

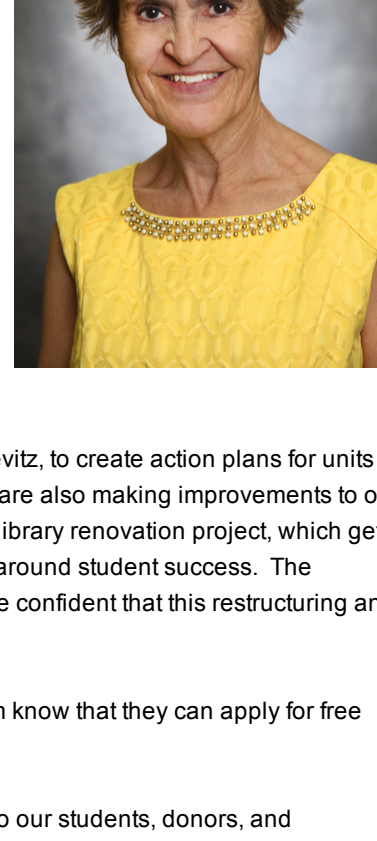


THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

NOVEMBER 2020

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The culmination of every semester and the opportunity to see our graduates reach their higher education goals by earning their diplomas is the highlight of the year. Although 2020 has been a very different year in many ways, that feeling of accomplishment for graduates remains the same. I commend the graduates for their perseverance and commitment to education. We will honor our graduates this weekend with three separate ceremonies with many modifications in place to make the celebrations safe for the graduates and their families.



We are continuing to restructure the university with a focus on student success and are pleased to already be seeing positive indicators. Our Student Success Center opened last month with professional advisers successfully working with current students as they map out each semester and strive to graduate in four years.

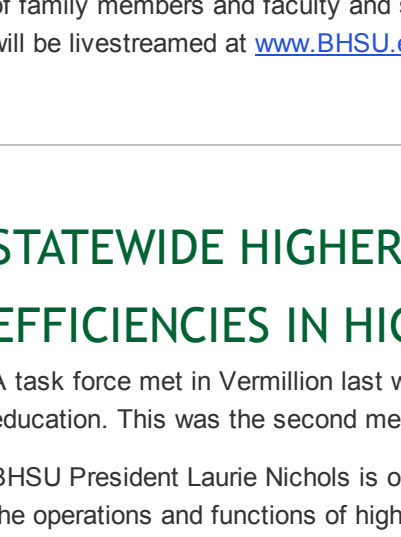
In addition, we are continuing to work with our consultant, Rufalo Noel Levitz, to create action plans for units across campus that will drive a stronger and more stable enrollment. We are also making improvements to our scholarship program and enhancing our career development efforts. Our library renovation project, which gets underway next month, includes redesigning the entire first floor centered around student success. The renovation will co-locate nearly a dozen student success services. We are confident that this restructuring and focus will have a positive impact on the entire campus.

If you know a student who might be interested in attending BHSU, let them know that they can apply for free during the month of November (see form below).

I also want to take a moment to express my gratitude and sincere thanks to our students, donors, and employees. Even as we face the ongoing challenges presented by the pandemic, it is important to count our blessings and be thankful that we have the opportunity to provide educational experiences for western SD at Black Hills State University. Please enjoy your Thanksgiving holiday and join us as we give thanks.

Laurie S. Nichols

President Laurie S. Nichols



BHSU WILL HOLD COMMENCEMENT WITH MODIFICATIONS

BHSU will have three commencement ceremonies on Saturday, Nov. 21 at the Donald E. Young Sports and Fitness Center to honor the 2020 graduates.

BHSU President Laurie S. Nichols said, "Commencement is an important milestone and we are committed to honoring our graduates with a number of modifications to the usual ceremony."

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, rather than having one ceremony for the entire group of BHSU graduates, a separate commencement ceremony will be held for each College. Graduating students along with a limited number of family members and faculty and staff will be in attendance. The commencement ceremonies will be livestreamed at www.BHSU.edu/Commencement.

STATEWIDE HIGHER ED TASK FORCE IS SEEKING EFFICIENCIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

A task force met in Vermillion last week to look at the return on investment from higher education. This was the second meeting of the [Senate Bill 55 Task Force](#).

BHSU President Laurie Nichols is one of the 20 members of the task force, which is studying the operations and functions of higher education institutions governed by the South Dakota Board of Regents. The task force was created after state lawmakers passed legislation in the 2020 session directing the study. Findings are to be reported to the Legislature and Gov. Kristi Noem in 2021.

At the meeting last week, former USD President Jim Abbott and former Regent Harvey Jewett shared perspectives on how public universities contribute to South Dakota's quality of life, workforce, and economic development. A 2016 study showed South Dakota public universities generate about \$2.66 billion of annual economic impact to South Dakota from a state investment at that time of \$197 million.



