

# Division of Student Affairs 2024-25





Everyone  
deserves  
a place to  
be seen,  
known,  
& loved

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Principle One: Embraces all students as valued members of an inclusive and diverse community that embodies God's love for all.

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# Our Shared Journey



At St. Thomas, our work in Student Affairs is grounded in the belief that every student deserves to be seen, known, and loved. Our “In This Together” initiative invites students and staff to build inclusive communities rooted in dignity, dialogue, and belonging—reflecting the Principles of Good Practice for Student Affairs at Catholic Colleges and Universities.

I am thrilled to share our end of the year report with you and am deeply grateful for the dedication of our staff, the voices of our students, and the many partnerships across campus that make our work possible. It is such an honor and a blessing to accompany students on their journey through St. Thomas.

Many of the high impact practices developed by our staff and partners were created not only for students but with students. Students have opportunities for engagement, reflection, discernment, and spiritual exploration that help them integrate their academic, personal, and professional lives.

It is my joy to see students flourish and discover their purpose beginning with their first encounter at orientation until they walk across the stage on graduation day prepared to make a difference in our world.

**Karen Lange, Ed.D.**

Vice President for Student Affairs



# Anderson Student Center



***“ASC is where I feel most productive and connected—it’s more than a building, it’s a community.”***

## *Tommie Central & Student Engagement*

**37 student workers** in Fall and **32 in Spring**, including **9 Building Managers**, provided over **6,000 hours** of service in customer support, event logistics, and recreation.

ASC hosted **1,058 meetings**, **105 community events**, **100 social events**, and **356 recruiting events**, with students spending over **6,000 hours studying** in ASC spaces.



## *Innovative Programming*

- **Bowling Leagues** supported 4–6 teams per semester, fostering social connection.
- **Bike Rentals** expanded to **135 rentals** from September to May.
- New partnerships with the Center for Well-Being and Voyageur Outward Bound School reimagined recreation as a tool for well-being and belonging.

## *Revenue Generation*

ASC generated **\$28,216** through bowling, lockers, tickets, and rentals—supporting student programming and facility upkeep.



# Club Sports



## National Achievements

- **Men's Lacrosse:** MCLA National Champions (7th title)
- **Rowing:** Julia Rodrigue, ACRA Women's Single National Champion
- **Rugby:** Minnesota 15's Champions
- **Sailing:** Competed in several East Coast regattas for the first time.

## Participation & Performance

- Nearly **600 students** participated across **22 active club teams**.
- Club athletes maintained a **3.4 GPA**, above the university average of 3.2.

# \$153,000

Fundraised by teams to support club sports up from \$137K in FY24

## Student Impact

- 94% of students plan to continue participating.
- 93% rated their leadership experience as good or excellent.

***"The best decision I ever made in college."***

***"A once-in-a-lifetime experience."***

# 17 states

Teams competed in 17 states, expanding St. Thomas' national footprint.



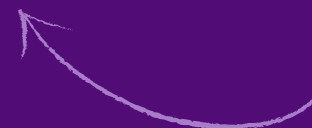
# Campus Life



Campus Life is a cornerstone of student engagement and success at St. Thomas. Through strategic programming, cross-campus collaboration, and innovative tools like **Tommie Link+**, Campus Life is building a campus culture where students feel seen, known, and connected.

***“It was an amazing experience! I feel not only welcomed but wanted here.”***

***—First-Year Student***



## Welcome Days 2024: Creating First Connections

Campus Life welcomed over **1,500 new students**—including first-year, transfer, and international students—through a vibrant and inclusive Welcome Days experience.

- **33 Labor Day Weekend events** were hosted in collaboration with **14 campus departments and student organizations**.
- Signature events included **Academic College Day, Student Engagement Day, Headphone Disco**, and the **Great Tommie Get-Together**.

