newly finished Surbeck Center became a place of respite, and even Guy and Gail March made a point of asking about their young son, Mike, whenever they saw the couple.

Bill Coyle, then head of the civil engineering department, mentored Dick challenging him academically while providing encouragement to push forward.

That unwavering support and kindness left a lasting impression.

By the time Dick graduated in 1965, the couple had a toddler and a baby on the way. He spent the next 35 years working with Caterpillar from field engineer to global operations leader.

Through it all, they never forgot how much Mines had given them—support, education, community—and often returned to campus attending football games, alumni events, and reunions.

In 2017, they bought a condo in Rapid City to be closer to their Mines community.

The Hardrock connection goes beyond Dick and Mary. Their son Mike is an adjunct professor at the university.

"He's probably more connected to Mines than Rolla, Missouri now," Dick joked.

Today, Dick and Mary are woven into the campus community as active supporters and regular attendees at athletic events. "We walk in and the coaches say hi," Mary said. "They know us." Their philanthropy reflects the support they once received. Dick's

gifts—focused on scholarships, athletics, and civil engineering—are deeply personal. "Half goes to athletics, the rest to scholarships and civil," he said. "I hope it helps students finish their education—and maybe produces a few good athletes, too."

For Dick, it's about more than school pride. "I ran out of money," he said plainly. "If we can help a kid stay in school, it's money well spent. A lot of them come from small towns like I did—parents aren't wealthy, but they want their kids to get a good education."

His children encouraged him to give freely. "They told me, 'We don't want your money—do what you want with it.' So, I've adopted the School of Mines. It feels like home."



Today, Dick's reasons for giving are straightforward. "What you have financially now, a good part of it is probably because of your schooling at Mines," he said. "Graduates get jobs. They're sought after. If the school has that kind of reputation, we as alumni should give something back so someone else can do the same thing."

Looking back, Dick and Mary see Mines not just as a school, but as a partner in their life's journey—a place that took care of them when they needed it most, and one they're now proud to take care of in return.

"Mines is kind of a friend," Dick said. "It's our home. It's our community."



TOGETHER, OUR DONATIONS CREATE A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR HARDROCKERS

Did you know that financial need is the number one reason a student turns down admission to Mines?

Gifts to the Mines Advancement Fund allow us to increase the number of scholarships, add new equipment and technology to labs, expand and renovate campus facilities, and more.

Your support will make a difference to Hardrockers now and in the future.



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INTRODUCING OUR 20TH PRESIDENT,
DR. BRIAN TANDE

An innate curiosity led Dr. Brian Tande on a career path that landed him the position of 20th president of South Dakota Mines – and he plans to nurture curiosity to drive the university’s continued success.

His first priorities as president are to maintain the culture that makes Mines unique, and make sure the university is well positioned for the future.

“I want to see us as a leader in engineering innovation,” he said. “We need to always be at the forefront of engineering and science education and figuring out how to best prepare students.”

Growing up in rural Stanley, North Dakota, Dr. Tande said he generally wanted to know how things worked – he especially enjoyed dismantling and reassembling radios. His grandmother bought him books on science; his father, who was an electrician, encouraged him to pursue engineering; and his high school chemistry teacher further inspired him. (Coincidentally, his high school chemistry teacher’s son attended Mines.) His interest in the chemical engineering field was solidified during high school when he toured a power plant in North Dakota and met a chemical engineer employed there.

Dr. Tande obtained bachelor’s degrees in chemical engineering and chemistry from the University of Minnesota in 1998 and a PhD in chemical engineering in 2002 from the University of Delaware.

He began teaching early on, serving as an undergraduate teaching assistant in general chemistry and continuing work with undergraduate researchers as a graduate student.

After obtaining his PhD, he began working in polymer product development in 2003 and moved briefly into fiberglass composite manufacturing. He then co-founded Twilight Labs, Inc., which commercialized unique coatings technology for products in the hunting and fishing industry. This led to formation of a spinoff company called Lumacept, Inc., which developed UV-C reflective coatings for infection control in hospitals.

“I pictured my whole career being in industry,” he said. “Eventually, I kind of missed working with students and doing research and teaching.”

He joined the faculty at the University of North Dakota in 2006 as an assistant professor of chemical engineering, working his way up to eventually becoming department chair in 2013. He briefly left UND in 2017, becoming an associate professor in Kansas State University’s Department of Chemical Engineering – a move he describes as a “mid-career crisis” – and returned to UND as associate dean of the College of Engineering and Mines in 2018, becoming dean in 2019.

“I like the higher ed environment,” he said. “I love that we bring together so many different people with different interests and different backgrounds. We take kids, give them a lot of skills, and set them off on really amazing careers.”

While considering his next career move, he came across the Mines presidency opportunity and found he couldn’t pass it up.

“This is a very special place – we have passionate alums, we have passionate faculty and staff,” he

said, “and we produce amazing graduates.”

He describes his leadership style as collaborative and transparent – “it’s about giving people the freedom to do their jobs in the best way they feel they can do them, and finding what people are passionate about,” he said.

He believes that Mines’ strengths will see it continue to succeed through what he views are the biggest opportunities in higher education: enrollment, demographic challenges, artificial intelligence, and changing attitudes about the value of a four-year degree.

“We offer something that’s a different experience for science and engineering students than other campuses,” he said. “We’re small enough that we can be nimble. Larger institutions can’t change direction as easily. I think we’re going to be more adaptable.”

Dr. Tande hopes to expand on the university’s reputation by possibly opening a center for innovation. “I want to create an environment where people feel comfortable to do things differently and risk failure,” he said. “You need to have some tolerance of risk of failure in order to be able to do really cool things.”

He also wants to continue developing the university’s economic development relationships; one important aspect of this is working with Elevate Rapid City and community entities to progress the plan for the Innovation

District, encompassing the area west of campus.

“Rapid City is really poised for some great things, and we’re going to be at the center of that,” he said.

Outside of work, Dr. Tande enjoys weightlifting, biking, hiking, reading about history, traveling, and spending time with his family. He and his wife of 26 years, Desiree, have four children: Lucas, Joel, Gabriel, and Adrianna. Lucas and Joel are college graduates, Gabriel is a college student, and Adrianna is entering her senior year of high school in Grand Forks this fall.

Desiree received a bachelor’s degree in nutrition from the University of Minnesota, a master’s degree in human nutrition from

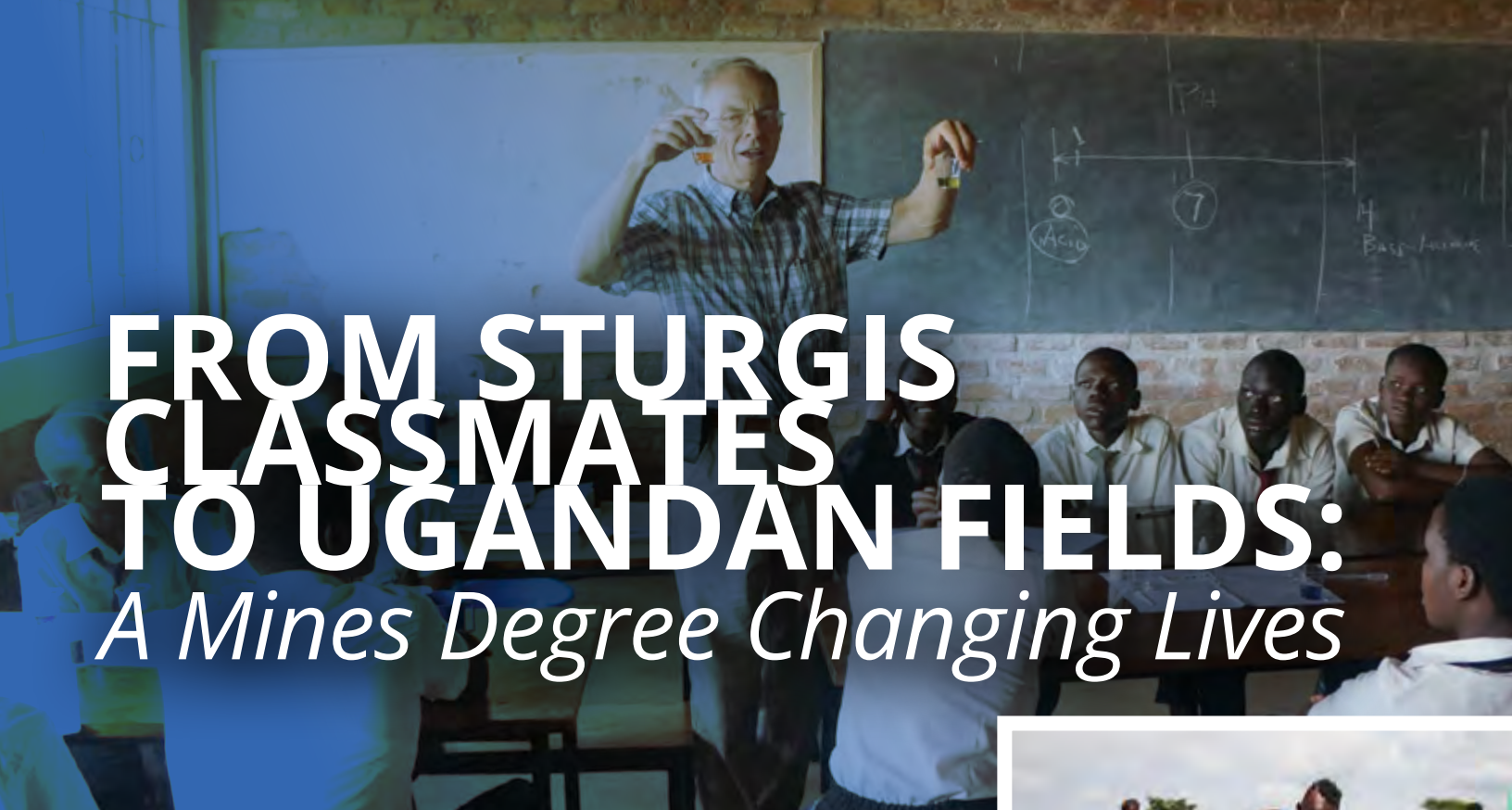
the University of Delaware, and a PhD from North Dakota State University in human development. She is currently an associate professor, department chair, and program director for the Coordinated Program in Dietetics and Human Nutrition program at the University of North Dakota.

The Tande family has two golden Labs, Athena and Mabel.

Dr. Tande recently purchased a motorcycle and plans to bring back the President’s Scholarship Ride in 2026. He also plans to work with Center for Alumni Relations & Advancement on updating the local President’s Dinner scholarship fundraiser and potentially expanding to host President’s Dinners in other locations.