BHSU CELEBRATES FIRST GENERATION STUDENTS

The TRIO program at BHSU recently celebrated First Generation College students and graduates as part of a national week of recognition. Slightly more than one in four BHSU students are FirstGen students, who are the first in their family to earn a college degree.

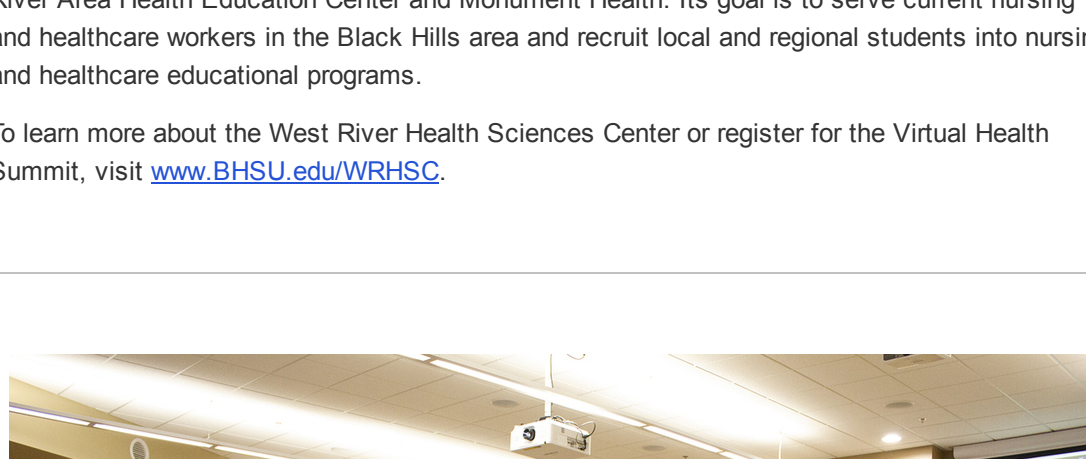
Ashley Kirchner, director of Student Support Services at BHSU, noted that it's important to recognize and support students who are the first in their families to earn a four-year degree.

BHSU has a legacy of providing opportunities for first generation students. Many BHSU faculty and staff including BHSU President Nichols; Dr. Cheryl Anagnopoulos, psychology professor and Faculty Senate President; Kathy Johnson, Vice President for Finance and Administration; Dr. Pam Cariveau, Assistant Provost; Dr. Trenton Ellis, sociology assistant professor and many others.

See videos of FirstGen students and faculty [here](#).

APPLY FOR FREE IN NOVEMBER

BHSU is waiving application fees for new students during the month of November. If you know of a possible future Yellow Jacket, please submit the quick [online form](#) to recommend him or her to the BHSU Office of Admissions. Your own child, sibling, niece or nephew perhaps? Let them know they can apply for free during November and encourage them to check out www.BHSU.edu/Admissions.



WEST RIVER HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER HOSTS HEALTH CARE SUMMIT

The West River Health Sciences Center will be holding two Virtual Health Summits in the month of November for current college students and for high school students. Faculty, staff, community members, and other supporters are also welcome to attend either session.

The virtual event will provide participants with the opportunity to learn about healthcare careers from current healthcare professionals as well as education and career pathways to achieve their goals. Participants will learn about nursing, healthcare fields and will have the chance to ask questions of current nursing students and professionals about the topics presented. For high school students, the Virtual Health Summit provides information about dual credit options to begin pre-health or pre-nursing education.

The WRHSC is a partnership between BHSU, SDSU, the University of South Dakota, the West River Area Health Education Center and Monument Health. Its goal is to serve current nursing and healthcare workers in the Black Hills area and recruit local and regional students into nursing and healthcare educational programs.

To learn more about the West River Health Sciences Center or register for the Virtual Health Summit, visit www.BHSU.edu/WRHSC.



BHSU HOSTS SALES TRAINING PROGRAM

BHSU recently launched a sales training program in Rapid City, the first of several workforce professional development initiatives. The BHSU Advantage: Strategic SALES Training Program officially kicked off in October at BHSU-Rapid City. The program coordinators are pleased to offer this sales skills development opportunity, according to Hans Nelson, director of the BHSU Center for Hospitality and Business.

The 30 participants include 14 BHSU students, a majority of whom are part of the University's MBA program. The other 16 participants are local business professionals from companies such as Coca-Cola High Country, Bank West, Vast Broadband, and Robert Sharp & Associates. BHSU students will earn a special topics credit for the program.