## Second-Year Engagement Pathway: Deepening Belonging

The launch of **Welcome BACK Days** featured **23 events**, with **10 tailored specifically for second-year students**.

- **78%** of surveyed participants reported making meaningful connections.
- Popular events included **Pizza & Prep, Tumbler Making at create[space]**, and a second round of **Headphone Disco**.

***“Through SY Path, I gained new experiences that allowed me to meet new friends and connect with campus resources.” —Second-Year Student***



"Clubs helped me get out of my room, meet new people, and feel represented and appreciated."

2,765

Events hosted by student clubs

3,381

Students involved in student-led clubs/organizations



### *Tommie Link+: Technology for Connection*

The new **Tommie Link+ platform** became the most-used resource for discovering Campus Life opportunities:

- **3,880** users in Year 1
- **1,310 group chat messages, 251 direct messages**
- **114 goal-setting activities** completed

### *Student Voice & Impact*

- **87%** of students say STAR, clubs/orgs, or create[space] positively impacted their experience
- **81%** built meaningful connections through Campus Life involvement
- **95%** of clubs re-registered for 2025–26

### *create[space]: A Hub for Creativity and Connection*

- **250 events hosted** (116 Fall, 134 Spring)
- **60 student club-led events, 55 academic partnerships**
- Students described create[space] as a place for **well-being, creativity, and social connection**

### *STAR Events: Building Community*

- **166 events hosted**
- **12,800 student attendees**
- Fan favorites included the **Riverboat Cruise, ValleySCARE, Minnesota Wild Game, Skiing at Trollhaugen, and Bingo Nights**

# Career Development Center



The Career Development Center (CDC) continues to be a vital partner in helping students discern and pursue lives of purpose. Through personalized coaching, innovative programming, and strategic employer engagement, CDC fosters environments where students are seen, known, and loved—and equipped to make meaningful contributions to the world.



## St. Thomas Connect: Building Relationships

St. Thomas Connect was successfully integrated into the First-Year Experience, resulting in **full participation from incoming students** and a **31.8% increase** in the platform's user base. The initiative fostered **935 more student–alumni connections** than the previous year—a **180% increase**—and saw over 6,800 messages exchanged.

With 72 alumni providing mentoring advice and a **4.93/5.00 student satisfaction rating**, the platform continues to be a powerful tool for building meaningful career connections within the Tommie Network.

## First Destination Survey – Class of 2024

- **97.3%** positive undergraduate career outcome
- **99.0%** positive graduate career outcome
- **80.7%** – “My current career or education path is related to my degree’s major or program of study”
- **82.3%** secured employment or education prior to commencement

*“I felt better equipped to navigate my job search. Our conversation was insightful and motivating.” –Student*





## Creating Spaces for Meaning-Making

Career development at St. Thomas is not just about employment—it's about helping students make meaning of their experiences and aspirations.

- Redesigned **faculty and staff advising resources** to support career conversations
- Developed **Canvas modules** and digital tools to integrate curricular and co-curricular learning
- Formed **133 new employer relationships**
- Hosted **195 employers** at career fairs



## Innovation in Career Readiness

- **Virtual Reality (VR) Pilot:** Launching Fall 2025 in partnership with STELAR to enhance interview and workplace readiness
- **Job Search Strategy Series:** Hosted series to support seniors, grad students, and alumni with job search skills. Included networking sessions, alumni volunteers, and post-event analysis for **102 students & 7 alumni**
- **Career Design Fellowship:** Collaborated with Mission Collaborative to support **70 alumni** in career transitions through two program cohorts, achieving a **100% satisfaction rate** and strong recommendations from nearly all participants.

