



## THE CENTER FOR COLLEGE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### Reflecting on Two Years of the Scot Speaker Series

By Dr. Ben Peterson

Over the past two years, the Scot Speaker Series has embodied Alma College's commitment to meaningful conversation and community connection. Together, students, faculty, and local residents have explored topics ranging from artificial intelligence and the arts to public service and politics.

This year, the series turned to the things that bring us together: music, dialogue, education, and food. We began with a performance and talk by opera singer and Alma College alum Jason Duika, who shared both his voice and his journey with Tourette Syndrome. The organization Undivided led a series of workshops on speaking productively across personal, political, and racial divisions. In March, Alma College alum Dr. Richard Douglass reflected on how his education shaped his path as an innovative public health researcher and leader. And we concluded with a sneak-peek screening of *Did You Guys Eat?*, a documentary on food production in Central Michigan by Dr. Stephany Slaughter and Nicholas Wracan.

While I've appreciated each event on its own merits, my greatest joy in running the series has been welcoming new people to campus and seeing conversations grow. Thank you to everyone who has attended, listened, asked questions, or shared your story. Your presence and engagement have made this series stronger—and reinforced the continuing importance of connection between the college and the broader community.

### Upcoming Events:

**Alma College High School Jazz Festival**  
**Friday, April 11 from 8:00AM - 5:00PM**  
**in the Remick Heritage Center,**  
**Presbyterian Hall**

A plethora of jazz bands from schools all across Michigan unite to compete as a part of this 27th annual musical celebration that marks a year of hard work by each group. Free; no ticket required.

**Alma Choirs Palooza**  
**Friday, April 11 from 7:00PM - 9:00PM**  
**in the Alma College Chapel**

A concert featuring some of your pop and contemporary a cappella favorites performed by Scots on the Rocks and Pretty in Plaid! This concert is free.

**Kiltie Wind Ensemble**  
**Sunday, April 13 from 3:00PM - 5:00PM**  
**in the Remick Heritage Center,**  
**Presbyterian Hall**

The Kiltie Wind Ensemble presents a colorful program including a wind arrangement of George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, featuring our own pianist James Schippers. Tickets: \$15 adults; \$7 seniors 62+; Alma College staff, students and youth 18 and under are free; seating is reserved. For reservations go to <https://alma.universitytickets.com/>

**Ceramics Display from Understanding Evolution and Morphology Through Ceramics**

**Wednesday, April 16 at 8:00AM - 12:55PM AND 1:00PM - 3:00PM in Dow Lobby**

Stop by the Dow Lobby and see the ceramic creations from the course *Understanding Evolution and Morphology* Wednesday through Friday of exam week. Students will be discussing their work 1-3 p.m. Wednesday, April 16th.

## Faculty, Staff, Students Produce Documentary on Michigan Agriculture By Tim Rath, Director of College Communications

A new documentary produced and directed by Alma College staff and faculty members aimed to shed light into the stories of Michigan agriculture and the lives of people who put food on our table. "Did You Guys Eat? ¿Ya Comieron?: Stories of Michigan Agriculture" is the latest film produced and directed by Emmy Award-winning documentarian and Alma College Professor of World Languages and Cultures Stephany Slaughter. A sneak peek will take place from 4 to 6 p.m. Saturday, April 12, at NCG Cinema in Alma.

"Did You Guys Eat?" is truly an Alma College production. It's co-produced by Slaughter and Wracan, with Center for College and Community Engagement (3CE) co-director Benjamin Peterson and Audio/Visual Specialist Jacob O'Brien rounding out the production team. O'Brien also edited and color graded the project. Assistant Professor of Music Justin Rito, together with student Audrey Merrifield, composed the score. Other Alma College students and alumni worked in the film crew.



## Scots Go Green! By Zoe Palmer



Saturday, April 5th, Alma College's First Annual "Scots Go Green" event bridged the gap between campus and community. Over 50 students volunteered across multiple Gratiot County locations, all in the name of environmental stewardship. Community partners included: Forest Hill Nature Area, Gratiot County Community Garden, Healthy Pine River, Community Advisory Group (CAG), as well as Alma College's own ecological station and campus greenhouse.

Students accomplished everything from giving life back to the currently dormant greenhouse through power washing and weeding to securing more fencing around the Community Garden to protect this year's crops. Alma College's LEAPS (Leaders for Environmental Awareness, Protection, and Sustainability) and AmeriCorps VISTAs collaborated on this project alongside the community partners and campus to make this vision come to life. It was a lovely sendoff for those LEAPS members set to graduate in the coming weeks and a great way to kick off the spring season. We all hope to see this event expand in the coming years, and overall, we couldn't have been happier with the turnout!



## Social Media Training By Ingrid Gustafson

Throughout the month of March, the Alma Public Library hosted a series of digital media classes, coordinated and taught by City of Alma Parks and Recreation Coordinator Morgan Most and AmeriCorps VISTA Ingrid Gustafson. During the first two-week class, participants learned about *Digital Literacy*, followed by two sessions of *Smartphone 101*. This has been a great success with plenty of room to continue growing and having more classes to build knowledge. Knowledge is power!



## Hygiene Kits Donated

In January, for Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Alma College students & staff along with AmeriCorps VISTA representatives assembled and donated 100 hygiene kits to support patients in need at the MyMichigan Continuing Care Clinic.



## Golden Scot Award

On April 3, Alma College celebrated the 29th Annual Kapp Honors Day, a tradition in which students present their academic projects and celebrate scholarly and creative accomplishments. Ten presentations were nominated for the Golden Scot Award, offered by the Center for College and Community Engagement (3CE) for the best community-engaged project presented at Honors Day. Winners of the 2025 Golden Scot Award are Holly Hall and Grace Gottschalk for their Honors 300 project, which involved planning and running a Kids Sports Clinic in collaboration with Alma Public Schools and Alma College Athletics. They discussed the lessons they learned from running this program and the value that community engagement added to their experience in the Honors program.