

2019 Report to ELCA Synod Assemblies

Central to the mission of Augustana College is education of the whole person: mind, body and spirit. This triune focus will be familiar to ELCA colleges and universities, whose educational missions are not concerned solely with accumulation of knowledge. Rather, one might say that for ELCA colleges, and liberal arts institutions in general, knowledge is the interplay of all aspects of human growth—*intellectual, physical and spiritual*. I would add one more to these, perhaps most related to the spiritual, and that is *mindful*.

Mindfulness, the state of being present *now* and paying attention to the moment at hand, is integral to individual well-being. It also is important to those concerned with the well-being of communities and the greater good in a world of precipitous change. Certainly important to education of the whole person, mindfulness also is relevant to another part of Augustana's mission: educating students "for a diverse and changing world."

This thinking is behind Augustana's plans for **The Austin E. Knowlton Center for Innovation in Health, Wellness and Human Performance**, which the college will unveil in 2020. Building on our renowned programs in the sciences and pre-health fields, Augustana also will introduce a major and minor in kinesiology—the study of human movement and physical activity, and their impact on the health and well-being of individuals and societies.

Launched by an \$8 million investment from the Austin E. Knowlton Foundation, the center will include classrooms and offices, exercise and mindfulness laboratories, gathering areas, and an aquatic center with 25-yard and therapeutic pools. It will bring together faculty expertise from public health, communication studies, psychology, biology, kinesiology and more. Through its design and blending of programs and spaces, the center will integrate mindful, intellectual and physical activity.

At ELCA colleges and universities, we are aware that to address problems and challenges facing the whole world, education of the whole person is necessary. As Saint Irenaeus of Lyons has said, "The glory of God is the human person fully alive."

When it is built, the Austin E. Knowlton Center for Innovation in Health, Wellness and Human Performance may be the one building on our campus that most encompasses preparation of "the human person fully alive." Throughout the Midwest it will be known for excellence in educating responsible, responsive leaders who are mindful of community and global issues related to health and wellness.

I invite you to visit Augustana and see it for yourself.



Steven C. Bahls, President