“Although we work hard to keep Mines as affordable as possible, the cost is still a barrier for many aspiring scientists and engineers,” he said. “I’m very proud that we have such generous alumni and friends who help us provide scholarships to remove those barriers. By giving back, they are helping produce what the world needs most – more Hardrockers!”





FROM STURGIS CLASSMATES TO UGANDAN FIELDS:

A Mines Degree Changing Lives

When Mike and Cathy Hafner reminisce about their first encounter, it's not in a lab or lecture hall but on a quiet Sturgis street in the early 1960s. During cold-war civil defense drills, students were told to "walk home quickly and calmly if nuclear holocaust struck." Mike, then in sixth grade at Sturgis Elementary, dutifully escorted Cathy—his future wife—home. They reconnected at a party in 1967, began dating that year, and married in 1973, just a week after Cathy graduated from Black Hills State University. Decades later, their partnership has taken them far beyond South Dakota; together with a friend they co-founded Field of Hope, a nonprofit transforming agriculture education and food security in Northern Uganda.

ENGINEERING RIGOR MEETS HUMANITARIAN VISION

Mike earned his mechanical engineering degree from South Dakota Mines in 1974 and went on to a 39-year career at John Deere, traversing nine US locations in sales, product support, and management. "Engineering taught me to think rigorously—identify a problem, break it down, test solutions," he says. "Those

skills served me well professionally and later helped structure our nonprofit work." Cathy, whose background spans education and construction project management support, adds that their shared faith and her own experiences fueled a yearning to serve beyond familiar borders.

Their journey toward Uganda began in 2010 when a mutual friend, inspired by missionary trips, returned from Northern Uganda and described devastated farmland, displaced communities, and forgotten agronomic practices after a 20-year civil war. Intrigued, Mike made vision-casting trips in 2011, partnering with a Canadian faith-based organization already working in the region. Despite early setbacks, they plunged in, investing personal funds to purchase tractors and to fund a water project to serve a school, medical clinic, a drip irrigation garden, and a community which had been devastated by the war.

FROM TRACTORS TO TEACHER TRAINING

"The tractors and the water project were a start, but they didn't feel like enough," Mike reflects. While staying



at Otino-Waa orphanage in Lira in 2013, he was unexpectedly asked to teach a secondary school agriculture class. Armed with internet research and notebook in hand, he stood before forty eager students in 90-degree heat. "I realized how hungry they were for knowledge. I kicked off each lesson with a song, filmed their responses, set up demonstration gardens. It changed everything."

Out of that experience emerged Field of Hope's three pillars:

PILLAR ONE: Experiential Agriculture Education.

Partnering with Vivayic, a US agricultural training development company, Field of Hope developed teacher guides aligned to the Ugandan national agriculture syllabus and trained educators to lead experiential

hands-on lessons. Now, more than 577 secondary teachers use these materials in their classes. Teachers also convene in WhatsApp groups for ongoing support in their teaching efforts. In addition, full-time Ugandan Field of Hope staff conduct teacher evaluations in their classrooms and site visits, ensuring high-quality instruction and accountability.

Field of Hope is making available Inspiring Students in Agriculture Grants to schools who put together agriculture projects for hands-on experience for the students. For example, a rabbit-raising initiative revealed unexpected value in rabbit urine, which is sold as an organic fertilizer. Goat rearing at another school is providing needed income for the school.

Last year alone, more than 57,000 Ugandan students were reached through Field of Hope's teacher training programs. Many teachers are faced with class sizes reaching up to 75–100 students. Because teacher training has been going on since 2019, more than 200,000 students have been impacted. "We used to think agronomy alone could solve food insecurity," Mike admits. "But empowering teachers, students, and women farmers creates sustainable change."

PILLAR TWO: Women's Smallholder Empowerment.

Mike connected with Agnes Obote, a Ugandan agriculture program manager, to design outreach for women smallholder farmers. This outreach now consists of ten women's groups with more than 40 women and men in each group. The training consists of land and seed selection, land preparation, planting and harvesting techniques, pest and disease control, and minimizing post-harvest loss. Field of Hope has also helped three different districts set up piggery projects. These projects have helped the women learn animal husbandry and have provided income diversification. Because the families taking part have very little access to borrowing money, Field of

Hope has helped the women set up Village Savings and Loans Associations. The women determine the amount of money they will save and the interest rate and payback period for loans. Money is saved in a lock box with three keys for the officers for security. From the VSLAs, women have since launched ox-plowing initiatives and small businesses and now have sufficient money for school fees, funerals, and weddings.

PILLAR THREE: Leadership Development.

Recognizing the power of cross-cultural exchange, Field of Hope invites university students—many from US land-grant agricultural programs—to assist with teacher training and field work. "Seeing them sing, dance, and learn alongside Ugandan peers has been profound," Cathy notes. "They return home inspired to pursue global service." In addition, Field of Hope has begun sponsoring scholarships for Ugandan students to pursue further agriculture education.

Internship opportunities have also been created through Field of Hope for Ugandan college students to volunteer their time in both small holder farmer and school training development projects.

EXPANDING IMPACT: ORPHAN CARE AND INNOVATION

Building on early successes, Mike and a former Field of Hope board member now work with two orphan care centers outside of Field of Hope to help them establish farming operations and livestock projects.

A MINES DEGREE'S FAR-REACHING LEGACY

Through it all, Mike points back to South Dakota Mines. "The rigorous problem-solving mindset I was taught in Rapid City applies anywhere—even to village farming and agriculture classrooms in Uganda. Mines taught me not just technical skills but how to adapt and persevere," he said. Cathy

concur: "Our education opened doors we never expected. It gave us credibility with partners and the confidence to dream big." For students and alumni pondering their own paths, the Hafners offer simple advice: **STAY OPEN** and say **YES**. "Don't limit yourself to a predefined career. Dedicate your time, talent, and treasure where there is a need—and watch how your skills translate in surprising ways."

LOOKING AHEAD

Field of Hope's roadmap includes expanded scholarships for Ugandan students, paid fellowships for US undergraduates and master's candidates, and new demonstration gardens that double as community learning centers.

Mike just returned from Uganda, where he commissioned the first Field of Hope water well. They hope this is just the first of many.

Their son Chris now serves on the board — passing the torch to the next generation.

"Every setback and success has felt guided," Mike reflects. "We were naive to think it would be easy, but those challenges taught us lessons no classroom ever could." Cathy adds, "It's dramatic how much richer life can become when you apply your education to serve others."

From a sixth-grade escort home to fields of maize and classrooms in northern Uganda, Mike and Cathy Hafner embody the transformative power of a Mines degree—and the boundless possibilities it can unlock for a better world.



CELEBRATING

HALF A CENTURY OF UNDERGROUND SOUND AT SOUTH DAKOTA MINES

Long before the internet rewrote how we discover music, a different kind of signal was shaping the sound of the Black Hills. Since 1971, KTEQ 91.3 FM—the student-run radio station at South Dakota Mines—has been a fearless voice for underground music, creative freedom, and community connection.

Now, as it returns to the FM airwaves and prepares to be inducted into the South Dakota Rock and Rollers Hall of Fame, KTEQ DJs reflect on more than 50 years of shaping the regional music scene while looking ahead to the next generation of sound.

“Before the proliferation of the internet, KTEQ was the beating heart of a thriving underground music scene in the Black Hills. The station, run entirely by students and community members in open format programming, was the epicenter for information on the latest music and event information,”

said Mike Ray (GEOL 97), KTEQ manager from 1992-1994.

KTEQ’s origins date back to 1922, when a group of electrical engineering students launched Mines’ first radio station, WCAT—nicknamed “Wildcat Radio.” Using a homemade transmitter and self-built components, they began broadcasting from the physical education building (now the Music Center) under a federal license—more than a decade before the FCC was created. Their passion for music and engineering laid the foundation for a radio legacy that helped shape Rapid City’s alternative music scene.



WCAT became a favorite among younger listeners, frustrating commercial stations—until a live mic incident in 1952 led the FCC to revoke its license. The station remained silent until 1971, when another group of engineering students revived campus radio under a new name: KTEQ.

“KTEQ was an unforgettable experience,” said Thomas Aldrich (MetE 75), station manager in 1975. With more than 60 volunteers, the station broadcast 24 hours a day, seven days a week. “Some of the friends I met when working there are still friends today.”

Beyond the music, memories, and camaraderie, Aldrich says KTEQ helped

shape his future as an engineer. “The responsibility of managing 60 – 70 people proved invaluable in my career in the mining industry. I learned life lessons not normally taught in engineering disciplines.” Some of Michael Conrad Walton’s favorite memories from Mines center on KTEQ. “One of my best friends there was Don Barnet,” said Walton, aka Michael Well-Tuned, a KTEQ DJ from 1975–76. “He was a huge Grateful Dead fan and once did a seven-hour ‘Dead’ show. He got a lot of calls that night.”

He also recalls the day Jerry Jeff Walker dropped by the KTEQ office. “He asked if we wanted to hear a few songs,” Walton said. “I consider that a great day.”

Jerry is one of many artists attracted to the community because of KTEQ and its following. Offspring, Green Day, Fugazi – they all made Rapid City a stop, playing to young crowds hungry for a new sound.

KTEQ didn’t just broadcast music – it started a movement that everyone wanted to be part of.

“The DJ meetings at the start of each semester, where you could go to sign up for a show, would fill the biggest classrooms on campus – sometimes 150 or more people would show up for a chance at a timeslot – having a KTEQ show, and being part of this community, was a big deal for many of us,” said Mike Ray, who started listening in the early 1980s as a young kid. “It was a doorway to a whole world of music I did not know existed.”

Dr. Bill Cross (MetE 84, MS MetE 86), professor emeritus at South Dakota Mines, has been involved with KTEQ for over 40 years—first as an undergrad listener, then as a DJ and later faculty advisor with the Tech Educational Radio Council (TERC). He fondly recalls how KTEQ once helped make Rapid City a



key stop for touring bands, inspiring a love of alternative music among local teens—some of whom later came to Mines to join the station themselves.

“I know people from back in the day whose goal in life from middle school was to go on KTEQ,” Dr. Cross said. In 2001, KTEQ lost its FCC license after leaving the air for a full year when it had to remove its transmitter from a local TV tower, bringing the region’s underground sound to a halt. Once again, students rallied and brought KTEQ back to the air in 2014.

Tung Nguyen (ME 2017) joined KTEQ as a sophomore in 2015, just as the station was finding its footing after years of being off the air. “Financially, we were strapped, so we got creative



in fundraising for new broadcasting equipment and FCC fees,” said Tung. “In 2015, we organized the inaugural KTEQstrophe (an event showcasing local bands during a live show – a

throwback to KTEQ’s early years) event at Black Hills Vinyl, which felt like a turning point for our community presence.”