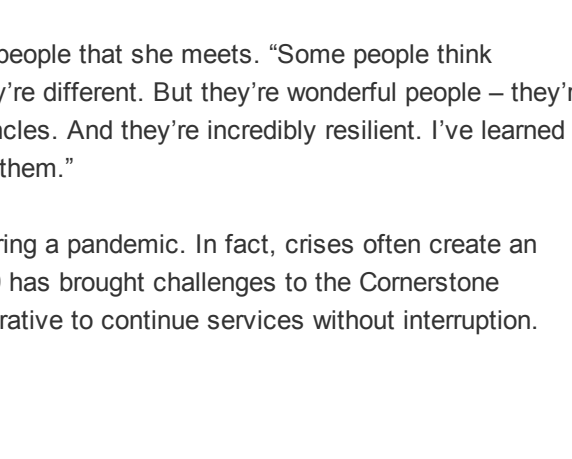
Shon Anderson, CEO of B9 Creations, noted he appreciates the sales program and is glad to be involved. "When given the opportunity to be a part of the local entrepreneurial community and higher education working to create professional sales workforce in the Black Hills, it was a no-brainer. Sales is the engine that grows businesses and a passion of mine," Anderson said.

This entire program is part of a new initiative that BHSU developed through the Center for Hospitality and Business, which is housed at BHSU-Rapid City under the direction of Hans Nelson. One of Nelson's goals is to create customized and off-the-shelf workforce training to support local businesses and the regional economy. [Read more](#)

Learn more at www.BHSU.edu/RapidCity or email Hans.Nelson@BHSU.edu.

BETA GAMMA SIGMA EARNS HIGH HONORS

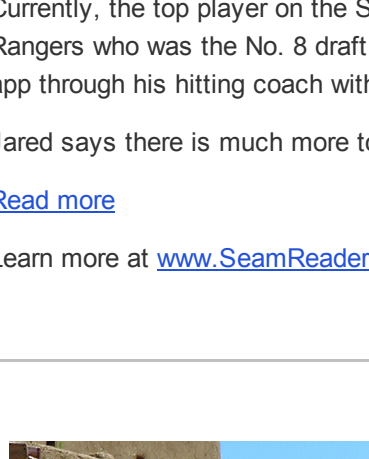
The Beta Gamma Sigma Honor Society chapter at Black Hills State University earned High Honors from the international organization, which represents the largest alumni group for graduates of business programs in the world.



The BHSU School of Business earned High Honors from the international Beta Gamma Sigma academic honor society.

Beta Gamma Sigma (BGS) will recognize the BHSU School of Business with High Honors on social media, in publications, and during BGS events and affiliated conferences throughout the year. With the High Honors designation, the BHSU chapter is eligible to submit award nominations for Chapter Advisor of the Year Award, Business Achievement Award, and Entrepreneurial Achievement Award.

Dr. Greg Farley, Dean of the College of Business and Natural Sciences at BHSU, said "The High Honors designation from Beta Gamma Sigma reflects the commitment of the students and the organization's faculty advisors: Dr. Susan Dana and Ms. Laura Prosser. Beta Gamma Sigma is committed to recognizing not only the exceptional efforts of highest-achieving chapters, but also a globally diverse group of talented business leaders. Through these awards, the organization shines a spotlight on outstanding chapters, Chapter Advisors and Deans. [Read more](#)



Allison

BIG IMPACT, SMALL FOOTPRINT: LYSA ALLISON

"Do good because you can do good." Words to live by and words that have led Lysa Allison to a career that has touched the lives of thousands of people.

Lysa, whose love of science and nature brought her to BHSU initially to pursue a bachelor's degree in Outdoor Education, has always had a heart for helping people. Her first job after graduation, a secretary for the Department of Corrections, didn't directly correlate with her degree. However Lysa says that position started her on the path to her current position as the Executive Director of the Cornerstone Rescue Mission in Rapid City.

In the Executive Director position she's held for five-and-a-half years, Lysa oversees all operations of the Cornerstone Rescue Mission, Veteran's Outreach, Women and Children's Home, Cornerstone Thrift Store, and Cornerstone Apartments. She works with a staff of 70 and approximately 800 volunteers to serve the 24/7 needs of vulnerable communities in an expansive region that includes all of West River South Dakota, and a little bit of North Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, and Nebraska although Lysa says that their reach extends much farther than that.

As the only emergency shelters in West River South Dakota, the Cornerstone provides a vital service for the community, taking in people off the streets and helping them turn their lives around. "We take people in that are sober and want to change their lives," Lysa says.

