

Hospitality Is Not Enough: Higher Education, Justice and Immigrant Communities

Paul C. Pribbenow, President
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Augsburg as Urban Settlement



- Almost 150 years in this urban place, alongside our neighbors; an immigrant sensibility
- John 1:14 was foundational as an early motto of Augsburg; a theological *and* practical claim
- We have settled here – “We believe we are called to serve our neighbor”
- Seeking common purpose as we live together; a classroom for democratic engagement



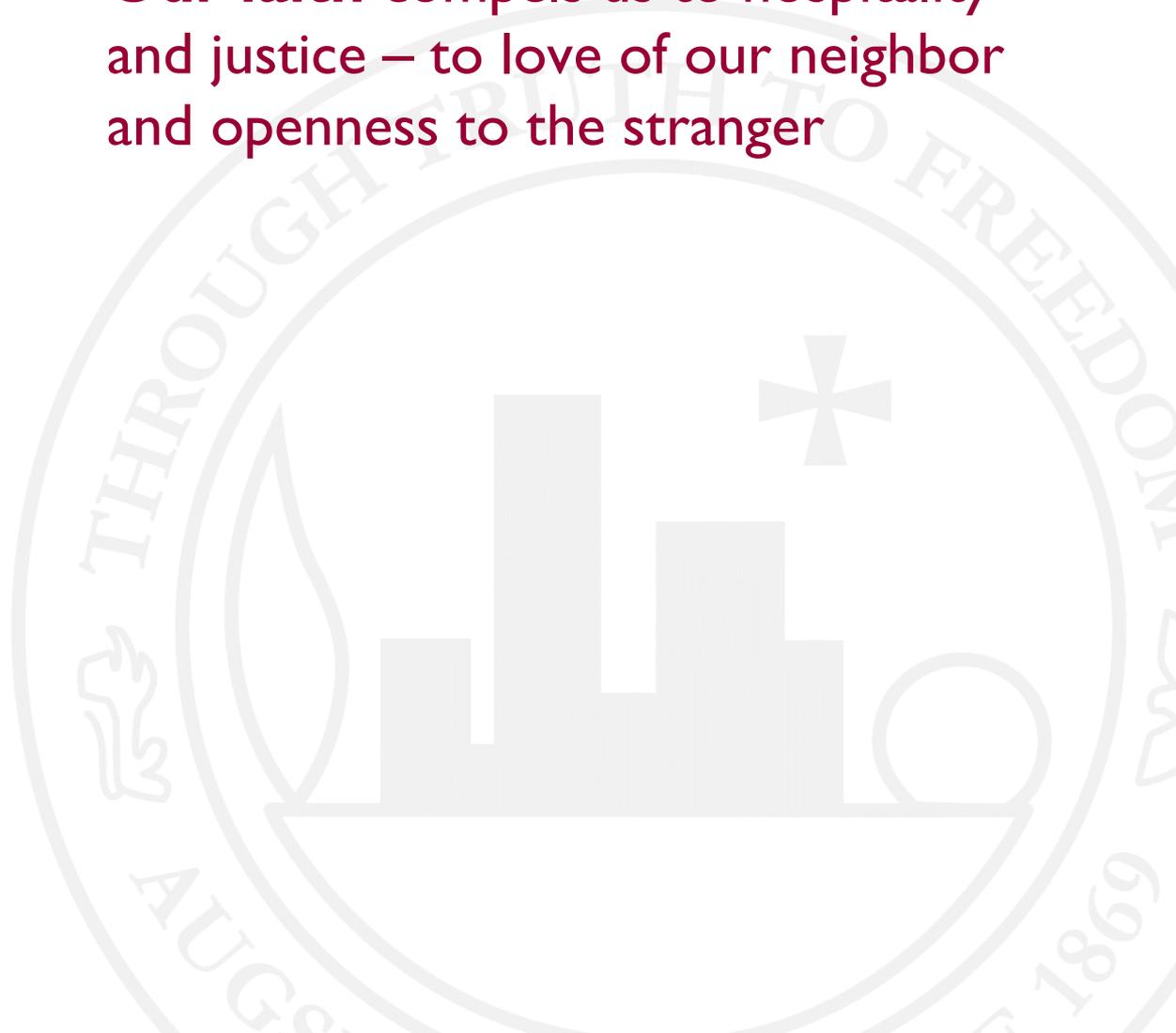
**AUGSBURG COLLEGE EDUCATES STUDENTS TO BE
INFORMED CITIZENS,
THOUGHTFUL STEWARDS,
CRITICAL THINKERS,
AND RESPONSIBLE LEADERS.**