The students kept up momentum, hosting the second annual KTEQstrophe, launching new merchandise, growing their social media presence, and starting a high school DJ internship program.

“Through thick and thin, the station is still here today, and many people have strong ties and memories of the station,” said Caleigh Copenhaver, a senior electrical engineering major and KTEQ’s current station manager.

Today, the station’s team is working to rekindle that role as a vital bridge between Mines and the greater Rapid City Area.

“I want KTEQ to be a place where people gather for music and share what they are passionate about with each other – whether this means a band playing music or everyone gathering for some food and drinks and talking about music. KTEQ brings people together,” Caleigh said.

That ability to connect people and its lasting impact on the regional music scene has earned KTEQ a spot in the South Dakota Rock and Rollers Hall of Fame.

With renewed community support, KTEQ hopes to expand its reach and reclaim its status as a cultural



nexus between the Black Hills and the national and international music scenes. “It’s really motivating to focus on connection and see the community take notice of what we’re doing,” Caleigh said. “When we get that kind of energy back from listeners and alumni, it makes all the effort feel worth it.” From Gary Brown (GeolE 72), KTEQ’s first DJ who signed on Aug. 7, 1971, to Caleigh and her team of music-loving engineers, KTEQ has remained a student-driven labor of love — a vibrant, ever-evolving archive of regional music culture that shows no signs of slowing down.

“KTEQ’s a place where people can find alternative perspectives and enjoy a unique vibe,” Tung said. “Rapid City is the perfect spot for this kind of environment, and I believe people will always seek out what KTEQ offers.”



alumni.sdsmt.edu

HARDROCKER CONNECTIONS

Welcome to your gateway to a stronger Mines community!

- Reconnect with classmates
- Discover mentoring opportunities
- Stay updated on alumni events
- Grow your professional network
- Give back to the Mines community



Every five years, something remarkable happens at South Dakota Mines. Old friends become new again. Familiar hallways echo with laughter from decades past. And this July 9–12, campus buzzed with more energy than ever before as 1,700 alumni and their families returned home for the 2025 All School Reunion—marking the highest recorded attendance in the event’s history.

This year’s theme, “Celebrating New Heights,” was more than a nod to Mines’ storied past—it was a celebration of how far the university and its alumni have come, and the strong foundation they continue to build for future generations.

From the minute guests arrived, the reunion was packed with moments of connection, discovery, and celebration. Familiar traditions like the M Hill Hike, Tunnel Activities, the Reunion Picnic, and the formal All School Dinner offered nostalgic touchpoints for returning Hardrockers. But this year’s reunion also broke new ground with fresh programming designed for families and younger alumni.

For the first time, the university hosted pre-reunion family excursions, allowing visitors to explore the beauty of the Black Hills together before the full schedule began. Children and

grandchildren of alumni had their own memories to make thanks to expanded kid-friendly events and activities sprinkled throughout the week.

“It feels like a family reunion,” said Kelly Whiting (MATH 89), summing up the energy that carried through the four-day celebration.

Department open houses offered a chance for alumni to meet with faculty, tour newly renovated spaces, and see firsthand how their programs have evolved. Whether they graduated five or 50 years ago, guests found themselves marveling at how the campus has changed—and how much it still feels like home.

“It all feels like home,” said Pete Knott (ME 62). “A lot has changed, but that’s the way of the world, the way of society. It’s changed, but it all feels the same.”

One of the biggest hits of the weekend was the Decades Street Dance, where alumni from across the generations gathered outside the O’Harra Stadium for music, dancing, and reminiscing under the stars. Throughout the reunion, conversations picked up as if no time had passed. Longtime friends recounted stories from their college days, introduced their families, and paid tribute to classmates who couldn’t

attend. Many classes celebrated milestone anniversaries, with photos, laughter, and plenty of storytelling along the way.

The heart of the reunion remained rooted in tradition. The hike up M Hill was as symbolic as ever. For many, the view from the top wasn’t just a reminder of student days—it was a moment to reflect on the shared legacy that binds all Hardrockers together.

“It doesn’t matter if it’s called Dakota School of Mines, South Dakota School of Mines & Technology, Tech, or now South Dakota Mines,” said Dr. Scott Kenner (CE 77), standing proudly at the summit. “We’re all here for one reason: the legacy of South Dakota Mines. That’s why we get together every five years, for the legacy.”

As the weekend drew to a close, hugs were exchanged, group photos snapped, and promises made to keep in touch. Though the years may pass, the bond shared by Mines alumni remains as strong as ever.

The 2025 All School Reunion didn’t just celebrate where we’ve been—it reminded us of how powerful it is to come home, and how bright the future looks when we climb new heights together.





Science Meets Skincare:

New Anti-Aging Technology Developed by South Dakota Mines Professor



From Botox and chemical peels to LED masks and fillers, the quest for ageless skin is constant. But while many treatments promise perfection, they often miss the mark on what people really want: to look refreshed and natural.

“It looks flawless, but it doesn’t look natural,” said Dr. Tugba Ozdemir, assistant professor of nanoscience and biomedical engineering at South Dakota Mines, referring to many different medical-grade anti-aging treatments. That desire for natural radiance inspired her creation of InovaSkin—a groundbreaking serum that uses a patent-pending peptide to draw in the body’s own hyaluronic acid (HA), rejuvenating skin from within.

Earlier this year, Dr. Ozdemir’s innovation earned first place and \$20,000 at the Governor’s Giant Vision Open Business Plan competition—funding her current space at the David Lust Accelerator Building and the beta launch of InovaSkin. She also received \$10,000 from South Dakota’s FAST Launch program to support market research and startup activities.

With a product in hand and safety testing completed, Dr. Ozdemir is preparing to validate the serum’s results through a customer perception study and clinical testing. She hopes to reach up to 1,000

participants and has multiple local medical spas who will help show the serum’s efficacy. “The serum is enriched with HA-binding peptides as well as silk fibroin, which is anticipated to increase skin’s natural HA levels as well as improve collagen production, ultimately creating a skincare powerhouse,” she said.

Silk, long used in biomedical applications like sutures and bone grafts, is an ideal ingredient due to its strength, elasticity, and compatibility with the body’s healing rate.

“We want to see if this improves fine lines and wrinkles, and if it’s going to improve skin texture, especially in aging women,” she said. “If you apply this regularly to your skin, your body will produce its own HA, and natural HA is much different than synthetic HA products. We anticipate this serum will provide a natural glow and improve the skin’s brightness without looking plastic—a new kind of glass-skin.”

InovaSkin stems from her research using HA-binding peptides for wound healing,

tissue regeneration, and prevention of fibrotic capsule building that happens with implants like pacemakers, joint replacements, and breast implants.

Her idea of a skin care product came last summer during a conference trip to Korea, a hotbed for skin care innovations. While waiting for her flight, she saw a sign promoting starting your own skin care company.

“I had all this wound healing research that I knew was working,” she said.

Back at Mines, she connected with Beth Lambeth, associate vice president for research, who introduced her to Merle Symes—now CEO of InovaSkin. She also credits the Entrepreneurs in Residence (EIR) program, led by Joseph Wright, for coaching and support that helped bring her vision to life.

Unlike many skin care companies with several products, InovaSkin will revolve around its core product – InovaSerum. However, Dr. Ozdemir is already building towards InovaSkin’s next new technology – a device that will scan an individual’s face and use an app to customize HA-boosting silk serum to individuals.

“The app will determine how much you will need from each of the ingredients and the medical spa will produce a special bottle tailored for you,” she said.

Dr. Ozdemir also hopes to create a more advanced version of the serum for problem skin conditions, like individuals with acne scars or people with psoriasis.

“As our product validates itself, we will be hiring Mines graduates and researchers to create new formulations, continue skin research, and develop advanced personalized skincare technologies. These are all things I hope one day will be possible,” she said.

But first, Dr. Ozdemir is focused on proving the power of her first product, InovaSerum.

If successful, InovaSkin won’t just transform the anti-aging market—it will redefine what’s possible when science, passion, and innovation meet in the heart of South Dakota.



BLACK HILLS BRAWL WATCH PARTIES

Join fellow alumni and fans for the 140th edition of the historic **Black Hills Brawl** as the **Hardrockers** take on long-time rivals **Black Hills State University Yellow Jackets** in the fight for the coveted Homestake Trophy.

SATURDAY, OCT. 4 | KICKOFF 6 P.M. MT

WATCH PARTY LOCATIONS:

Kansas City – Gert’s Grille
12018 College Blvd, Overland Park, KS 66210

Sioux Falls – JJ’s Wine, Spirits & Cigars
3000 W 57th St, Sioux Falls, SD 57108

Denver – Fiction Beer Company
19523 Hess Rd, Parker, CO 80134

Twin Cities – Location TBD
Details coming soon!

Spearfish Tailgate – Joy Center Parking Lot, BHSU
Tailgate from 4:30–6:00 p.m. before the game

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Help us beat BHSU in a new competition — raising the most support for athletics. Every yard matters in the game. Every dollar counts in this challenge.



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Campus News

SURBECK EXPANSION CONTINUES

The Surbeck Center expansion has begun and is right on schedule. This project will add an approximate 18,200 square feet of space to the welcoming front door of campus. With a July 2026 completion date, the expansion will aim to increase dining space, provide additional spaces for gathering and studying for students, and bring numerous programs under one roof, such as the Counseling Center, Rich and Trudy Wells Veterans Resource Center, and the Center for Women in Science and Engineering.



The expansion of the Surbeck Center is funded entirely by generous donors. If you are interested in getting involved with a donation, feel free to visit our giving page at give.sdsmt.edu or scan the QR code.



SPIRIT CARD FROM HIGHMARK FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

South Dakota Mines, along with Highmark Federal Credit Union, is excited to announce the newest spirit card available for Hardrockers. When you sign up for the Hardrocker Spirit Card through Highmark Federal Credit Union, you easily help support Hardrocker Athletics and academic scholarships, at no extra cost to you. When you use your Spirit Card for credit purchases, Highmark will donate a portion of each purchase back to South Dakota Mines. Spirit Cards are free with any checking account and can be used wherever VISA cards are accepted. Find out how to get one at highmarkfcu.com/spiritcards.



NEW DEGREES OFFERED ON CAMPUS

South Dakota Mines has introduced several new academic program options designed to help students gain a competitive edge in today’s evolving workforce. New minors include creativity and collaboration in STEM, polymer engineering, biomedical engineering, and quantum information science. Mines also launched a Bachelor of Science in data science and engineering — an interdisciplinary degree combining computer science, statistics, and mathematics to prepare graduates to tackle complex challenges in a data-driven world.



