

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy holidays from Black Hills State University.

After a challenging 2020 fall semester, we were pleased to honor our graduates with modified commencement ceremonies. Kudos to all the graduates and their families! We are looking forward to seeing where your BHSU degree takes you. These graduates earned their diplomas and are now achieving their dreams by successfully moving into employment opportunities and pursuing professional degrees at graduate schools.

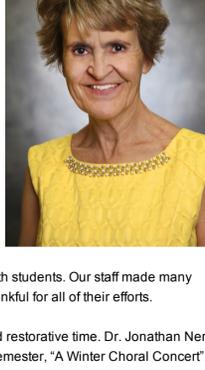
While many universities across the country stayed online or went to online earlier than anticipated—at BHSU we were able to stay the course and conclude our semester as planned thanks to the tremendous work of our faculty and staff. It took everyone, working together, to make this happen. Our faculty were extremely flexible with their teaching and with students. Our staff made many modifications in their job to help us manage during the pandemic. I am thankful for all of their efforts.

As we take a break to celebrate the holidays, I hope you have a restful and restorative time. Dr. Jonathan Nero, professor of music at BHSU, shared a [link](#) to their final concert of the fall semester, "A Winter Choral Concert". Enjoy this as you celebrate the holiday season!

Moving into the year 2021, there's a feeling of optimism across campus as we make plans for the future. We have plans for a sculpture by Dale Lamphere right at the gateway to campus. We are encouraged by the success of our alumni and students even as they continue to navigate the many unknowns. We are reinvigorated by the many changes taking place across campus that will create even greater opportunities for our students. And we are sincerely appreciative of our donors and community members who continue to show their support of BHSU.



President Laurie S. Nichols



BHSU FALL 2020 COMMENCEMENT CEREMONIES

Black Hills State University honored the 2020 graduates this fall with three [commencement ceremonies](#). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, rather than having one ceremony for the entire group of BHSU graduates, a separate commencement ceremony was held for each College. There were 160 graduates honored that day across the three ceremonies. [See photos](#)



Ed Idarraga and his wife Renata were recipients of one of the BHSU Thanksgiving food baskets this year. Ed is a night time custodian at the Donald E. Young Sports and Fitness Center on campus.

THANKSGIVING BLESSINGS FROM A GRATEFUL BHSU COMMUNITY

Just before the Thanksgiving holiday, all of the custodians at Black Hills State University received an unexpected email that made their holiday memorable and delicious. [Read more](#)

DALE LAMPHERE SCULPTURE PLANNED FOR SPEARFISH

A 20-foot sculpture by Dale Claude Lamphere, a Sturgis resident who attended Black Hills State University before going on to an impressive career as an artist, is planned for Spearfish. Lamphere recently created a model for sculpture that will honor the ongoing collaboration of the Spearfish community and Black Hills State University. [Read more](#)



Sturgis resident and BHSU Alum Dale Lamphere is creating a 20-foot sculpture that will be installed in the new roundabout at the intersection of Jackson Boulevard and Ames Street in Spearfish.

BHSU ALUMS RECOGNIZED FOR BEING EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATORS

All four the 2020 state finalists for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST) are BHSU alums.

According to Tom Wheaton, Alumni Director, there are two mathematics finalists and two science finalists. The Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST) is the highest recognition that a kindergarten through 12th grade mathematics or science teacher may receive for outstanding teaching in the United States. [See more](#)

BHSU MUSIC STUDENT HONORED FOR STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENTS

Joseph O'Rourke, a music student at BHSU, was featured on Good Morning Black Hills recently. He was being recognized for the awards his students have won at the South Dakota Music Teachers Association 2020 Conference and competitions. [Watch here](#)

DEAN OF STUDENTS CELEBRATES SUCCESSFUL SEMESTER

As we wrapped up the Fall 2020 semester student leaders and Dr. Jane Klug thanked all the staff and faculty who went above and beyond to help students stay on campus this semester. Thanks to all the staff and faculty who make BHSU great! [Watch here](#)