THE AUGSBURG EXPERIENCE IS SUPPORTED BY AN ENGAGED COMMUNITY THAT IS COMMITTED TO INTENTIONAL DIVERSITY IN ITS LIFE AND WORK. AN AUGSBURG EDUCATION IS DEFINED BY EXCELLENCE IN THE LIBERAL ARTS AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES, GUIDED BY THE FAITH AND VALUES OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH, AND SHAPED BY ITS URBAN AND GLOBAL SETTINGS.

Grounding Augsburg's Equity Commitment



- **Our faith** compels us to hospitality and justice – to love of our neighbor and openness to the stranger



We Are Called: Our faith grounds this commitment



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IN 2019,
AUGSBURG IS A
STUDENT-CENTERED,
URBAN UNIVERSITY,
WHICH IS SMALL TO
OUR STUDENTS AND
BIG FOR THE WORLD.



2019 »

The New York Times

Muslim College Chaplains Reach Across Religious Divides

MINNEAPOLIS — Emma Blom grew up in the Scandinavian heartland of rural Minnesota, reliably attending her small town's Lutheran church. She spent each

childhood summer in vacation Bible school and played the piano for Sunday worship services. "Borning Cry" was her grandmother's favorite hymn.

Catholics were a scattered minority on the Minnesota prairie, Jews even rarer. As for Muslims, Ms. Blom had never met one. "I knew the women wore stuff on their head," she recalled. "I didn't even know it was called a hijab."

Then, as a sophomore at Augsburg College here in 2014, Ms. Blom felt her faith wavering. She had been shaken by her grandmother's death, and drew no solace from her church's rituals. One of her classes scrutinized the Bible for sexism and misogyny. Was she a Christian anymore? Was she even a believer? She didn't dare to ask any of her Lutheran friends, for fear of being judged and found wanting. Still struggling this fall, Ms. Blom turned to perhaps the most unexpected counselor and confessor of all: Augsburg's Muslim chaplain, Fardosa Hassan. And from Ms. Hassan, 26, a Somali refugee who had never seen snow until arriving in Minnesota as a 9-year-old entering fifth grade, Ms. Blom heard words that sustained her.

Doubt was the necessary companion of belief, Ms. Hassan assured her, not its irreversible solvent. Divine texts can be interpreted by human hands and in modern ways. One devout person's truth is not necessarily another's.

Two months after the conversation, Ms. Blom is attending church again, feeling more settled in her soul.

In this encounter across chasms of difference, Ms. Hassan embodied the vital role that dozens of Muslim chaplains like her are playing at colleges and universities throughout the nation. These chaplains serve as doors that open two ways — welcoming and integrating Muslim students who fear hostility at a time of rising Islamophobia, and normalizing Islam to non-Muslim students who have absorbed a narrative of it as an oppressive and violent religion.