NUCOR MINERAL INDUSTRIES BUILDING OPEN FOR CLASSES

The Nucor Mineral Industries Building officially opened for classes in January this year and a ribbon cutting was hosted on April 25, 2025, with special guests Governor Larry Rhoden and former president, Dr. Jim Rankin (EE78). The building supports the Department of Geology and Geological Engineering, the Department of Mining Engineering and Management, and the Department of Materials and Metallurgical Engineering. The new state-of-the-art facility will unlock cutting-edge research and learning opportunities for today and tomorrow’s students and was funded by private donations, state support, and corporate sponsorships.

SALZBURG MUSIC TRIP UPDATE

This past July, the South Dakota Mines Concert Choir toured Austria, performing in several cities over a week filled with music and cultural experiences. Starting in Vienna and continuing through Melk to Salzburg, the choir gave four memorable performances in historic, acoustically rich venues.

The tour’s highlight was a collaborative concert at the Salzburg Choral Festival, where they joined six other choirs and the Salzburger Dom Symphony Orchestra in the magnificent Salzburg Cathedral. This experience showcased their talent internationally and deepened their connection to European choral traditions.

Beyond performing, students explored Austria’s cultural gems, including a visit and performance at Melk Abbey and a tour of the 2,600-year-old Hallein Salt Mine, blending history with adventure.

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR



Hardrocker Athletic Director David Crum entered collegiate athletics to make a difference in college students' lives, and he can think of no better place to accomplish that than South Dakota Mines.

His first year as athletic director has been full of observation and reflection as he gets to know the university, the athletic coaches and staff, and, most of all, the student-athletes.

"They're amazing people with an even more amazing future in front of them," he said.

In the past year, Hardrocker Athletics has chalked up quite a few accomplishments, including volleyball finishing third in the RMAC, the program's highest-ever finish; Lauren Prochazka, volleyball head coach, being named RMAC coach of the year; and football finishing with a winning record for the third time in the last four seasons – something that hasn't occurred in close to 40 years.

David grew up in Hettinger, North Dakota. His family moved to Grand Forks when he was in his early teens. He obtained a bachelor's degree in communications from The Concordia College in Moorhead, MN, and a master's degree in sports management from Ohio State University.

He went on to spend the next 31 years in various roles in Division I athletics, including the University of California, Los Angeles; the University of Nebraska; the University of Louisiana-Monroe; Iowa State University; the University of Minnesota; and Colorado State University.

David met his wife, Linda, while they both worked at Iowa State. Linda was a volleyball player as a student at the University of Iowa, and later coached volleyball at Butler, Duke, and Iowa State. They have three daughters: Allison, 23; Abigail, 20; and Adelaide, 18.

His most recent Division I role was at Colorado State, where he served as the senior associate athletics director for development. He left that role in 2022 to become the executive director of development at UHealth Northern Colorado Foundation. "I missed college athletics from the day I left," he said.

He found that Division II athletics was a better fit for his professional goals, and the specialized engineering education that Mines offers piqued his interest.

David describes his leadership style as inclusive and participatory, working closely with the head and assistant coaches of each program and athletics staff members to develop the department's mission, vision, and strategic goals.

One of his biggest goals for the department is to be in the top half of the RMAC's metrics in terms of scholarship support and program financial support. Overall, he wants Hardrocker Athletics to be a point of pride for alumni and friends.

"Every year, we have a new opportunity with a new group of incoming student athletes to grow our family and make an impact on young people's lives," he said.

In the long term, David would like to expand Mines' athletic facilities to include better office space for all program staff, enhance O'Harra Stadium – keeping the iconic ramps – and create a facility near the stadium that would encompass the football program as well as high-end club events and community gatherings.

"We have to think progressively about what we want Hardrocker Athletics to look like 5, 10, even 25 years from now," he said. "Working together, we need to roll up our sleeves, create a culture and programs that create experiences and environments that engage our fan base, alumni, and friends to be a part of the journey."



NEW ERA OF LEADERSHIP FOR HARDROCKER ATHLETICS

South Dakota Mines is welcoming three new head coaches, marking an exciting chapter for Hardrocker Athletics.



Michael Iseman takes the helm of men's basketball, bringing a decade of collegiate coaching experience. Most recently, he helped lead Missouri University of Science and Technology to its first NCAA Tournament bid in nearly 30 years and its highest NCAA Division II ranking in program history. Known for attracting top-tier talent to STEM-based universities, Michael is eager to build a program that makes the campus and community proud.



Kyle Bachand steps in as the new women's basketball coach after two seasons leading William Jewell College, where she doubled overall wins and tripled conference victories. Kyle has coached at both the Division I and II levels, including Colorado State, where she helped guide the team to a 41-24 record. A former standout player herself, she is recognized for her energy, vision for player development, and ability to build strong team cultures.

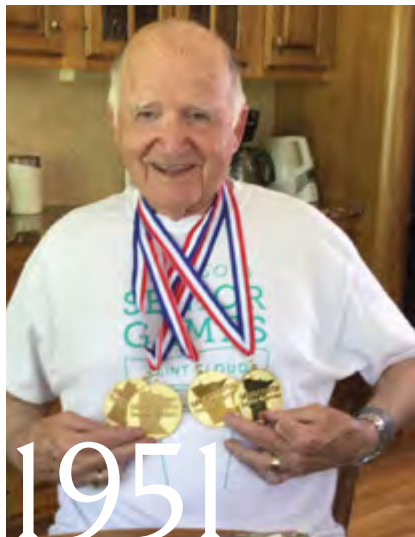


Teren Schuster, a Sioux Falls native, joins as the head men's soccer coach. Teren comes to Mines from Briar Cliff University, where he was head coach, and brings experience across multiple collegiate levels. A graduate of Cardinal Stritch University, he is passionate about player development and creating positive, winning team environments.

Show Your School Spirit With Your Hardrockers Debit Card.



Class Notes



1951

Lowery Smith (GeolE 51) was inducted into the Minnesota Senior Sports Association Hall of Fame in May 2025. He is the oldest inductee. Lowery started competing in senior games at the age of 87 and has won multiple medals - Gold & Silver medals in state and national senior games- Javelin, Shot Put, Discus & racquetball - while also enjoying activities such as climbing Mount Kilimanjaro and rafting the Grand Canyon.



1956

John Mohr (EE 56) The photo of January 28 says it all. I'm still here but moving slower. Alice is still here too but moving even slower. She is scheduled for total hip replacement surgery on April 10. She hopes to recover fast enough to participate in the Senior Olympics on the last weekend of May.



Pete Vossos (Chem 56) brought his wife, kids & spouses, and six grandchildren to South Dakota for a family vacation. They toured the campus and visited the museum. Larry Simonson captured this moment on M Hill.



1965

Gale Bishop (GEOL 65) I have moved back to my birth state, North Dakota, to establish a new residence in Minot, ND. Now well into Retirement III, I am archiving my research, artifacts, and papers as I finish research on fossil decapods, modern sea turtle conservation, and the morphology and occurrence of fossilized sea turtle nests in the Cretaceous of Colorado, Wyoming, and Pula, Croatia. Publication continues, now with 125 papers published, two web sites archiving data and information (scistp.org) and (galebishop.com), and a "Gale Bishop Archive Exhibit" being curated. Kim & Eric Bishop live in the Atlanta Metro Area; Kelia & Jameson Taylor live in Elkader, Iowa and Hurricane, Utah, respectively. My spouse, Kata, is a Professor of Geology at Minot State University. Finishing my 82nd circuit of the Sun, I am enjoying academic life, friends and family, two new kittens, and top shelf bourbon.



1968

Gene McPherson (EE 68) In the Fall of 2023, 6 of us (only 4 are in the pic) biked from Pittsburg to Georgetown, DC. —333 miles-- in about 9 days. The name of the route is the GAP, Great Allegheny Passage. The first half is slightly uphill on a rail trail. The second half is downhill on the towpath of the C&O Canal National Park. Each day we passed through the wonderfully colorful fall leaves. The route is famous for being a multi-day ride. We rented our bikes in Pittsburg and turned them in at Georgetown. We stayed in B&Bs and motels, all arranged by the tour company, mountainsidebiketours.us. I am on the left, and next to me is my wife, Barbara. (I was 78 then and the only Tech grad on the trip.)



1971

Carlos Calderon Jr. (MinE 71) Graduated in 1971 and have worked throughout the American Continent (Canada, United States, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Chile). As part of my tasks, I have visited properties and companies in Germany, Austria, and Brazil, and have been fortunate to work in coal, mines, copper, and gold mines. I am currently developing a gold mine in southern Honduras. I have eight grandchildren and am expecting my first great grandchild. I love SDSM&T.

1972

Lance Swanhorst (CE 72) After 28 years with the US Environmental Protection Agency and five years of retirement activities in the Washington, DC area, Sue and I moved to Madison, WI in July 2024, in part to be closer to our son Matt and his wife Molly, and other family members. I hope to continue umpiring youth baseball in the Madison area and other activities with my wife, since we are blessed with relatively good health. I look forward to getting back to SD more often now that we are only a couple of states away!



1974

Donald Henninger (MATH 74) World travelers, Jane (NAU B/MA Ed 69/73) and Donald Henninger (Math 74), sold the house and car, rented out the condos, and traveled Around-the-World-in-366-Days (2023-4). Don retired in 2022 from AG Wassenaar, Inc, Littleton, CO; Jane, an independent travel agent, put together their Flexible Independent Travel package to include 3 months in Southeast Asia, 3 months in New Zealand, and 6 months in Australia including side trips to Saudi Arabia, Bali, Fiji, Timor Leste, and Japan. Upon their return, they delayed settling in Aurora, CO, by adding a Jan - Feb tour in South Africa and remodeling the condo.

1975

Jeffery Ingerson (ME 75) Jeffrey Ingerson retired after a 40+ year career in the oil and gas industry. I worked for Questar E&P, Chesapeake Energy, and RKI E&P in various engineering and management positions. I retired in 2016 and now reside at my lake home on Enemy Swim Lake in South Dakota. I have two adult children.... Sars and Matthew.



Left to right: Connie & Dan Jackson, Carol & Gary Nelson, and Cynthia & Bill Fall.

Dan Jackson (MetE 76) Dan & Connie Jackson and friends celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary! **Gary Nelson (MetE 77)** & **Bill Fall (MinE 76)** were in Dan's wedding party. Both couples are celebrating their 49th anniversary. Congratulations to all!

Joan Howard (PHYS 76) Now splitting our time between Palm Desert, CA, and Carcassonne, France. A good life living on two continents and never seeing winter. Retirement is so much fun.

Patrick Smith (CE 76) We have moved to North Carolina to be closer to our granddaughter and family.



