



Legends and Legacies Virtual Awards Ceremony

NEBRASKA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

Thursday, May 13, 2021 / 6:30 p.m.



Welcome

Scott Young ('01)
master of ceremonies

Suzanne (Peterson) Sughroue ('02)
president, Alumni Executive Council

Young Alumni Loyalty Award

Derek Bombeck ('05)

Alumni Loyalty Award

Doug Koch ('95)

Young Alumni Achievement Award

Ben Greenfield ('01)

Alumni Achievement Award

Ann Miller-Watkins ('65)

Young Alumni Humanitarian Award

Vanessa Martinez ('08)

Alumni Humanitarian Award

Heather Craig-Oldsen ('70)

Alumni Medal of Honor

Gene Crump ('69) and Linda (Cooke) Crump ('70)

Closing

Darrin Good
president



Young Alumni Loyalty Award Derek Bombeck ('05)

"I wasn't just getting an education, but also gaining a family." – Derek Bombeck

Without skipping a beat, Bombeck began giving back to NWU. Bombeck regularly returns to campus to guest lecture and speak with prospective students, and he has employed more than 50 NWU interns with the Nebraska Athletics Department and the Lincoln Convention and Visitors Bureau. Through the Prairie Wolf Partner program, he helps out-of-state NWU students feel at home. He has served on the board of directors for Zeta Psi Fraternity and volunteers with sports organizations in Lincoln.

"Derek's loyalty as a family man and professional make him the perfect recipient for this award. I appreciate the respect he has amongst his peers, not only in the event industry and at the Lincoln Convention and Visitors Bureau, but at his alma mater as well."

—Jeff Maul, executive director, Lincoln Convention and Visitors Bureau

Nationally recognized by his peers as an exceptional sports events executive, Bombeck credits professors, mentors like Nancy Hansen and the Event Management Program with his ability to flourish in his highly competitive industry.



Alumni Loyalty Award Doug Koch ('95)

Koch has been involved with the Nebraska Wesleyan Athletic Training Program since before it was accredited and offered as a major at NWU. Having found his passion for sports medicine, Koch attended UNMC and went on to become an orthopaedic surgeon after residency at the University of Tennessee and a fellowship in sports medicine.

Returning to Nebraska after his training, Koch has served as the team physician and medical director of the Athletic Training Program at NWU. In addition to his role supporting athletes and teaching future athletic trainers at NWU, Koch performs surgery at Lincoln Orthopaedic Center, works on the staff of several area hospitals and serves as the team physician for Lincoln Salt Dogs baseball and Lincoln Stars hockey.

"For the last 14 years, Dr. Koch has volunteered his time to serve as the Prairie Wolves' team physician and orthopedic surgeon. He graciously provides a free weekly clinic on campus for NWU student-athletes. Doug also volunteers his time at all home football contests, post-season events, and as many regular-season events as possible. NWU could not ask for a better mentor to help with the care of our student-athletes!"

—Samantha Wilson, NWU assistant professor of health and human performance



Young Alumni Achievement Award Ben Greenfield ('01)

The busy life of a multi-sport student-athlete with a double major and leadership roles across the NWU campus prepared Greenfield for medical school at UNMC and a highly successful career as a perfusionist, professor and published researcher. He is currently Perfusion.com's director of recruitment and a clinical perfusionist, a UNMC professor of perfusion and clinical instructor and a government liaison for perfusion in the Nebraska legislature. Greenfield helped write licensure law for perfusion in Nebraska and now helps oversee licensure proposals on the State of Nebraska Board of Medicine and Surgery.

Greenfield often speaks to NWU's pre-health students and to audiences across the country about medicine, perfusion, a multidisciplinary approach to cardiac surgery and on how to maintain a positive attitude through adversity.

"I met Ben 20 years ago while he was in perfusion school, shortly after he graduated from Nebraska Wesleyan. Being a Wesleyan graduate myself, I knew he had to be an excellent student. I wasn't disappointed. The perfusion profession is better, the students he teaches are better, and I am better, all because we know Ben Greenfield."

—Andy Bonness ('93), perfusionist,
Nebraska Heart Institute and Heart
Hospital



Alumni Achievement Award Ann Miller-Watkins ('65)

Throughout her career as an economist at the EPA in Washington, D.C., Ann Miller-Watkins worked to convince political and corporate powers that the up-front cost of human health measures and environmental protections are in everyone's best interest. She quantified and valued the benefits of reducing air pollution, and her model became the standard used by health officials in calculating the benefits of reducing air emissions from power plants.

Growing up just a few blocks from campus, NWU shaped Miller-Watkins's sense of community. She has continued to serve Nebraska Wesleyan as a member of the Board of Visitors and Board of Governors, and she has transplanted her strong sense of community relationships to her Northwest Washington, D.C., neighborhood.