*“My first meeting with the CDC team this year resulted in me getting a job offer. 2nd meeting resulted in a strong negotiating position and a great salary.”*



## Looking Ahead: Deepening Impact

In response to evolving student needs, CDC is launching several new initiatives:

- **Big Interview:** AI-powered virtual interview practice
- **Iris Photo Booth:** Free professional headshots
- **Graduate School Preparation Resources**
- **Employer Advisory Board:** Diverse recruiters guiding strategic engagement and inclusion

# Center for Well-Being



## *Advancing Whole-Person Care and Student Flourishing*

Celebrating five years of integration, the Center for Well-Being (CWB) continues to lead in holistic student support through shared records, warm handoffs, and collaborative treatment planning. During the 2024–25 academic year, there were 11,065 appointment encounters across counseling, primary care, wellness coaching, and specialty services.

*“They helped me find a care routine that works for my schedule and health.”*



## *Collaboration with Exercise Science: Personal Training*

Launched in March 2025:

- 49 personal training sessions
- 10 wellness coaching sessions
- 10 student participants
- 4 student coaches

## *Collaborations with Morrison Family College of Health*

- 319 flu shots administered by 7 graduate nursing students
- Suicide prevention and mindfulness training for 90+ nursing students and faculty
- New clinical placements with the School of Social Work and Graduate School of Professional Psychology

## *Student Voices for Mental Health*

This peer-led initiative helps students explore the intersection of mental health and vocation:

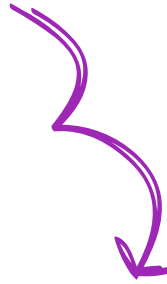
- 89% said the program helped clarify the link between mental health and career goals
- 80% reported growth in communication, empathy, and teamwork
- 50% said one-to-one reflection sessions clarified their sense of purpose

*“I felt less alone. Talking about change gave me hope.”  
—Student in Student Voices for Mental Health*



## Outreach & Prevention

- **1,325 First-Year Experience contacts**
- **210 QPR Suicide Prevention trainees**
- **765 participants** in meditation, mindfulness, and yoga
- **382 students** in sexual assault and violence prevention workshops
- **233 registrants** for the 2024 Wellness 5K



# 11,065

Appointment encounters across counseling, primary care, wellness coaching, and specialty services



# 2,966

Community members served

# 580

Student-athletes engaged in Title IX and Healthy Relationships training

## Voyageur Outward Bound School (VOBS)

With generous support from the Haggerty Family Foundation and in partnership with VOBS, the Center for Well-Being hosted three "Canoeing Day: Healthy Relationships Edition" events in Spring 2025. These experiential outings combined canoeing on Lake of the Isles with guided discussions on healthy relationships, communication, and belonging.

## Learning Disability Assessment Team

Our Learning Disability Assessment Program continues to grow in both reach and impact. This year, **61 students** completed ADHD intakes, leading to **164 total appointments** for intake, testing, and feedback.

## Mental Health Acuity & Outcomes

CWB continues to respond to rising mental health needs with compassion and clinical excellence:

- **PTSD-related medical encounters** rose by **148%**
- **Anxiety** remains the top diagnosis in primary care mental health visits
- **Crisis appointments** increased to **163**, continuing a post-pandemic upward trend

Using the **CCAPS** assessment, students showed significant symptom reduction:

- **Depression:** ↓ 0.64
- **Generalized Anxiety:** ↓ 0.59
- **Academic Distress:** ↓ 0.43
- **Eating Concerns:** ↓ 0.70
- **Distress Index (overall):** ↓ 0.57

Local outcomes exceeded national averages, affirming the effectiveness of CWB's integrated care model.

# Dean of Students

*Accompanying Students with Compassion and Purpose*

*"These efforts helped me feel like I truly belong here." —First-Gen Student*



*"I felt supported at a time when I didn't know where else to turn."*



## *Orientation & Registration: Foundations of Belonging*

Welcomed **2,877 students and guests** through a redesigned Orientation & Registration experience.