"My role is to help students negotiate this multi-faith, diverse environment," said Ms. Hassan. "I'm going to give them a tool for when they go out of this institution, so they know how to be respectful of others. A lot of times, people are afraid even to ask the questions of people who are different. So I start with friendship. Start by



Aliya Sameru, top, a freshman at Augsburg College in Minneapolis, tidied up last month after a Friday Prayer service. Emma Blom, left, is a senior at Augsburg. Augsburg's Muslim chaplain, Fardosa Hassan, helped her through a period of spiritual doubt. Ms. Hassan, right, met last month with members of the school's Muslim Student Association.

integrated into the life of the school," said Heidi Hasdell, the president of Hartford Seminary in Connecticut, which has a program

Each academic year, though

aboard" stabbed 10 people at a shopping mall in St. Cloud, 65 miles from Minneapolis, heightening fears of homegrown terrorism. to Minneapolis in the care of her

ing class of 2012, was one of those students. Her family fled Somalia's civil war in 1993 and lived in Kenya for several years before she came to Minneapolis in the care of her

ation turn up for their meetings. For Ms. Hassan, such efforts are necessarily person-to-person. If a Christian student like Ms. Blom represented one vector of her out-

PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRIDGET BENNETT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Grounding Augsburg's Equity Commitment



- **Our faith** compels us to hospitality and justice – to love of our neighbor and openness to the stranger
- **Our academic mission** and the liberal arts demand of us an openness to an ever wider set of perspectives



Intentional Diversity: *The Grace of Great Things*



Grounding Augsburg's Equity Commitment



- **Our faith** compels us to hospitality and justice – to love of our neighbor and openness to the stranger
- **Our academic mission** and the liberal arts demand of us an openness to an ever wider set of perspectives
- **Our democracy** is strengthened by the road we travel together, alongside folks who don't necessarily share our experiences and gifts

PAUL PRIBBENOW

Hospitality is Not Enough: Claims of Justice in the Work of Colleges and Universities

Augsburg College educates students to be informed citizens, thoughtful stewards, critical thinkers, and responsible leaders. The Augsburg experience is supported by an engaged community, committed to intentional diversity in its life and work. An Augsburg education is defined by excellence in the liberal arts and professional studies, guided by the faith and values of the Lutheran Church, and shaped by its urban and global settings.

The Augsburg College mission statement

Augsburg College's founders chose as the college's original motto these words from the gospel of John: "And the Word became flesh" (John 1:14). Today the motto is more relevant than ever as it provides a theological framework for the college's deep commitment to access and hospitality while also challenging the Augsburg community to explore and respond to the ways in which the world is marked by systems and practices that are unfair and unjust. We believe that the claim of hospitality demands that we work for justice. I want to explore with you what this theological claim means for our mission and work as a college. How does Augsburg College imagine its distinctive work as an expression of faith in our particular location and context?

From the time of its founding, Augsburg has been a place of great hospitality, which plays itself out in many ways because of our character and our location. In particular, we have become a place that is hospitable to students who have joined us from communities of color, from first-generation families, and from the city. That has changed the nature of our day-to-day life in fundamental ways over the past three or four years as we have

lived into our mission commitment to intentional diversity and the hospitality that enriches our life together. More recently, we have been wrestling with the question: Is hospitality enough? Is just the fact of welcoming enough, or, is there a reason *why* the need to be welcomed demands more of us? As I started to explore this question, I found that Augsburg is in fact a place that is both hospitable and also very much dedicated to sending and equipping our students to go into the world to fight for justice for those who are vulnerable and who do not have access.

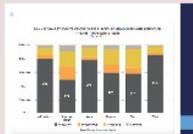
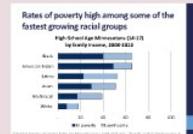
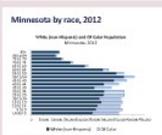
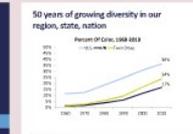
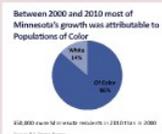
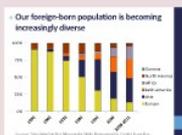
Civility: The Etiquette of Democracy in Action