BHSU MBA PROGRAM RANKED AMONG THE MOST AFFORDABLE MBA PROGRAMS FOR 2021

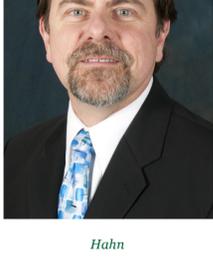
Black Hills State University's MBA program was ranked among the most affordable MBA programs for 2021 by College Consensus. The Most Affordable MBA Programs is a consensus ranking of MBA programs in top business schools around the nation. This ranking of the Most Affordable MBA programs is based 100% upon each MBA's base tuition. [Read more](#)

MATTHEWS OPERA HOUSE NOVEMBER VIDEO PODCAST FEATURES BHSU PROFESSOR

BHSU Professor Gina Gibson was the guest speaker for the Matthews Opera House & Arts Center's November Video Podcast. In this episode she discussed being the first Artist in Residence for the Sanford Underground Research Facility. [Watch here](#)



Gibson



Hahn

BHSU PROFESSOR TO PRESENT AT THE 2021 JAZZ EDUCATION NETWORK INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

Dr. Christopher Hahn has been invited to present research at the 2021 Jazz Education Network International Conference this January. The Jazz Education Network is an organization that seeks to advance jazz education, promote performance, and develop new audiences around the world.

TRIO PROGRAMS AT BHSU AWARDED FIVE-YEAR GRANT FUNDING

The success of the Student Support Services TRIO programs was recognized as BHSU was funded once again. The \$1.7 million dollar grant will ensure the TRIO program continues to provide exceptional opportunities for students for the allotted five-year timeframe.

Ashley Kirchner, Director of Student Support Services at BHSU, noted that BHSU is pleased to offer the TRIO programs and is very proud of the students for their successes.

Kirchner oversees the highly successful TRIO grant program at BHSU. In the last year the program exceeded their goals in all three of their performance objects. Student Support Services (SSS), which serves 200 students including 77 first-generation students, increased the retention rate of participants to 84 percent. In addition 93 percent of the SSS enrolled participants reached Good Academic Standing. The group also exceeded their goal for the graduation rate of participants.

"These numbers further confirm the kind of impact that retention services can have on the success of students, especially those who are identified with some of the highest needs," Kirchner said. "We appreciate the great faculty and staff at BHSU that makes reaching these numbers possible." BHSU bachelor degree seeking students who are first-generation, who have a disability that impacts their learning in the classroom or are income eligible can apply to be a part of TRIO. Please reach out to Ashley.Kirchner@bhsu.edu 605-642-6824 for more information.



Fred Nelson, American Legion Commander and Director of Network & Computing Services at BHSU and Dr. Priscilla Romkema, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at the Veteran's Park ribbon cutting.

BHSU ESTABLISHES VETERANS' PARK ON CAMPUS

BHSU hosted a ribbon cutting on Veterans Day, Nov. 11th, to dedicate Veterans' Park on campus.

The new park honors all veterans - past, present and future and commemorates the former Vetsville, a housing unit with trailers that was established in 1946 to provide affordable living for veterans and their families after World War II.

American Legion Commander Fred Nelson, who is the Director of Network & Computing Services at BHSU, spoke briefly about the importance of Veterans Day. Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Dr. Romkema dedicated the park and the first Veterans Bench to Dr. Charles Schad (Army Veteran and Professor at BHSU). The BHSU ROTC conducted the flag raising with the BHSU Choir singing the National Anthem.

UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM CAPSTONE PROJECTS

Junior and senior Honors Program members have worked incredibly hard to put together a number of unique, interesting projects related to their fields. Each project is either a thesis or a major project that is undertaken by the student and guided by a senior faculty member and second reader. You can view the 2020 Honors presentation videos [here](#).