

## COMMENCEMENT - MAY 16, 2020



On Saturday, May 16, at 10:00 am, **148 students earned degrees** marking the completion of their ministerial training at Martin Luther College. Degrees awarded were 39 preseminary Bachelor of Arts degrees and one seminary certification, 99 Bachelor of Science in Education degrees (including 15 early childhood education degrees), eight Bachelor of Science degrees (including one staff ministry degree and seven educational studies degrees), and one staff ministry certification.



In addition, 15 students received their **Master of Science** in Education degrees, and eight students earned their Master of Science in Educational Administration degrees.

The **virtual Commencement Service** recorded in the Chapel of the Christ was conducted by presiding minister Rev. James Pope. MLC President Mark Zarling presented the commencement sermon on the theme, "Where's My Jesus?" Dr. Jeff Wiechman, vice president for academics, read the names of the students receiving degrees.



On May 16, during the WELS Reading of Assignments, **150 assignments were issued**. In category 1 (candidates who are available for assignment anywhere), 120 were assigned: 64 current graduates and 55 previous graduates. In category 4 (candidates who are limited to a certain geographic area), 30 were assigned: 13 current graduates and 17 previous graduates.



## STUDENT ENROLLMENT

**697 UNDERGRADUATES**

**99% TRADITIONAL-AGE STUDENTS**

**49% MEN 51% WOMEN**

Representing **33 states**  
and **6 countries**

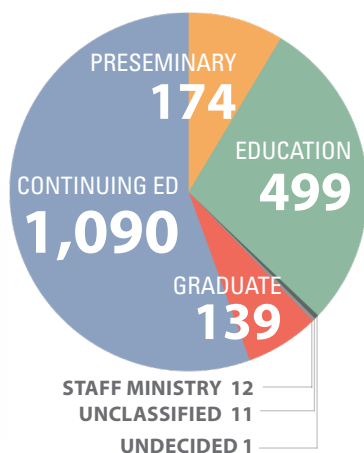
**FIRST-YEAR  
STUDENT PROFILE:**

**3.62**

Average  
**HS GPA**

**25.1**

Average  
**ACT**



**87 ON-CAMPUS FACULTY**  
(tenured, adjunct, other)

**ENROLLMENT: 1,926**

**12:1 STUDENT/TEACHER RATIO**

## MLC DAY

*Celebrating Seniors*

We at MLC rejoice over the wonderful support our 2020 graduates experienced through your prayers, messages, videos, photos, and donations!



- mlcday.com: **1,700+** visitors from **42** states and **10** countries
- Over **1,400** personal messages of support shared with our **148** graduating seniors
- Facebook page: **21,661+** people reached and **29,202** video views
- Donations: **\$105,235 raised**

We look forward to the next MLC Day on May 5, 2021!

**#MLCDay21**

## COVID-19 RESPONSES AT MLC - FALL PREPARATIONS

The MLC 2020 Fall Planning Team is meeting regularly to create a realistic plan for opening our 2020-21 fall semester. Applying quickly changing COVID-19 recommendations, they are making thoughtful decisions in these areas: **Campus life** (How will we safely house our students and operate our food service?) **Academics** (What instructional methods, environments, and combinations will work within CDC guidelines?) **Athletics** (What routines will allow our athletes to practice and play safely within pending restrictions?) **Social life** (Recognizing how important this is to our campus family, what opportunities and spaces can we make available?)

Our top priority is providing the highest level of safety and confidence in our campus learning environment while adhering to the spiritual and educational standards WELS expects from its college of ministry. Our commitment remains, under God's grace and guidance, to do everything possible to conduct our ministry on the MLC campus this fall in a traditional manner.

Watch your email, your Facebook feed, and our website for ongoing updates related to our fall semester opening.

## CAMPAIGN GIVING UPDATE

Campaign Goal: **\$18M**

**\$1,638,060** Donated or Pledged to ECW

**2,554** Total Gifts

**1,752** Donors



## CAMPAIGN PAUSED

We will pause in our active promotion of ECW until the current uncertainty surrounding the coronavirus has subsided. We thank you for your continued prayers and support for our ministry.

To learn more, please visit [mlc-wels.edu/mlc-campaign/](http://mlc-wels.edu/mlc-campaign/).



## ADMISSIONS UPDATE

Our Admissions team's communication with prospective students has been very productive this spring. Because the team cannot travel, they are devoting more time to virtual visits and electronic communication.

Admissions Counselor Lori Unke commented, ***"It seems as if the high school students are more comfortable sharing their thoughts from the privacy of their homes than in a noisy office somewhere in their school. This has led to some quality ministry conversations!"***

The team has also had time to be more active on social media—responding to high school posts, acknowledging students' achievements, and reaching out to future Knights and their families. With all this additional guidance and communication provided by the MLC admissions counselors, the status of the enrollment process is actually improved.

Director of Admissions Mark Stein provided this update: ***"Applications are ahead of last year, along with admits and deposits. If the trend continues, we should see a larger freshman class interested in considering their future here at MLC. The MLC class of 2024 is an exciting group of young people from all over the country and world willing to consider serving!"***

## REV. MARK ZARLING RETIRES



**Rev. Mark Zarling**, president of Martin Luther College from 2007 to 2020, is retiring this summer. During President Zarling's tenure, God has blessed the college in countless ways.

The campus saw the construction of beautiful new facilities funded by God's people: Chapel of the Christ, the Early Childhood Learning Center, a baseball field, and a soccer pitch.

The academic catalog expanded to include many new majors, as well as minors in urban ministry and Chinese. The graduate program added two new degrees: Master of Science in Educational Administration and Master of Arts in Theological Studies. And continuing education offerings expanded tremendously, including the addition of New Teacher Induction.

President Zarling put the spotlight on lowering student debt, broadening international services, expanding experiential learning, and recruiting new students not merely to fill current vacancies but to prepare for new ministries still in development. Through all these changes, he kept the campus focused on the mission statement: "To train a corps of Christian witnesses . . ."

Faculty, staff, and synod leaders have called President Zarling a man of faith, a pastor-administrator, a humble visionary, a Christ-like leader, and MLC's spiritual compass. He spoke God's promises in the hallways, prayed with colleagues in their offices, and spiritually uplifted the whole college family.

"President Zarling has left an impression on Martin Luther College," said WELS President Mark Schroeder. "He has personally guided and shaped hundreds if not thousands of students. And through his leadership he has instilled in our synod's members a love for and a confidence in Martin Luther College."

If you have any questions related to this report or other matters related to our ministry, contact us at [mlcinfo@mlc-wels.edu](mailto:mlcinfo@mlc-wels.edu).

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