1978

Bill Wallace (MinE 78) Mary and I moved back to Rapid City in 2024 from Broomfield, Colorado, and I am still working full-time for Navajo Transitional Energy Co. It has been great fun skiing Terry Peak and hiking in the Hills. Family **Sarah Suek (IE 2006)**, **Adam Lungren (ME 2008)**, and Cory Wallace will all be here in July for the Tech Reunion.



1979

Cate Meyer (EE 79) passed away on October 21, 2024. A celebration of her life was held in the spring of 2025 in Fort Collins, CO.



1981

Reah Graham-Dahl-Stamnes (CE 81) & Knut Dahl-Stamnes (CE 80) judged the 2025 Greater Austin Regional Engineering & Science Fair (GARSEF), a middle school science fair, for the 2nd year.

1982



Joe Novotny (ME 82) My wife and I both retired on the same day back in October 2024. We both love it, filling our days with volunteer work, hobbies, and travel. We've visited Napa Valley and recently returned from 4 weeks in Spain & Portugal.

1983

Lorraine Padden (EE 83) The IEEE Fellow Award is a special recognition for members with extraordinary accomplishments in the IEEE technical fields. To ensure that the recognition is extraordinary, the total number of recipients each year cannot exceed 0.1% of the total higher-grade membership. Congratulations to Lorraine Padden, 2024 Class of IEEE Fellows, for this prestigious recognition!



Luie Trudy (PHYS 83) Recently retired after 40 years in the desert in September and moved to Kentucky. Beautiful area and friendly people!



1985

Greg Johnson (ChE 85) retired last year from a 39 1/2-year career with the Department of Defense. I spent 30 years working at Ellsworth AFB as an environmental engineer, finishing as Chief of Environmental Compliance. Susan and I have four kids and 10 grandchildren in Wyoming, Indiana, and South Carolina whom we plan to visit more often now that I am retired. I also plan on playing a lot of music.



1987

Ann Barnum-Curnow (GeolE 87) I made a significant career change in September 2022 and took on the role of Program Manager Corporate Sustainability Projects for CenterPoint Energy, an energy delivery company headquartered in Houston, Texas. My focus is carbon accounting aligning with CenterPoint's commitment to a clean-energy future and reducing carbon emissions across their operations. My daughter is currently in her

senior year at the University of Wisconsin Madison majoring in Finance. She spent the summer interning with 3M in Minneapolis. I have cherished the experience of getting a feel for big university life through my daughter, but I wouldn't trade my time at Tech for anything. My brother (Tom Barnum MinE 84) and our families will be traveling to Mt. Togwotee Pass this summer to spread our parents' ashes (Warren Barnum CE 61), honoring their last requests. On my return to Minneapolis, I plan to pass through Rapid City with my daughter to spend at least a day at the reunion. Unfortunately, my spouse developed early onset Lewy Body Dementia and now resides in a memory care facility. This challenging situation marks a new stage in my life. This past summer Ted Muller (ChemE 87) stopped by to visit. He teaches High School chemistry in Rexburg, Idaho, and lives in Idaho Falls with his partner, Tiffanie Tibbitts. If you are in Minneapolis, please reach out.

1993

Lorelei Peters (IE 93) has been promoted to Senior Healthcare Data Scientist at Nebraska Medicine in Omaha, NE.



1996

Samer Alhaj (CE 96) My family and I live in Denver where I work as a hydraulics engineer. We like the area very much due to the diversity and outdoor activities. My wife, Manal, teaches children from over 30 countries and enjoys it every day. My daughters are currently attending the University of Colorado. We enjoy traveling as a family when we have time, both nationally and internationally. I can't believe it's been almost 30 years since I graduated from the wonderful Mines. This recent photo is taken with my beautiful family in Jordan.

1997

Chris Klein (MinE 97) celebrated 20 years working at LG Everest.

2004

Nick Rogness (CSc 2004) was promoted to Chief Executive Officer at Golden West Telecommunications.



2010

Anastasia "Tasha" Baker (MetE 2010) married Brendyn Medina on June 15, 2010, at the Shrine Center in Rapid City, SD. Tasha is the Quality Manager at VRC Metal Systems in Box Elder, SD and Brendyn is the Public Information Officer for the Rapid City Police Department. Brendyn and Tasha live in Rapid City.



Everett Brill (Geol 2012, MS EMgmt 2017) Welcomed our 2nd child Aurora in June 2024. Relocated to Elko, NV and started a new position as Senior Geologist over production at Kinross Bald Mountain.

2013

Steven Barnett (CEE 2013) Director of Engineering at Maguire Iron



Mikkella (Reese) Pryer (ChE 2017) and Korey Pryer (CEng 2017) welcomed future Hardrocker, Sophia George, in October of 2024. She is the first granddaughter on both sides of the family and can't wait to visit Rapid City to see where her parents met!

2018

Katelyn Kirsch (MetE 2018) was a Heat Treat Today's 40 under 40 Honoree in 2024. She was recently promoted to own the Material Testing Special Process as the Metallurgical Technical Authority at Moeller Aerospace after completing the development of the lab itself.

Dalton Lyons (CEE 2018) has been promoted to Vice President of Multifamily Development for D.R. Horton in Salt Lake City. He, his wife and two boys will be relocating there from Denver.



Sophie Brogdon (CE 2019), student yoga teacher between 2015-2020, married Samuel Blackstone (former award-winning Rapid City Journalist) near Dahlonega, GA where they both reside. Sophie works as a Stormwater Engineer and is a partner in her husband's medicinal mushroom business, Mindfull Mycology.

Nicholas Edwards (ME 2019) New job as a Control Account Manager at Lockheed Martin

2020



Korder Cropsey (CE 2020, MS CE 2021) earned licensure as a professional engineer in South Dakota after passing the Principles and Practice of Engineering (PE) exam, qualifying him as a civil engineer specializing in structural design.

TSP, Inc. is pleased to announce the addition of Structural Engineer-in-Training **Helen Squyer (CE 2020)** to the firm's office in Sioux Falls, SD. Prior to joining TSP, she worked for the South Dakota Department of Transportation in both Rapid City and Pierre. Squyer brings experience in structural design and field work, along with strong attention to detail to ensure the highest standards of safety and accuracy.

2022

Megan Stone (CE 2022) Stantec in Phoenix has a great water resources group!



Keith Beck (EE 90) The annual Theta Tau Fishing Trip was at South Whitlock Resort near Gettysburg, June 6-9, 2024. A good time was had by all!

Pic 1: Left to right: Jim Pulaski (IE 2009), Scott Oveson (CSc 92), Sam Berta (CE 98), Randy Ringstmeyer (CE 2002), Scott Herrbolt (IE 92), Steve Braley (EE 91), Shawn Klabunde (EE 90), Brandt Lyman (CE 2004), Marty Jackley (EE 92), Lorne Lawrence, Kevin Erdmann (ME 2004), Keith Beck (EE 90), Ben Grassel (ME 2013), Don Lapp (ME 92), Mark Ingalls (CSc 92), Adam Kindt (IE 2013), and Jacob West (CSc 2022).

Pic 2: Randy Ringstmeyer, Scott Oveson, Jay Blomster (ME 2004), David Hartmann (CE 94), Glen Wilcox (ME 90), Shawn Klabunde, Brandt Lyman, Kevin Erdmann, Pat Brueggeman (EE 97), Don Lapp, Lorne Lawrence, Scott Darnall (CSc 93), Scott Herrboldt, Ben Grassel, Mark Ingalls, Sam Berta, Kelly Whiting (Math 89), Steve Braley, Keith Beck, Jim Pulaski, Matt Carda (IS 99), Adam Kindt, and Jacob Ames.



The SME Board has chosen to induct over 50 new Fellows in 2025. Feb. 25, 2025 was a night to celebrate 4 of our Mines alumni who received this recognition this year: **Dennis Bryan (GeolE 70)**, **Dave R. Hammond (GeolE 69)**, **Dr. Andrea Brickey (MinE 99)**, and **Jim Gebhardt (MetE 77)**. Andrea Brickey, Ph.D., a professor of mining engineering and management at South Dakota Mines, was recently honored with the Society for Mining, Metallurgy & Exploration's Ivan B. Rahn Education Award for her dedication to educating the next generation of mineral engineers. Congratulations, Hardrockers!!



Class of 1975, 50-year Reunion 8 Omega brothers: Ralph Wagner (CE), Dave Knox (ME), Ken Miller (CE), Chip Story (GeolE), Doug Emme (GeolE), Doug Miller (GeolE), John Chikos (CE), and missing from the photo was Rick Chancellor (MinE).

ALUMNI Gathering



Florida Moon Rockers Event - May 16, 2024
Alumni pictured: Scott Vangen (EE 82), Jake Steffen (ME 2020), and Moon Rockers advisor Jason Ash (ME 99) with students.



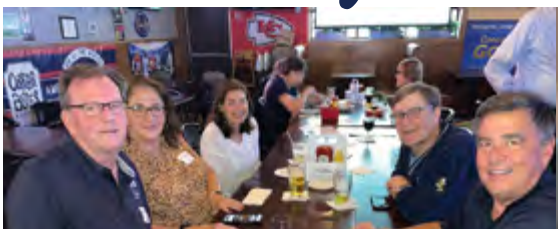
Sioux Falls High School 2 Hardrocker Welcome Event - June 4, 2024 Monte (MetE 74) and LuAnn Dirks welcomed incoming freshmen and their families to the Hardrocker family @ Omnitech, Sioux Falls.



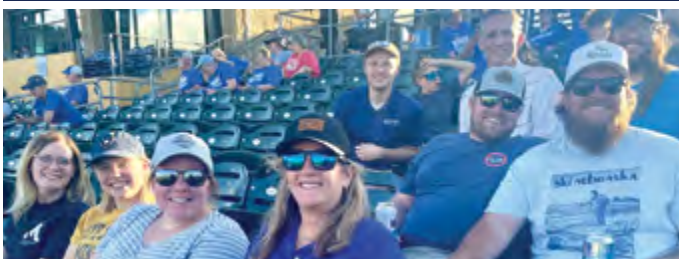
Omaha Alumni Mingle - June 6, 2024
Left to Right: Cheyanne Borbely (Admissions Rep.), Brendon (GeolE 2018) & Cass (ME 2015) Stieb, Alex Spies (ME 2020), August Meyer (MATH 2020), Aaron Grinager (IE 96)



Minneapolis High School 2 Hardrocker Welcome Event - June 20, 2024 **Left to right:** Bill Betten (EE and PHYS 77) and Grant Nelson (ME 2019) welcomed freshmen and families @ HDR Minneapolis.



