

# McGovern Center Living the Legacy

FALL/WINTER  
2023-24

## We Appreciate You

### “FRENETIC” YEAR HIGHLIGHTS THE VALUE OF OUR WORK

Your support for the McGovern Center is more than appreciated. It makes possible everything we do, and this year has been positively frenetic. For every event described below, there are at least two others we don't have time to describe. But in all this, we keep our eye on the goal of defining the legacy and sharpening the vision of Sen. George McGovern.

If you can make a donation to the McGovern Center in honor of Sen. McGovern's lifelong legacy, we encourage you to visit [give.dwu.edu](http://give.dwu.edu). Your gift can help us ensure that our work will continue.



### 2023-24 Speaker Series

Mark your calendar.

**Feb. 13, 2024**

**Stark Lecture:  
Tatewin Means**  
*Thunder Valley  
Development Corp.*

**April 2, 2024**

**Carhart Lecture:  
Dr. Bret Lingwall**  
*South Dakota School of Mines  
“Carbon Pipelines”*

## School Lunch

### MEG ADDRESSES NEED

The McGovern Engagement Group (MEG) spent the spring semester learning about the federal school lunch program and one possible alteration that could simplify the registration process for families. MEG had taken this topic on as a policy initiative under the counsel of D.C. attorney Marshall Matz. Matz provided legal counsel to Sen. McGovern on food and nutrition issues in the 1970s. On Thursday afternoon, March 23, a few students from MEG met with Ben Ready, regional director for Sen. John Thune, to discuss the “Matz Proposal.” Ready explained that the Thune office had discussed the proposal and took it seriously. While the proposal faced several intractable barriers, the learning experience was rich and worthwhile.



**JOEL ALLEN, Ph.D.** *Director of the McGovern Center*

## McGOVERN CENTER IN THE NEWS

One of the remarkable developments this fall has been the level of media interest the McGovern Center projects have generated, mainly between South Dakota Public Broadcasting and the *Mitchell Republic*. On Sept. 8, South Dakota Public Broadcasting ran a feature on our depolarization events and continued its coverage with a second interview on its news feature program, “In the Moment,” which was broadcast on Oct. 19. On Oct. 16, we had our first one-on-one red/blue/purple conversation. The *Mitchell Republic* ran a front-page story on that event. (Note: A subscription is necessary to read *Mitchell Republic* stories.) The following week, on Oct. 25, the *Mitchell Republic* ran a front-page story covering the lake debate. A few days later, the newspaper ran a front-page, above-the-fold, two-page article featuring Dr. Andrea Bjornestad. We make every effort to share these stories on social media to ensure that our message is disseminated to readers all over the world.

Your gifts will help us continue to bring news of the McGovern Center and more to our students and community.



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DWU is an equal opportunity employer and provider.

# McGovern Ongoing Projects

## DWU SPEAKER SERIES DELIVERS

The McGovern Center continues to sponsor four campus speakers a year. The purpose of this speaker series is to develop, within our general education program, students' understanding of civic responsibility and the common good and to nurture qualities that result in the flourishing of the communities in which they live.

### **SURF Day at DWU**

On March 28, representatives of the Sanford Underground Research Facility (SURF)

came to campus. SURF is the deepest underground research facility in the world. It extends almost one mile below the surface of the earth in an old gold mining shaft. SURF has more than 30 continuing experiments. The two most famous experiments are the neutrino detection experiment and the search for dark matter. Sessions were well-attended, including a general session for students, a lunch with science students and an afternoon coffee with science and education faculty.

### **The Crisis of Rural Mental Health**

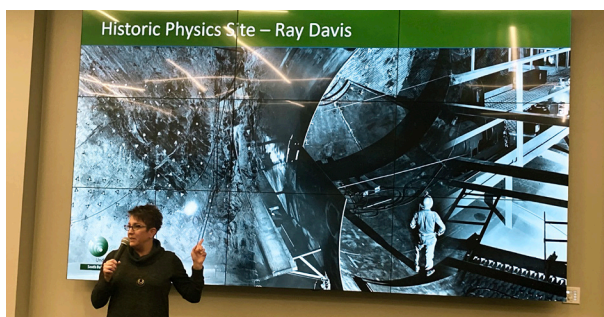
The challenge of mental health in rural communities could hardly be any more severe. With limited access to services, persistent stigma, economic hardships and isolation worsened by scarce resources, tailored solutions are essential. On Nov. 7, we welcomed Dr. Andrea Bjornestad to campus.

Dr. Bjornestad is the mental health state specialist for South Dakota State University Extension. She has conducted numerous studies on the factors contributing to stress, depression, anxiety and suicide in agricultural producers, and her research is internationally recognized. Her lecture was attended by more than 100 students, faculty, staff and community members. It can be viewed at [dwu.edu/live](http://dwu.edu/live).

## DWU GROUP SUPPORTS UGANDAN MINISTRY

In May, we sent six DWU students, a Mitchell High School student, a nursing faculty member and a retired dentist to Uganda. Our nursing students and faculty shadowed doctors and nurses in the clinic. In one day, they saw and treated 145 patients. They were in full operation as nurses, and their work was very appreciated by the clinic staff. AsOne has five clinics in Uganda now, and we worked at two of these sites. The team also organized and ran two youth camps with about 150 children each.

The Uganda team for May 2024 is already in the works. Nine students have applied and been accepted. The team will be led by the Rev. Dr. Anthony Purcell and the Rev. Taryn Ragels, DWU's campus pastors.



# Braver Angels

## A THRIVING PARTNERSHIP ENCOURAGING UNITY



 Braver Angels

The McGovern Center is continuing a robust partnership with Braver Angels, the nation's largest depolarization organization. Debates have been held on critical race theory; gun control; and college athletes profiting from sale of name, image and likeness. And on Nov. 28, the year's final debate question focuses on whether those running for the presidency should submit to a physical and cognitive

exam. We also hosted a depolarization workshop called "Meet Me in the Middle."

Perhaps our most successful event has been our lake debate. The question was, "How Can We Best Revive Mitchell's Dying Lake?" This controversial issue has tremendous local concern. Lake Mitchell is filling with phosphorous-laden sediment, and the cost of dredging and other treatments are estimated to cost the city \$25 million.

About 100 individuals from the Mitchell community were present for the lake debate with 50 more watching online. We had great opening speeches by DWU's own Dr. Paula Mazzer and community member

Jordan Hanson, then an excellent overview by two lake scientists – one in favor of dredging and one opposed. While the debate did not achieve a consensus, there was a sense that real progress was made and that something needs to be done and done right.



[braverangels.org](http://braverangels.org)

## Thank You!

Many thanks to all of you who appreciate the work of the McGovern Center and who support us with your gifts. We appreciate your partnership in this great work of extending the McGovern tradition. We ask that you continue to give toward this great mission and purpose. Please use the enclosed return envelope or give online at [give.dwu.edu](http://give.dwu.edu). Help us create sustained programs through the McGovern Center by making a planned gift. Talk to our advancement team today about a strategic McGovern Legacy gift.

Visit [dwugift.org](http://dwugift.org) or make a one-time contribution at [give.dwu.edu/McGovern](http://give.dwu.edu/McGovern).



WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR YOU DURING THIS SEASON OF GIVING.

