

Greetings, Class of '96!

It's almost here! Our 15 year reunion is just around the corner! What a fun time to celebrate the new directions life has taken us over the past decade and a half and remember the special years we shared on campus. Viking Days 2011, with the theme "A Viking State of Mind," (think New York City/Broadway) promises to be filled with great events and fun experiences. We hope you will be able to come back and enjoy the festivities. Please mark your calendars and make plans to attend the celebration October 14-16. You will find additional information about the weekend and a tentative schedule of events at www.augie.edu/vikingdays. You can register by sending in the enclosed form, or by using the Augie Link website beginning July 1. Can't wait to see you again in October!

As you may remember, Augie celebrated 150 years this past year and the final celebratory event was a "Spark" gala event in April. You can see photos from the Spark at www.augie.edu/spark. A book and video commemorating Augie's first 150 years are also available through the website or by calling the Marketing Office at 605.274.4404. Additionally, a digital archive of all of Augustana's publications is available at www.augielink.com. Click on the Augustana Album icon in the middle of the page to enter the website containing the album. The digital archive allows everyone the opportunity to easily browse and search through all of the publications in Augustana's history. The Mikkelsen Library undertook this project last summer in honor of our Sesquicentennial. Check it out!

The final quarter for Augie's fiscal year ends July 31 and we need your contributions to reach the goal of \$1 million for the Augustana Fund. Please consider giving to this important fund; every dollar counts! It would be great if we could reach 90% or more participation from the class of 1996. If you want to learn more about the fund and how those monies are used for needs on campus, please visit www.augie.edu/giving/giving-opportunities/augustana-fund.

Life in the Eastman household has taken on a new direction with the birth of our second daughter Mataya in late May. We are discovering the joys and challenges of chasing a two-year-old while caring for a newborn – but so far it has been a fun (albeit exhausting!) journey. We are also in the process of moving to Fountain Hills, AZ (why not make life just a little bit crazier?!) and are eager to settle into our new community.

We feel a bit sleep-deprived at times, but life is good. Abby reminded us how good just before Mataya was born. We had read that it might be beneficial to include the older sibling in the birth of the new baby by giving the big brother or sister an opportunity to pick out baby's first gift. That sounded good to us, so we told Abby she could pick out the first present for her sister and give it to her right away when she came to see her in the hospital. A few days passed, and I had forgotten about our conversation when Abby brought up the subject during a last-minute shopping trip. I asked her if she had decided what she would like to give her sister. Abby thought for a minute, then turned to me and said, "I'm going to give her a song." For the next three days she practiced and practiced all her favorite songs, trying to decide just which one she would share. Then, on the day Mataya was born, Abby proudly marched into the hospital room, perched herself on the bed next to Mataya, and sang "The Itsy Bitsy Spider" (complete with actions). It was a humorous and touching moment, to say the least- and one that will forever be etched into my memory. Even at two years old, Abby understood that the best gift she could give was the gift of herself. I hope her example will always inspire me to do the same.

Thanks for the gift of YOU that you have shared with the Augie community. I look forward to seeing you in October. Have a great summer, and don't forget to contact the Alumni office with any updates you might have. (We have not received many updates lately!) Thanks to those who have written or called, and remember -- we want to hear from all of you!

Blessings,

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Class Notes for 1996

Heidi (Mayer) Sato and husband Brendon welcomed son Ethan Ken Sato on August 20, 2010.