Sioux Falls Alumni Mingle - June 4, 2024
Picture 1: Dale (GeolE 78) and Sarah Larsen, Diane Bushong, Curt Struck (CE 78), Dave Bushong (ChE 80)
Picture 2: Triangle brothers - Dr. Monte Dirks (MetE 74), Chuck Cox (ME 2000), Greg Hintgen (EE 99), Chris Klien (MinE 97), Jim Lang (MetE 98), Aaron Grinager (IE 96)



Omaha Storm Chasers Tailgate and Game - June 5, 2024:
Ceri Klopp (CEE 2016), Cass Stieb (ME 2015), Kalie Schiltz (ChE 2015), Erin Duffy (CEM 2017), Dylan Schiltz (CEE 2015), Brendon Stieb (GeolE 2018), Alex Spies (ME 2020 and EMgmt 2023), Aaron Grinager (IE 96), August Meyer (MATH 2020).



Omaha High School 2 Hardrocker Welcome Event - June 6, 2024
Alumni pictured: Jerry Farke (ME 2014), Cass Stieb (ME 2015), Brendon Stieb (GeolE 2018) with incoming freshmen and parents @ HDR Omaha.



Kansas City Chicken N Pickle Event - June 20, 2024,
Back row: Cheldon Coughlen (CSc 2018), Josh Leone (EE 2024), Christian Weaver (CEng 2021), Hunter Newsom (CE 2025), Mason Karpen (CEE 2023), Lance Baum (CEng 2016), Joshua Sass (ME 2005), Jordan Landen (ME 2017), Mack Landen (CEE 2016), Isaac Egermier (CSc 2020), Gena Engel (ChE 2006), Liam McEuen (EE 2022) **Front row:** Hunter Vincent (CEE 2017), Justin Wenner (ME 2005), Ethan Stebbins (CEE 2022), Morgan Benninghofen (CSc 2020), Joshua Duklet (CSc 2020)



Portland Alumni Dinner - June 24, 2024 Donn (ME 58) and Carole Lobdell, Ben Zimmerman (ME 2002) and guest, Laura Williker (EE 81), Dr. Pierre Larochelle (Mechanical Engineering Department Head)



Denver High School 2 Hardrocker Welcome Event - June 26, 2024 James Gormley (ME 2021), Cherokee Winkler (EE 2022), Cody Schellinger (CE 2015), Kellan Johnson (ME 2017); interns -Tyler Captain, Carly Hirsch, and Madalyn McQuistan; Nicole Thompson (CE 2017), Megan Johnson (IE 2017), Brigit Schellinger (CEE 2016). Sitting on the table-Anna Larson (CE 2018).



Denver Alumni Event - June 26, 2024
Cherokee Winkler (EE 2022), Kellan Johnson (ME 2017), Nicole Thompson (CE 2017), Anna Larson (CE 2018), Carly Hirsch (intern), Shelli Grinager (Director of Alumni Relations), James Gormley (ME 2021).



Mile High Mines Mingle - June 27, 2024
John Murzyn (GEOL 2022), Sydney McCuiston (GEOL 2021), Henry Brouwer (ChE 2022), Hailey Sund (IE 2025), Raynor Ratchford (GeolE 2022), David Tilley Jr. (GeolE 2022), Olivia Grinager (IE 2026)



Nemo Alumni Dinner, SD - June 27, 2024
Reah Graham-Dahl-Stamnes (CE 81), Marc Vaillancourt (CARA CEO), Jim (CE 73) and Marie Quinn, Jo Dwyer (Alumni Engagement Coordinator), Ben Titus (MATH 2022), Knut Dahl-Stamnes (CE 80)



Nemo Alumni Dinner, SD - July 25, 2024
Around the table: Elaine Mellegard, Scott (CE 77) and Mary Ann Kenner, Kirby Mellegard (EE 72)



Black Hills Family Picnic - July 6, 2024

Pic 1, left to right: Lance (CE 98), Olivia, Jerilyn (ChE 99), and Lucas Roberts **Pic 2:** Ross Lushbough (ChE 71), Ken Gabel (IS 2010), Gary Christman (ChE 73.5), Karl Hackett (MinE 96), Aaron Grinager (IE 96), Nick Rogness (CSc 2004), Harry Rossander (CE 81), Justin Briggs (ChE 98), Rich Sudmeier (MinE 2001), Tyler Artz (MinE 2015), Dave Vandale (ME 96) **Pic 3:** Dick (CE 65) and Mary Schlumpberger, Joe Harris (ME 65)

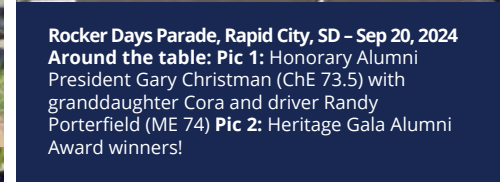
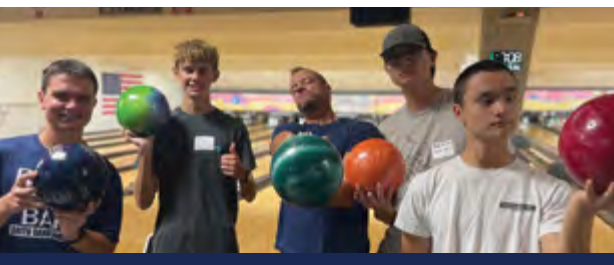


2024 Tailgates

HARDROCKERS



Hardrockers at Summer Nights – Aug. 22, 2024



M-Hill Picnic, Rapid City, SD – Sep 20, 2024



Hardrocker Heritage Gala, Rapid City, SD – Sep 20, 2024
Marc Vaillancourt (CARA CEO), Les Rose (ME 70), Lance Roberts (CE 98)



Alumni/Student Bingo Night, Rapid City, SD – Oct 29, 2024 Aaron Grinager (IE 96), Dick Schlumpberger (CE 65), and Ken Miller (CE 75)



Battle of the Mines Tailgate, Golden, CO – Oct 12, 2024

Top - Julie Carver (GeolE 86), Tracie White (Parent), and Delmar Rumph (GeolE 68) **Bottom**- Maria Fossum-Cadwal-lader (IE 96), Kendahl Johnson (IE 2023), Shawn Dean (ME 2024), Hunter Jasky (IE 2023)

Homecoming Tailgate, Rapid City, SD – Sep 21, 2024 Pep band playing "Happy Birthday" to Lance Roberts (CE 98).



Sugar Land, TX Dinner – Nov. 15, 2024
Alphabetical order: Ernest Anoma (MinE 78), Bob Chin, Shelli Grinager (Director of Alumni Relations), Mark (ME 2007) and Vanessa Hofacker, Dave Jackson (ME 70), Lorraine Padden (EE 83), Pete (CHEM 56) and Angie Vossos, Mitch Williams (MetE 2013)



Katy, TX Dinner – Nov. 16, 2024
Fonar Sefa (ChE 2008), Greg Meszaros (GeolE 97), Tony Meszaros (CE 95), Stefanie Merkel (IE 94), Holly Hartley (CE 2002), Shelli Grinager (Director of Alumni Relations), Clair Menning (CE 73), Margaret (CSc 91) and Tim Parmenter

Katy, TX Dinner – Nov. 16, 2024
Jason Baihly (CE 2001), Dan Carlson (ChE 77), Jim Knost (ChE 73), Sheri Wilson, Holly Hartkey (CE 2002), Vivian Rohrback (GeolE 2002)



Woodlands, TX Hardrocker Hangout – Nov. 16, 2024
Jay Jackson (CEng 2020), Angie Stepanski, Nate Kessenich (IE 2019), Sharon and Chip Speice (GeolE 84), Connor and Caitlin (GeolE 2012) McNeilly, Katie Toscana (ChE 2011), Gary Weaver (MinE 74), J.D. Wientjes (MinE 79), Mary Weaver



Houston, TX Bowling Bash – Nov. 17, 2024
Back row, left to right: Eric Luvaas, Michael Maisiey (PHYS 88), Enis Sefa (ME 2020, ME 2021), Atlantic and Fanar (ChE 2008) Sefa. **Front row:** Lily, Luke, Lane and Rose (ChE 2008) Luvaas and Shelli Grinager (Director of Alumni Relations)



Houston, TX Happy Hour – Nov. 17, 2024
Left to right: Paige Sommer, Shelli Grinager (Director of Alumni Relations), Mike Wientjes, J.D. Wientjes (MinE 79), Judd Hansen (ME 78), Dale Farmen (MinE 76) Rose Luvaas (ChE 2008), and Rich Sommer (CSc and MATH 91)



San Antonio, TX Dinner – Nov. 18, 2024
Back row, left to right: John Hazel (ChE 85), Vivian and Doug (ChE 78) Schultze, Anna and Clyde (MetE 72) Ericsson, Morgan Vagts (CSc 2021), Shelli Grinager (Director of Alumni Relations) / **Front row:** Tom (MinE 84) and Christina Barnum, Sree Ande (MS CE 2000 and PHD ME 2003)

Austin, TX Dinner – Nov. 19, 2024
Matt Colvin (MATH 2005), Knut Dahl-Stamnes (CE 80), David Hoffman (ME 79), Shelli Grinager (Director of Alumni Relations), Dave Bush (EE 77), Paul Barker (ME 66), Matt Griffith (CSc 99), and Reah (Graham) Dahl-Stamnes (CE 81)



Dallas, TX Dinner – Nov. 20, 2024
Pic 1, Left to right: Haley and Devin (EE 2016) Kroeber, Mitra and SK (MinE 78) Choudhury, John Obenauf (EE 82), Reed (EE 86) and Lara Ashmore. **Pic 2:** Brenda (ME 83) and John (CHEM 83) Harrison, Bill Pembroke (CE 84), and Reed Ashmore (EE 86). Not pictured: Sam and Melissa (Johnstone, ChE 2022) Clemen, Brenda Harrison (CHEM 83), Randy Nelson (GeolE 71), Craig Prascher (EE 70).