Let me begin with a claim—civility is democracy in action. The theme of our coming together for this conference is the role of civility in our common lives. For me, the concept of civility was critical as we rewrote and adopted the college's new mission statement in 2010 (printed above). The new mission statement says that Augsburg College educates students to be informed citizens, thoughtful stewards, critical thinkers, and responsible leaders. The first outcome named is informed citizens, a deliberate choice

PAUL PRIBBENOW serves as the 16th president of Augsburg College, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Democracy's EDUCATION PUBLIC WORK, CITIZENSHIP, & THE FUTURE of COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

EDITED BY HARRY C. BOYTE



Resurgence and diversity of new Americans

Continuation of increase in racial diversity

Racial Gaps Persist

Two case studies of our work with immigrant communities:



Our **Somali Neighbors**
in the Cedar-Riverside
Neighborhood of Minneapolis



Mexican Immigrants and Families
in Minnesota as
Undocumented Students

We're in This Together: The Cedar-Riverside Partnership



It's About Student Success: Minnesota Urban Debate League

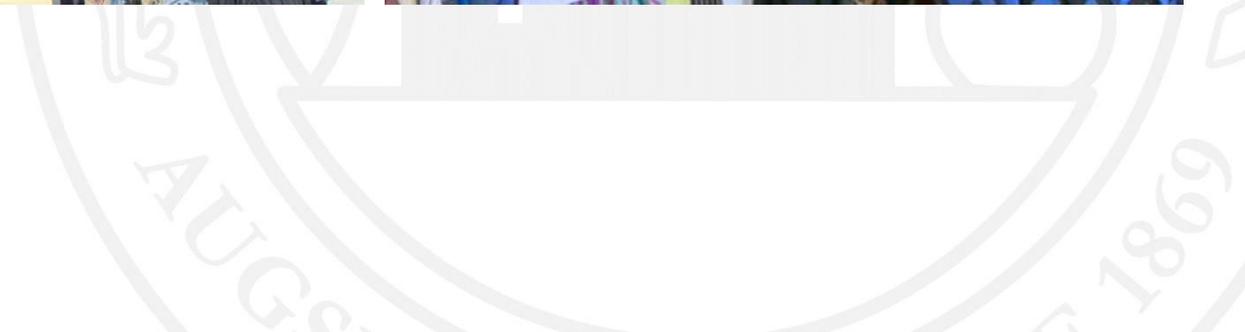


Somali Debate Initiative

It's About Building Institutions: East African Future Teachers Program



It's About Community Engagement: Sisterhood Boutique









Undocumented Mexican Immigrants: The Call to Radical Hospitality



Increasingly,
undocumented students
are raised right here, in
the United States.

Augsburg – and every higher education institution – must heed the call to educate students of ability. It is through this call that our colleges and universities can secure economic prosperity not only for students, but for our state and nation.