- Orientation Leaders played a **transformative role** in helping students feel welcomed and valued
- Programming emphasized **gratitude**, connection, and campus traditions
- Students began to explore **vocation and purpose** through advising and resource engagement

*"I felt very welcomed and valued through the entirety of my O&R."*  
—Incoming First-Year Student

## *First-Gen Tommies: Empowering First-Generation Students*

The First-Gen Tommies initiative continues to walk alongside first-generation students, helping them discover their strengths and build meaningful connections.

- **First-Gen Mapping Project** led by Retention and Student Success identified **24% of** first-gen first-year students not involved in high-impact practices followed by intentional outreach
- Hosted **30+ events**, including Wondering Wednesdays, First Gen Week, and Finals Care Packages
- Created student worker roles focused on peer engagement and social media outreach
- Launched new first-gen survey to measure belonging and program effectiveness



## Veterans & Military-Connected Student Services

The Paul & Sarah Karon Veterans Resource Center (VRC) continues to be a space of healing, purpose, and belonging.

- **Veterans Ball** celebrated military traditions and fostered community
- Hosted the **PTSD Conference** and **Green Zone Training**
- Welcomed **40+ daily visits**, offering personalized guidance and care
- **81.8% retention** for first-time full-year students; **90%** for transfers
- **\$49,240 in gift contributions**; **33 individual gifts** as part of **Tommie Give Day**,
- Expansion to the **Minneapolis campus** supports graduate student needs



*"The VRC is a light in the dark. It's the warmest place on campus." — Veteran Student*

## Basic Needs & Emergency Support: Affirming Student Worth

# 226

Students supported by CARE Team

# 721

Meals distributed through the meal bank

# \$21,783

Awarded in emergency grants

## Off-Campus Student Life: A Home Beyond Campus

Off-Campus Student Life (OCSL) continues to be a space of refuge, reflection, and connection.

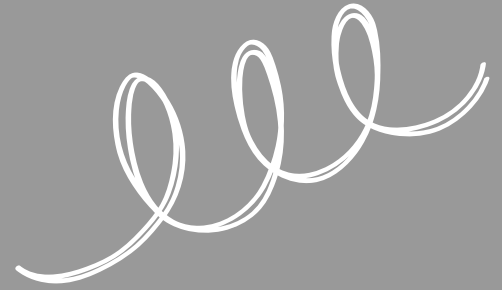
- Hosted **20+ events** with partners like Campus Ministry and the Office of Sustainability
- Expanded hours and amenities to provide meals, study spaces, and tech access
- **43% increase in usage** from the previous year

*"OCSL has become much more than just a physical space—it's where I feel seen, valued, and heard." —Second-Year Student*

## Family Engagement: Extending the Circle of Care

- Launched the **Family Portal**, adding nearly **1,000 new users** in July
- Hosted a successful **Family Weekend**
- Planning a **First-Gen Family Event** to deepen inclusive engagement

# First-Year Experience



## *Building Foundations of Belonging and Purpose*

The First-Year Experience (FYE) program continues to be a cornerstone of student success, inclusion, and holistic development at St. Thomas. Rooted in our mission, FYE fosters welcoming communities where students are **seen, known, and loved**, and where they begin their journey of **vocational exploration and meaning-making**.

*"FYEX helped me find my place at St. Thomas. I started thinking about what kind of impact I want to make."*

## *Learning Communities: Accompaniment Through Transition*

- Living Learning Communities (LLCs) and Common Good Learning Communities (CGLCs) offer immersive, interdisciplinary experiences that connect academic learning with personal growth and community engagement
- New LLCs in Leadership & Creative Communications and Literary & Digital Storytelling align with core and professional requirements, enhancing relevance and student agency
- The CGLC model simplifies requirements and expands access, allowing students to explore vocation through diverse academic lenses

## *Peer Mentoring: Being Seen and Supported*

Peer Mentors play a vital role in helping students feel seen, supported, and connected.