Pierre Tailgate – Jan. 18, 2025
Alpha order: Kevin Barry (CE 2015), Brandon (ME 2015) and Megan Carda, Paul Cremer, Scott Darnall (CSc 93), Derek Ferwerda (CE 2019), Terry Florentz (GeolE 92), Todd (GEOL 97) and Holly (CSc 94) Gagne, Jim (GeolE 71) and Jeanne (GeolE 79) Goodman, Kevin (CE 87) and Michelle Griesse, Kathleen Grigg (GGE 2013), Aaron (IE 96) and Shelli (Director of Alumni Relations) Grinager, Darin Hodges (CE 98), Stevie Holmes (GEOL 2012), Steve Johnson (CE 83), Joel Jundt (CE 85), Bryce (GeolE 2015) and Sara Kampa, Neal (GeolE 2015) and Samantha (ChE 2015) Olmstead, Mike Perkovich (MinE 83), Steve Pirner (CE 72), Toni Richardson (IS 95), Lisa Rombough (CE 2000), Robin (MinE 81) and Frank Schiro, Al Spangler (ME 90), Alan Swanson (CHEM 66), Nayyer Syed (GEOL 94), Andrew Undt (CE 2021), Darrell Utter (CE 2009), James (CE 85) and Sherri Wald, Weellie Weeldreyer (GeolE 2000), Pat (CE 2005) and Sarah Wellner, Dustin (CEng 2005) and Kayla Witt



Rockers on the River – Jan. 27, 2025
Front row: Stacy Watters (GeolE 2006), Toni Richardson (IS 95), Joel Jundt (CE 85), Marty Jackley (EE 92), Dawn Leitzke (GeolE 87), Jeane Goodman (GeolE 79) / **Middle back row:** Dr. Brian Tande (President of South Dakota Mines)

New Alumni Welcome Mixer, Rapid City, SD – Dec. 5, 2024
Manalee (CHEM 82) and Doug (ChE 83) Johnson, Jeff Allen (ChE 77), Tyler Artz (MinE 2015), Bela Larsen (IE 2024), Morgan Thompson (BME 2023), Jackson Ezzell, Aaron Grinager (IE 96)



Burns and McDonnell Lunch - Jan. 17, 2025
Renita Mollman (CE 88) and Jade Herman (IS 2009)



Kansas City Happy Hour - Jan. 18, 2025 Left to Right: Spencer Ferguson (CE 2014), Merry Ortberg (ME 93), Justin Wenner (ME 2006), Jason Howe (CEng 2005), Josh Duklet (CSc 2020), Rose Kelzenberg (EE 2019), Alex Ferguson (MinE 2011), Eldon Strid (MinE 73)



Mines Day at the Capitol - Jan. 28, 2025



Rapid City Beers with Brian – Feb. 3, 2025



SME Conference, Denver, CO – Feb. 25, 2025



Tucson Alumni Dinner - Apr. 3, 2025
Kreg Beck (GeolE 81), Marisa Delavega, Shelli Grinager (Director of Alumni Relations), Duane (ChE 66) and Linda Huston, Duane Jahn (IS 66), Casamera King, Cody Marshall (MetE 2023), Judy and Lloyd McLaughlin (CE 74), Ken Miller (CE 75), Rube (CE 79) and Susi Rubendall, Bill Wahl (MetE 74)



Sioux Falls Pub Crawl - Mar. 22, 2025
Alpha order: Orie Barnes (MetE 78), Frank Blaine (ChE 87), Dennis (CE 86) and Tami Clark, Chuck Cox (ME 2000), Pat (2002) and Jessica Deering, Jacob Fonkert (ME 2024), Austin Gill (MATH 2018), Aaron (IE 96) and Shelli (Director of Alumni Relations) Grinager, Chris (MinE 97) and Tammy (IE 96) Klein, Gabe Laber (CE 2003), Kyle Lady (MATH 2019), Jim (MetE 98) and Kelly Lang, Ben Laufman (EE 2024), Steven Laufman (EE 96), Madisen Lindholm (ATM 2023), Robin (MinE 81) and Frank Schiro, Nick Sudbeck (CE 2022)



Shakopee Brewhall- Mar. 24, 2025
Alpha order: Helen Babits (ChE 2022), Bob (CE 96) and Rhonda (CE 92) Dehler, Travis (ME 97) and Tammy (IE 96) Gorsuch, Justin (IE 2012) and Laura Griesinger, Aaron (IE 96) Grinager, Mike Kaspszak (ME 81), Derrick Kellen (IE 96), Jerry (CHEM 94) and Susan Mealman, Bob Nesheim (PHYS 2007), Dan Oveson (ChE 95), Tori Oveson (ChE 2016), Sydney Sanders (BME 2024), Karl (IEEM 2019) and Abi (IE 2018) Stark, Donn (EE 71) and Sharon Taylor, Jonathan Warner (ChE 2010)



Omaha Smash Park - Mar. 28, 2025
Alpha order: Bret Budd (CE 82), Erin Duffy (CEM 2017), Jocelyn Garrity (CHEM 2016), Cole Jolovich (CE 2015), Shayla Lindsey (CHEM 2019), August Meyer (MATH 2020), Jim Miller (CHEM 86), Eve Norton (MATH 91), Gary Norton (CE 92), Mark Olsen (CHEM 88), Dylan (CE 2015) and Kalie (CHEM 2016) Schiltz, Joseph Shy (CE 2015), Brendon (GeolE 2018) and Cass (ME 2015) Stieb, Elizabeth Vacek (CE 2015)



New Alumni Welcome Mixer
May 1, 2025



Mines Masters – Apr. 5, 2025



Art + Engineering at the Makerspace – May 7, 2025
Michael Dowding (PHYS 2002)



Denver Mortenson Happy Hour- May 20, 2025
Left to Right: Lynn Crawford (CHEM 73), Mario Hieb (EE 82), Lucy Reilly, Charles Snyder (ME 63), Lukasz Dubzj (CE 2011), Brigit Schellinger (CE 2016), Jane and Don (MATH 74) Henninger, Aaron Grinager (IE 96), Roger Nakamura (ME 2023), Erik Trujillo (CSc 2025)



NYC Gathering - June 2, 2025
Left to right: Ryan Bozer (GEOL 2019, CARA Development Officer), Anil Baysal (EMgmt 2016), Gaylord Olson (EE 61), Desiree and Dr. Brian Tande (South Dakota Mines President), Aaron Alphonusus (MATH and CSc 2018), Manasi Paste (CSc 2020)



Sioux Falls President's Dinner – Apr. 4, 2025

Sioux Falls High School 2 Hardrockers – June 3, 2025



Houston Alumni Gathering – Apr. 5, 2025
Left to Right: Judd Hansen (ME 78), Carlos Calderon, Jr. (MinE 71), Ernest Anoma, Sr. (MinE 78), Katie Toscana (ChE 2011), Daniel Hayden (CE 2012), Grace (ChE 2014) and Jake (ChE 2011) Moehring, Rose Luvaas (ChE 08), Audrey and Tony (ME 80) Evers, Enis Sefa (ME 2020), Dale Farmen (MinE 76). Not pictured: Michael Maisey (PHYS 88)



Thursday at Thirsty's – 2024/25

Future Hardrockers



We want to celebrate your new Hardrocker!

Email Shelli.Ginager@sdsmt.edu to receive your #HilmNewHere 6-month onesie.



Dylan (CE 2015) and Kaylie (ChE 2016) Schiltz welcomed Brooks in June 2024! He's a smiley, happy little guy and brings us so much joy.



Baby Kenner, son of Blake & Kaelyn Kenner (ChE 2014), grandson of Todd (CEE 83) & Sally (GeolE 83) Kenner



Desmond, son of William (ChE 2009) & Mary Baker.

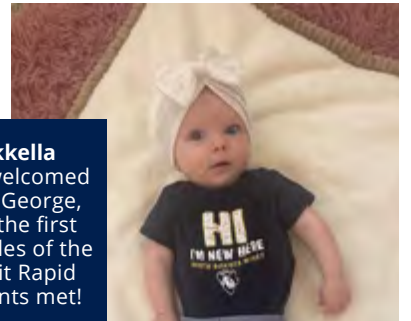


Karoline, daughter of Gina (Rossi) Tinio (CEE 2016)



Sawyer, son of Mackenzie (CEE 2016, 2018) & Jordan (ME 2017) Landen

Korey (CEng 2017) and Mikkella (Reese) Pryer (ChE 2017) welcomed future Hardrocker, Sophia George, in October of 2024. She is the first granddaughter on both sides of the family and can't wait to visit Rapid City to see where her parents met!



Alpin, son of Ana & Fanar Sefa (ChE 2008)



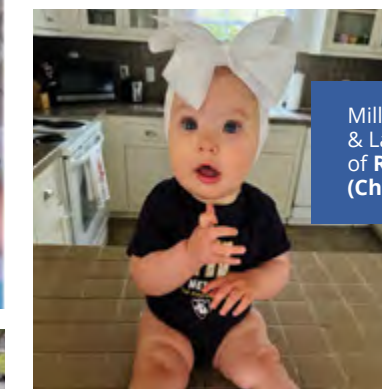
Grayson, son of Bayley (CE 2020) & Taylor (IS 2019) Colemer



Nova Rose Malsom, daughter of Luke (ME 2017) & Shay Malsom, was born early at 34 weeks, spent some time in the NICU, but is very healthy now and growing fast!



Parker, son of Allan & Lindsay Kieffer (IE 2004)



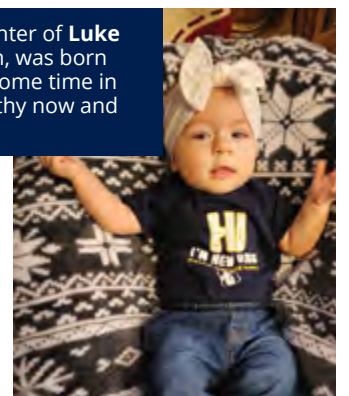
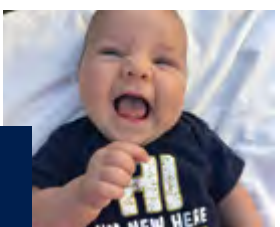
Millie Joy, daughter of Zach & Langley Wells, granddaughter of Rich (ChE 82) & Trudy (ChE 84) Wells



Braxton, son of Nicholas (EE 2016) & Shenae Alberts, attending his first Black Hills Brawl!



Rhea Fountain, daughter of Tim Fountain (MetE 2014)



Awards

**Will be awarded at homecoming*



Jim Green (ME 74)

MARCH MEDAL

This year, the March Medal, the highest award given to alumni for their service to the university, will be awarded to Jim Green, who graduated in 1974 with a degree in mechanical engineering.

The March Medal is awarded annually to a graduate who exemplifies the spirit of electrical engineering alumnus Dr. Guy March through positive interaction with students, the institution, and South Dakota Mines alumni. Dr. March was named the second head of the Department of Mathematics in 1941. His leadership was an integral part of propelling the Alumni Association (which is now part of the Center for Alumni Relations & Advancement) into the active organization it is today. March Medalists embody the caring spirit of Dr. March, which has been a hallmark of the university that has been handed down over decades.

2025 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI

South Dakota Mines alumni are known for pursuing excellence in their careers. The Distinguished Alumni program was started in 1998 to recognize the outstanding contributions of South Dakota Mines graduates, not only to the fields of engineering and science, but also to their communities and the university. Their accomplishments serve as inspiration for future generations and highlight the great impact South Dakota Mines alumni can make in this world.