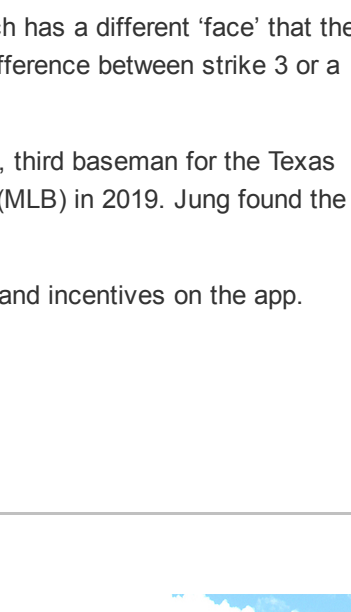
She notes that the best part of her job is the people that she meets. "Some people think homeless people have a stigma because they're different. But they're wonderful people – they're mothers, they're fathers, they're aunts and uncles. And they're incredibly resilient. I've learned so much about resiliency and character from them."

The needs of the homeless don't go away during a pandemic. In fact, crises often create an increased need for services. While COVID-19 has brought challenges to the Cornerstone Mission, Lysa and her staff knew it was imperative to continue services without interruption. [Read more](#)

PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL PLAYERS USE APP CREATED BY BHSU ALUM

USE APP CREATED BY BHSU ALUM

An app, that emerged as part of a senior project for a class at BHSU, now has more than 10,000 downloads and is being used by professional baseball players. The Seam Readers mobile app was created by BHSU alum Jared Tiefenthaler.



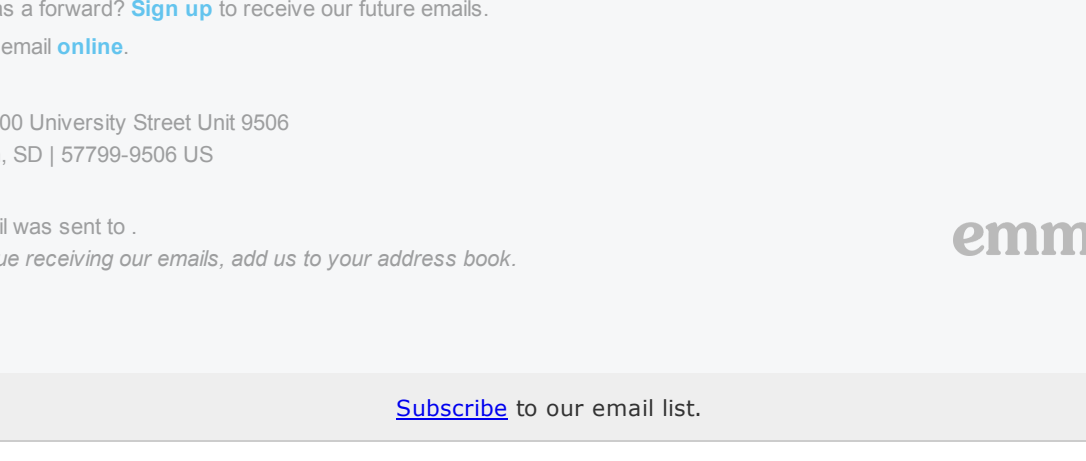
Tiefenthaler

"All the classes I took in entrepreneurship at BHSU are what I give credit to when it comes to advancing the idea for Seam Readers," says Jared, who now lives in Chino Valley, Ariz. He graduated from BHSU in 2018 and played for the BHSU football team.

Seam Readers is a baseball and softball technology company whose focus is training and teaching the skill of seam reading to players across the world. Seam Readers is the only way to actually get better at hitting by playing on your phone. "Each pitch has a different 'face' that the spin creates. Knowing what each pitch looks like could be the difference between strike 3 or a home run," Jared says.

Currently, the top player on the Seam Readers app is Josh Jung, third baseman for the Texas Rangers who was the No. 8 draft pick in Major League Baseball (MLB) in 2019. Jung found the app through his hitting coach with the Texas Rangers. Jared says there is much more to come with additional features and incentives on the app. [Read more](#)

Learn more at www.SeamReaders.com



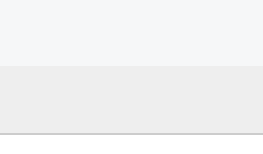
BHSU PLANNING A TOUR TO THE LAND OF ENCHANTMENT THIS SPRING

BHSU alumni and friends are invited to join a trip to New Mexico in March. This nine-day program will focus on the fascinating cultural mix for a special cultural heritage experience. Learn about the culture clashes at the living pueblos of Taos, Canyon de Chelly, and the remarkable Sky City, Acoma. Meet Native Americans who share their insights and heritage and visit historic trading posts and Gallup's famous "paw row." For details email Murray@ShebbyLeeTours.com

This trip may change or be postponed depending. Trip details are pending CDC recommendations.

www.BHSU.edu

Share this email:



Manage your preferences | Opt out using TrueRemove®

Got this as a forward? Sign up to receive our future emails.

View this email [online](#).

BHSU 1200 University Street Unit 9506 Spearfish, SD | 57799-9506 US

This email was sent to . To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.