- In FYEX 100, mentors offer in-class and out-of-class support, share lived experiences, and foster belonging through personalized outreach
- **83%** of students reported that the program helped them find belonging at St. Thomas
- **86%** viewed their mentor as a personal asset and benefit

## *Retention-Focused Innovation*

FYE continues to address equity gaps through retention-based sections tailored to historically underrepresented populations, including:

- First-generation students
- Commuters
- STEM Inclusive Excellence cohorts
- Out-of-state students

These sections feature intentional instructor selection and peer mentors with shared backgrounds, reinforcing our commitment to inclusive excellence and accompaniment.

*"Having a mentor made me feel like someone truly cared about my success—not just academically, but as a person."*







# Residence Life

*Creating Spaces for Connection, Growth, and Flourishing*



## *Meeting Unprecedented Demand with Care*

In 2024–25, Residence Life responded with agility and compassion to record housing demand, ensuring every student seeking on-campus living found a space designed for connection and growth.

This operational excellence was matched by a deep commitment to student formation—rooted in the values of **accompaniment**, **meaning-making**, and helping students feel **seen, known, and loved**.

## *Living Learning Communities (LLCs): Purposeful Belonging*

LLCs focused on themes like sustainability and healthcare, helping students align their living experience with personal values and vocational exploration.

- **692 first-year students** assigned to LLCs
- Partnerships with **46 faculty and staff** integrated academic and co-curricular experiences
- **87%** of students reported a stronger sense of belonging

*“Through this LLC, I’ve built friendships and a better connection with my roommate. It fits the person I strive to be.” —First-Year Student*



## *Learning Outcomes: Being Seen, Known, and Loved*

Students who began with no evidence of connection were guided toward deeper engagement and belonging.

- Over **1,400 RA-led** one-to-one conversations supported student reflection and growth
- **83% of second-year students** scored at least “middle” on connection pre-assessments
- **99% of first-year students** scored at least “beginning,” with **59% improving their learning**



## *Second-Year Experience: Deepening Identity and Connection*

- Launched **8 Second-Year LLCs** in Frey Hall
- Supported **150+ students** in refining academic and personal identities
- Resident Advisors facilitated **one-to-one conversations** inviting reflection on values, social identity, and relationships

## *Residential Connection Team (RCT): Accompaniment in Action*

- Hosted **90+ events**, half on weekends to support campus vibrancy
- Engaged **700+ unique student participants** each semester
- Events became spaces of welcome, recognition, and joy

# 87%

Reported a stronger sense of belonging to campus because of their LLC experience

# 89%

Satisfied with their experiences on the weekend

# 91%

Satisfied with their LLC experience



*“The hosts of the events were super welcoming and greeted me with a smile, this helped encourage an inclusive environment.”*

# Retention & Student Success



## *Accompanying Students Toward Flourishing*

The Office of Retention and Student Success continues to walk alongside students through proactive, student-centered systems of support.

*"My professors have been very welcoming and open to meeting and providing me with many new opportunities." —First-Year Student*

## *Tommie Alert & High Fives: A Network of Care*

- 1,568 unique students received 3,448 alerts from 360 faculty members
- Increased use of Tommie High Fives support academic belonging
- Faculty and staff use alerts to offer timely, personalized outreach

## *Retention & Completion Outcomes*

- **323 more continuing students** registered for Fall 2025 compared to the same time last year
- Graduation rates for FTFY cohorts are trending upward, with the Fall 2021 cohort nearing the **67% four-year graduation goal**

## *Tommie Check-In Survey: Listening to Student Voice*

Conducted in Week 6 of Fall semester, the Tommie Check-In Survey revealed:

- **97%** of first-semester students feel comfortable being themselves at St. Thomas (vs. 90% nationally)
- **93%** feel valued by the university (vs. 83% nationally)
- **88%** feel like part of the community (vs. 82% nationally)

## *Top Resources Used:*

1. Tommie Link/Tommie Link +
2. Library
3. Anderson Athletic and Recreation Center
4. Clubs & Student Involvement
5. Create[Space]