2007

2008

2009

2010

2011

2012

2013

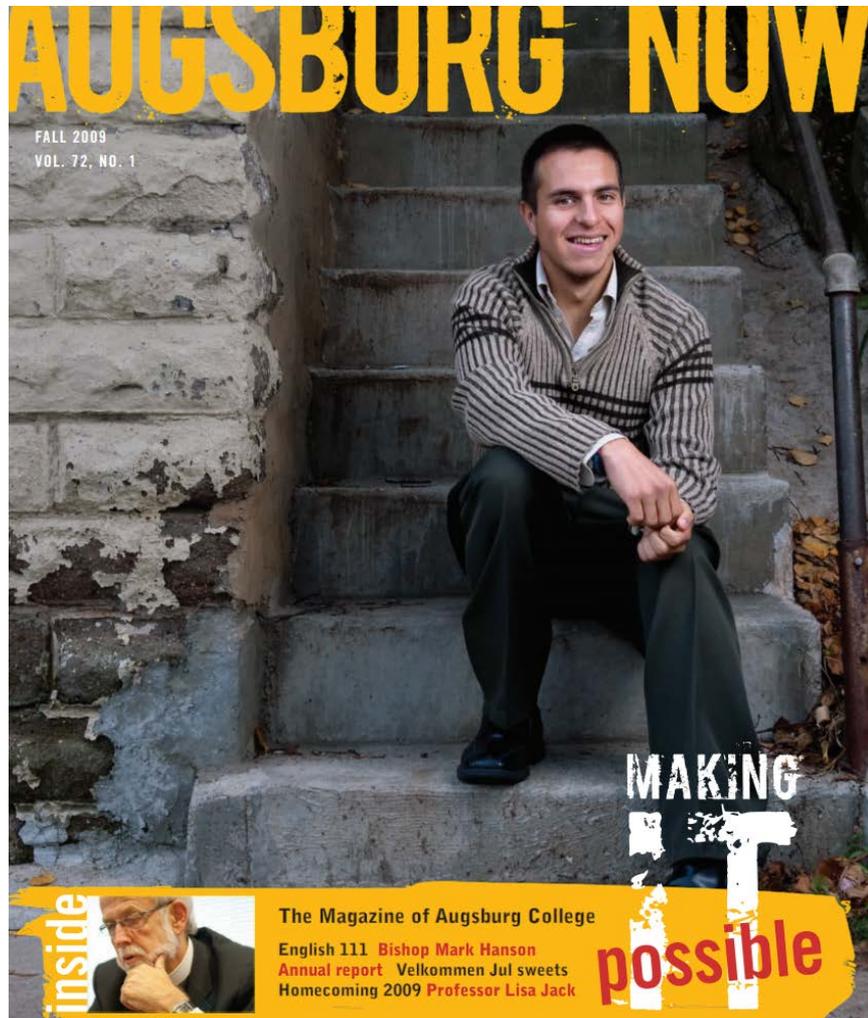
2014

2015

2016

2017

Beyond Hospitality to Equity: An Institutional Commitment



Augsburg College ... does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, **national or ethnic origin**, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, or disability

*Approved by Board of Regents
Executive Committee
June 16, 2010*

DACA and DREAM



- 2011: Obama administration issued new policy allowing certain undocumented immigrants, who came to the U.S. as children, to apply for two-year work permits



- 2012: Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program provides temporary relief from deportation for eligible young adults



- 2013: MN Dream Act makes undocumented students eligible for state aid and in-state tuition

United We Dream

- Broaden access through institutional aid and grants
- Reduce financial barriers to experiences, including internships, research, community engagement, student leadership
- Empower undocumented and DACA students to develop self-advocacy skills, persist, and graduate

THANK YOU!
UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS | EDUCATORS | INSTITUTIONS

-  **80 SCHOOLS PLEDGED**
TO WORK WITH AND FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS.
-  **766 COMMITMENTS**
WERE MADE BY INSTITUTIONS ACROSS THE COUNTRY.
-  **28 STATES STEPPED UP**
AND PARTICIPATED TO FIGHT FOR EDUCATION EQUITY.

 #InstitutionsOut [SIGN UP HERE FOR EDUCATION EQUITY](https://unitedwedream.org/educationequity)
unitedwedream.org/educationequity

Post-U.S. Election Challenges

- “Sanctuary” movement
- Keeping students safe, while focused on their success – asking for on-campus latitude
- Campus Climate Action Team – scanning internal and external challenges
- Policy advocacy at state and federal levels





Need to Determine Public Will

1. Is it literally our mission or vision?
2. Is it of obvious strategic interest?
3. Is this an area where Augsburg has unique experience or expertise?
4. Does it affect the students, faculty, staff, alumni, and neighbors we support and serve?
5. Is Augsburg called to leadership?
 - a) Will an Augsburg stand change or reframe the debate?
 - b) Are there partner organizations with whom to collaborate?
 - c) Does Augsburg's role in local community define a need to respond?
6. Do we align with or bring value to our church body by taking a position?
7. Can the Augsburg stand speak to the value of nonpartisanship?

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From those who have been entrusted with much, much more will be demanded.

— *Luke 12:48*

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