"I have had the privilege to serve as Mrs. Watkins' Ward 4 councilmember for the last six years. She has always been a leader in our community. Known by her neighbors (and the D.C. mayor) as the "mayor of Orchid Street," Mrs. Watkins' steadfast commitment has made the city of Washington better, and we are grateful for her leadership."

—Brandon Todd, Ward 4
councilmember, Washington, D.C.



Young Alumni Humanitarian Award Vanessa Martinez ('08)

"Wesleyan inspired me to contemplate what it means to be a global community member and to embody that through music, literary translation, stepping, Global Service Learning and also now in my career." – Vanessa Martinez

After six years advocating for alternatives to the harmful practices of immigration detention with the International Detention Coalition, based in Mexico City, Mexico, Martinez recently returned to Lincoln—her hometown—to continue her work in promoting justice for migrants and inclusive communities at Nebraska Appleseed, the organization that inspired her career path. She currently serves as the organizing manager for the Immigrants & Communities Program.

Martinez holds master's degrees in Latin American studies and in community and regional planning from the University of Texas at Austin.

"Vanessa brings joy and humor to difficult work. Her focus on people and her vision for systemic change is a driving force that pulls in and connects larger and larger circles of individuals along the way. She is truly a champion for change and is making the world a better place."

—Darcy Tromanhauser, director,
Immigrants & Communities Program
at Nebraska Appleseed



Alumni Humanitarian Award Heather Craig-Oldsen ('70)

"The Wesleyan experience changed the lives of students and required us to explore the values that would direct our lives." – Heather Craig-Oldsen

After first learning about social justice at NWU, Craig-Oldsen earned a Master of Social Work, went on to transform U.S. foster care training and then taught the next generation of social workers. While teaching, Craig-Oldsen worked with Native American communities in Nebraska to make her foster care curriculum culturally responsive. Her professional service has been recognized by her peers in social work, foster care and academia.

"Heather and I first met in high school. Our friendship continued during our time at Wesleyan and deepened during the following years. She has the ability to not only find good in every person she encounters, but also to offer respect to that person and set an example for those around her. The world is truly a better place because of Heather's presence."

—Linda Adams ('70)

Craig-Oldsen has served as a community fundraiser, on national committees for social work and child welfare, and on City Council in Ponca, Neb. She has endowed scholarships at Briar Cliff University and Nebraska Wesleyan.



Alumni Medal of Honor

Gene Crump ('69) and Linda (Cooke) Crump ('70)

"Coming to a small, unique campus helped us to expand our understanding of many different people, which helped us later in our careers." – Gene and Linda Crump

Both lawyers by trade, Gene and Linda Crump have served Lincoln and all of Nebraska with their legal acumen— Gene as a public servant, including a time as acting Nebraska attorney general, and Linda as an educator at the University of Nebraska College of Law, administrator at UNL and president of the Nebraska Bar Association.

Gene and Linda have each offered their leadership on numerous boards throughout Lincoln, including boards at NWU. They've had a lasting impact on NWU as instructors in criminal justice and sociology and through their service to the university.

"Beginning during their Wesleyan days, Gene and Linda built and understood the importance of maintaining lasting personal connections. Decades after graduating, when I get together with either of them, it is as though no time has passed. Nebraska Wesleyan and the world are undoubtedly a better place because of these two."

—Heather Craig-Oldsen ('70), professor emerita, Briar Cliff University

For a complete list of previous award winners, visit www.nebrwesleyan.edu/alumni

Alumni Executive Council

2019–2020 Members

Clark Bellin ('96)
Lincoln, Neb.

Jennifer (Smith) Benson ('98)
Fremont, Neb.

Jeff Bliemeister ('94)
Lincoln, Neb.

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Lincoln, Neb.

Kristin (Brichacek) Carlson ('07)
Lincoln, Neb.

Thomas Christie ('74)*
Lincoln, Neb.

Kate (Honeyman) Engel ('06)*
Lincoln, Neb.

Kay (Bowmaster) Green ('67)*
Lincoln, Neb.

John Greving*
*NWU vice president of advancement,
Lincoln, Neb.*

Geoff Hogeland ('98)
Lincoln, Neb.

Steven Joekel ('75)*
Omaha, Neb.

Daniel Lambe ('92)
Lincoln, Neb.

Kirk Lott ('85)
Lincoln, Neb.

Shelley (Benischek) McHugh ('91)*
*NWU director of alumni relations,
Lincoln, Neb.*

Scott Miller ('89)
Lincoln, Neb.

Tarryn (Tietjen) Moss ('16, MBA '18)
Lincoln, Neb.

Josh Norton ('05)
Omaha, Neb.

Ben Pankonin ('02)
Lincoln, Neb.

Suzanne (Peterson) Sughrue ('02)*
Lincoln, Neb.

Jen Svendsen*
NWU events coordinator, Lincoln, Neb.

* Indicates award committee member

Additional Award Committee Member

Kathy Wolfe ('90)
former dean of undergraduate programs