"I am having fun, and it's not all focused on school. I can tell its about growing into a adult and becoming my own person reaching for my own goals of becoming a professional"

—First-Year student

### Innovations

To close persistent equity gaps, the office launched several strategic initiatives:

- **Automated Outreach Campaigns** focused on registration, academic progress, and milestone tracking
- **AI-Generated Student Success Summaries** help advisors and faculty better understand student engagement and risk factors
- Enhanced **"My Tommie Support Team" platform** improves visibility and usability of support networks



87.9%\*

FTFY 2024 students are registered for Fall 2025

82.8%\*

Rising Juniors (FTFY 2023) students are registered for Fall 2025

72.4%\*

Rising Seniors (FTFY 2022) students are registered for Fall 2025

\*Unofficial as of 8/22/25

### Targeted Outreach Campaigns for Retention and Completion

To proactively support students at risk of not persisting or completing their degrees, the office launched multiple outreach campaigns:

- **Challenge Semester Initiatives**
- **Special Population Outreach**
- **J-Term and Summer Enrollment Reminders**
- **Outreach for Students with Incomplete Grades**

These campaigns reflect our commitment to identifying and accompanying students through academic transitions and challenges.

"I get along with my roommate really well, and the Aquinas program has been a great way to get involved and meet more people. I enjoy tommie link a lot and it is useful to find activities go be involved" —First-Year Student

# Student Diversity & Inclusion Services (SDIS)



*"My communication skills increased, my time management skills are elite now, and my study habits strengthened!" – REAL Program student*

## *REAL Program: A Model of Accompaniment*

The **Reaching Excellence in Academic Leadership (REAL)** Program continues to be a cornerstone of student success, offering a holistic introduction to college life and empowering students to lead with purpose.

- **25% increase in retention** from 2021 to 2024 (from 62.5% to 87.5%)
- Summer experience blended professional development with community-building
- Workshops included financial literacy, email etiquette, and LinkedIn networking
- Weekly wellness groups co-led by CWB staff created spaces for vulnerability and connection

## *Linkages Program: Sustained Mentorship*

With a **98.4% retention rate**, the Linkages Program continues to provide first-year students with consistent, caring mentorship.

- Plans are underway to expand Linkages into a **four-year model**, reinforcing long-term accompaniment and relationship-building

*"Linkages gave me people I could rely on during my first year of college as a first-gen student."*



"I have met and experienced so many amazing opportunities thanks to the Dease Scholarship and their faith in me to be a changemaker."

—Dease Scholar



### *Cultural Dinners and DEASE: Affirming Identity and Building Community*

SDIS hosted **10 cultural dinners** with nearly **1,900 attendees**, including Somali Night and the MSA Cultural Dinner. These events offered students opportunities to celebrate heritage, connect across difference, and feel deeply seen and affirmed.

The DEASE Scholarship Program also saw a **22.2% increase in retention** from 2021 to 2024, with the most recent cohorts achieving 100% retention. These outcomes reflect the power of sustained, identity-affirming support.

### *Multicultural Leadership Council*

Now in its second year, the Council brought together **12 cultural clubs** and **58 student leaders** for monthly meetings and retreats.

- Facilitated new collaborations, including ASIA and HUSA's joint **Running Man Event**



### *Career Readiness Initiative*

In partnership with the Career Development Center, SDIS supported students—especially first-generation and underrepresented populations—in preparing for life after college.

- Career Educators helped students craft resumes, build networks, and prepare for interviews
- Programming emphasized social mobility and professional identity formation

### *Undocu-Ally UST: Supporting Undocumented Students*

SDIS staff led the **Undocu-Ally UST initiative**, focused on expanding **Non-Employment-Based Opportunities (NEBO)** for undocumented students.

- Researched peer institutions and support mechanisms
- Advanced inclusive practices and equal access to resources