Chad Glanzer (IE 92)



John Konechne (ME 86)



Dr. Jim Rankin (EE 78)



Terry Rasmussen (MetE 91)



Craig Willan (MetE 76)

2025 OUTSTANDING RECENT GRADUATES

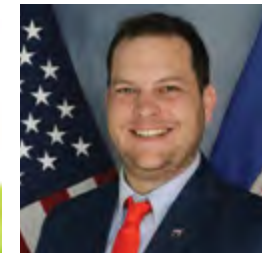
The Outstanding Recent Graduate Award was established at South Dakota Mines in 1984 to honor graduates who have achieved exemplary career progress and recognition within 10 years of their graduation. Criteria for selection includes entrepreneurial effort, professional advancement, innovating research endeavors, technical or entrepreneurial accomplishments, community service, and industry or community recognition.



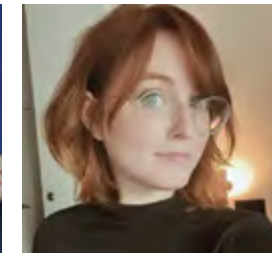
Bianca Boll (IE 2015)



Hyrum Byers (MinE 2016)



Jonathan Dixon (CSc 2016)



Lindsey Westergaard (EE 2015)



Ben Van Camp (IE 2015)



Read bios for each alumni award winner

Hardrocker Hall of Fame

The South Dakota Mines and Hardrocker Athletics will induct six new members and three teams into its Hall of Fame during homecoming weekend. The event will be streamed live at rmacnetwork.com/sdmines. The inductees to the 2025 Hall of Fame are as follows:

1974 FOOTBALL TEAM

Rusty Kocon (ME 92)
Men's Basketball

Jerry Schafer
*Cross Country and Track & Field
Coach (1986-2018)*

1975 FOOTBALL TEAM

Don Bachand (CE 77)
Men's Basketball

Dean Schauer (MetE 89)
Men's Basketball

1976 FOOTBALL TEAM

Mel Vedvei (IE 2008)
Women's Basketball

Chuck Spiece (GeolE 57)
*Football, Men's Basketball,
Track & Field, Wrestling*

full list of athletic awards



In Memoriam

These names have not appeared in a previous Hardrock magazine and were received between May 16, 2024, and July 25, 2025. Names are listed alphabetically by year of graduation.

We encourage you to share information about the passing of any alumnus. Please send to alumni@sdsmt.edu.

Curtis Graversen (MetE 43) 1/12/25
Willard Grablander (EE 49) 10/12/24
Vernon Abild (EE 50) 1/23/25
Luther Jungemann (EE 50) 7/13/20
Victor Dosch (EE 51) 11/7/2024
Delbert Harris (EE 51) 8/7/24
George Wulf (GeolE 51) 2021
Oscarlee Fenton (CE 53) 6/1/24
Ralph Teslow (CE 52) 1/31/25
Kenneth Urban (CE 53) 12/24/23
Hilary Larsen (GeolE 54) 1/17/25
Lyle Matson (Chem 54) 7/30/24
Melvin Nelson (Chem 54) 7/16/24
Dewayne Misterek (CE 55) 1/24/25
John Wilkinson (GenE 55) 12/17/18
Max Gassman (ME 56) 2/10/25
Robert Anderson (EE 57) 2/12/25
Roger Dean (CE 57) 10/8/23
Duane Hertel (ME 57) 4/5/23
Robert Hicks (EE 57) 4/26/24
Marlen McGee (GenE 57) 11/11/20
Howard Opp (EE 57) 9/20/24
Richard Berg (CE 58) 7/31/24
Math Brandner (ME 58) 3/13/11
Bill Eisenbraun (EE 58) 12/10/24
Bill Mannick (ME 58) 9/8/24
Donald Urquhart (GenE 58) 5/17/24
Larry Johnson (ME 59) 7/1/24
Chaman Malhotra (GeolE 59) 2/13/25
Jerry McDow (ME 59) 11/30/24
Leroy Solid (ME 59) 2/3/24
Timothy Sottek (MS Geol 59) 7/19/24
Tom White (GenE 59) 4/24/24
Charles Benson (ME 60) 6/1/24
Robert Cash (ChE 60) 5/25/24
Cecil De Lange (ME 60) 4/22/25
Robert Jones (CE 60) 5/2/25
George Ketterling (EE 60) 3/7/25
Garry Scharberg (MinE 60) 12/2/24
Daryl Schultz (CE 60) 7/8/24
Donald Sobek (ME 60) 5/22/25
Paul VandenBerge (EE 60) 6/28/23
Robert Whippo (MS Geol 60) 5/27/24
Kenneth Yocom (Math 60) 10/8/24
Gerald Brickner (CE 61) 8/22/24
Cleo Kurtz (Math 61) 1/30/24
Joel Martin (Phys 61) 5/4/25

Harold McLarnon (ME 61) 2024
Lonnie Rempfer (ME 61) 6/2/24
Gerald Rounds (ChE 61) 12/29/22
Wesley Banning (Math 62) 3/5/24
Dennis Cullen (ChE 62) 3/6/25
Thomas Olson (GeolE 62) 7/24/24
Marcus Pedersen (ChE 62) 5/1/25
Lynn Sammulu (EE 63) 11/22/24
Michael Stensaas (ME 63) 5/2/25
Vic DeJong (ME 64) 5/18/25
Bill Lindgren (Math 64) 8/24/24
Richard Loeb (MetE 64) 6/7/22
Richard Weller (Math 64) 10/30/22
Ronald Anderson (MS Phys 65) 3/18/25
Robert Brown (EE 65) 2024
Michael Gustafson (ChE 65) 11/11/24
Chuck Koenig (CE 65) 5/11/25
Bill Scott (ME 65) 8/12/24
Per Bratland (ME 66) 5/26/25
Jon McCafferty (CE 66) 3/5/22
James Rezek (EE 66) 12/30/24
Kelly Biddle (MetE 67) 6/30/25
Michael Burdick (ME 67) 2/13/25
Bob Hofstadter (EE 67) 9/2/24
Charles Mize (ChE 67) 5/22/24
Art Anderson (EE 68) 3/25/25
Bert DeCuba (ChE 68) 2/19/24
Earl Gill (ME 68) 12/14/24
Martin Bosch (ChE 69) 2/19/21
Steve Miller (EE 69) 5/2/25
Mark Sandwick (MetE 69) 12/10/24
Bruce Trowbridge (MS Phys 69) 3/11/25
Hans Nilsen (EE 70) 5/14/20
Mads Ole Andenas (CE 71) 11/9/24
Mark Hoffman (Chem 71) 10/16/24
James Hudson (EE 71) 12/14/23
Larry Lockwood (GeolE 72) 10/23/24
Melvin Maeschen (CE 72) 6/7/25
Richard Baker (MS Geol 73) 8/11/24
Charles Foldenauer (ME 73) 12/7/24
Larry Morgan (Chem 73) 10/10/24
Norman Wetz (CE 73) 7/6/24
Rob Wheeler (Chem73) 8/8/24
Donely Brunner (EE 74) 6/9/24
William Davis (CE 74) 5/11/24
Fredrick Galbraith (Phys 74) 12/27/24
Gary Hanten (ME 74) 6/15/25

Don Kleinschmit (CE 74) 3/9/25
Thomas Reiners (MS Phys 74) 8/25/24
Frank Kumley (EE 75) 10/22/22
Loyal Richmond (MS ChE 75) 7/3/18
Donald Sorenson (EE 78) 2020
Craig Steinbach (MinE 78) 4/25/25
Gary Doerr (CE 79) 3/14/24
Cathleen Meyer (EE 79) 10/21/24
Brian Williams (GeolE 81) 6/14/24
Donna Johnson (Math 82) 3/5/25
Michael Johnston (GeolE 83) 1/4/19
Richard Buhr (EE 84) 5/29/24
Timothy Herman (GeolE 85) 11/10/24
Douglas Junker (ChE 85) 9/17/24
Tom Wildy (ME 85) 12/18/24
Shawn Prendiville (ME 86) 5/18/24
Joseph Graham (EE 88) 11/11/19
Rich Hardegger (ChE 91) 3/6/25
John Sanders (ME 91) 3/21/25
Karen Lauer-Silva (IS 92) 7/1/22
David Lail (IS 93) 6/4/23
Phuong Nguyen (MS Mtro 93) 5/24/24
Jeffrey Greni (IS 94) 10/15/24
Yuri Iverson (ME 95) 6/28/22
Brian Henry (ChE 96) 4/16/25
Joel Guillaume (ChE 97) 10/2/24
Matt Nowka (CE 97) 12/5/24
Christian Cicimurri (MS Paleo 99) 5/28/23
Paul Blomstrom (ME 2003) 7/6/24
Robbie Rombough (IS 2007) 8/21/24
Cody Vostad (ME 2013) 2/23/24
Zachary Myers (MetE 2021) 8/24/24

Former Faculty/Staff:

Nellie Bailey (Staff) 10/27/23
Dean Bryson (Hum/STS) 11/4/24
Francine Campone (Dean of Students) 6/27/25
Irene Cassidy (Staff) 7/30/24
Bonnie Cecil (Surbeck Staff) 4/7/25
Chuck Colombe (Counseling) 6/19/24
Donna Johnson (Math) 3/5/25
Dolores Nelson (Staff) 5/24/25
Fredrick Rich (Geol) 7/12/25
Duane Roehrick (Staff) 7/27/24
Chuck Ruch (16th President) 2/1/25
Bob Wermers (Athletics) 2/11/20



SOUTH DAKOTA MINES 50-YEAR CLASS REUNION | 1975 | MAY 8 – 10, 2025

First row: Jerry Dickey (ChemE 75), Bob Case (EE 75), Carmen Adams (ChemE 75), Ralph Wagner (CE 75), Eileen Petersen (GeolE 75), Richard Horton (ME 75), Ken Miller (CE 75), Linda Rausch (ChemE 75), Booty Kuhns (GeolE 75), Chip Story (GeolE 75)

Second row: Tim Kuhl (GeolE 75), Doug Miller (GeolE 75), Laurie Chamberlin (ChemE 75), Ritch Larsen (ME 75), Rick Sorbo (CE 75), Bill Belden (ME 75), Lorin Brass (MetE 75), Chuck Enze (CE 75)

Left to right around Grubby: Mark Olson (EE 75), Owen Palm (GeolE 75), Jeffrey Ingerson (ME 75), David Knox (ME 75), John Chikos (CE 75), Glenda Williams (CHEM 75), Doug Emme (GeolE 75)

Save the Date

CLASS OF 1976, MAY 7-9, 2026



SOUTH
DAKOTA
MINES

330 E. KANSAS CITY ST.
RAPID CITY, SD 57701

Save the Date

HARDROCKERS AT SEA

PANAMA CITY TO MIAMI

APRIL 4 – 14, 2026

Hosted by President Brian Tande and Desiree Tande



cara.sdsmt.edu/hardrockersatsea

