“It is not enough to do good ... it must be done well.” — St. Vincent de Paul
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You’ve surely heard the story by now.

Traveling back to campus following a game in Pittsburgh, the bus carrying our women’s basketball team became stuck in snow-muddled traffic on the New York State Thruway in the wee morning hours of Tuesday, Nov. 18. As time passed, and with no imminent end to the storm in sight, the team rationed food, melted snow for drinking water, and welcomed a marooned driver aboard the team bus.

Twenty-six hours later, having finally been rescued by a courageous group of first responders, the perseverance, perspective, and social media savviness of these 25 individuals had evolved into a national and international sensation.

Our Communications Office fielded inquiries from all 50 states, Australia, India, and Japan. Coaches and players were interviewed by The Associated Press, CNN, ESPN, Sirius/XM, The Ellen DeGeneres Show and Anderson Cooper 360, as well as all of the major cable networks.

Luke Russert, Arsenio Hall, and Thurman Thomas joined the chorus of well-wishers who sent thoughts and prayers to the team via Twitter.

Through all of the coverage, Head Coach Kendra Faustin, her assistants and student-athletes remained gracious and grounded. Although beleaguered and tired, these young women, demonstrating wisdom and humility beyond their years, continuously expressed their gratitude to their rescuers and their concern for the motorists who were still stranded.

St. Vincent de Paul once said, “God allows us to give rise to the practice of two beautiful virtues: perseverance, which leads us to attain the goal, and constancy, which helps us to overcome difficulties.”

As president of Niagara University, I am extremely proud of the way these team members demonstrated these Vincentian qualities throughout their trying ordeal.

Many say that sports are a microcosm of our society. I would say that #NUWBBstrandedonbus, as it was referred to online, was emblematic of what it means to be a Niagaran.

We talk often about what makes Niagara University different — it’s our people and the manner in which we come together to encourage one another, to grow, and to make each other better. Here is an example of that community, a bus full of young women stuck on a dark highway amidst a historic snowstorm. Not once did they panic or become malcontent; in fact, the experience allowed them to bond even closer as a team. They encouraged one another. They sang. They prayed together.

The outpouring of support they’ve received from our students, alumni, and friends has been as monumental as the situation itself. Social media gets a bad rap but, in this case, it kept a team connected to the outside world. Technology allowed NU graduates from across the globe to send inspiring words to these young women, letting them know that they were in our thoughts and prayers.

In the days that followed the snowstorm, some creative professionals from Buffalo-Niagara’s regional tourism agency produced a song dedicated to the resilient people of Western New York. Of course, Let It Snow was sung by Michele Marie Benzin, Niagara University Class of 1998.

Thank you, Michele. And thanks to all of you for your support of our students.

The roadways have long since cleared. As always, I invite you to visit us, and let me know your thoughts and recommendations. I encourage you to email me your comments at jjm@niagara.edu.

Rev. James J. Maher, C.M.
President
The most Rev. Raymond F. Chappetto, D.D., V.G., V.E., ’67; the Rev. John Carney, C.M., ’78; and Monica Saltarelli, ’86, were among the six individuals honored during Niagara University’s annual Vincentian Heritage Convocation, Sept. 25, 2014.

Father Chappetto received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters for his remarkable career as a leader in the Catholic Church, while Father Carney was granted the Perboyre Medal for extraordinary service and contribution to the global society. Monica was honored with the St. Vincent de Paul Medal for the way her life embodies the ideals and values of St. Vincent. Other honorees included Diane Quaratello, executive director of the Boys and Girls Club of Niagara Falls, who received the St. Louise de Marillac Award for Outstanding Service; Nanette Harmon, a senior lecturer and faculty fellow of American Sign Language and Deaf Studies at Niagara Falls, who was presented with the Vincentian Mission Award; and James Delaney, Ph.D., an associate professor of philosophy, who was presented with Niagara’s Ozanam Medal.

The B. Thomas Golisano Center for Integrated Sciences received the 2014 Sustainability Award from the Greater Buffalo Building Owners & Managers Association. The state-of-the-art, $33 million science facility opened to Niagara University faculty and students at the beginning of the fall 2013 semester. Earlier this year, it earned a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Certification — Gold Rating from the United States Green Building Council.

Three individuals known for their extraordinary professional success, as well as their remarkable philanthropic work in the local community, were honored during NU’s President’s Dinner in November.

Alumni Maryalice Demler, ’86, anchor at WGRZ-TV Channel 2, and James Glynne, ’57, chairman and CEO of Maid of the Mist, received the St. Vincent de Paul Award, an accolade conferred upon individuals “whose vision, accomplishments and good works reflect the life and ministry of St. Vincent de Paul.” Robert M. Bennett, chancellor emeritus of the New York State Board of Regents, was the inaugural recipient of NU’s Legacy of Service Award, recognizing his exemplary commitment to the community.

Niagara University welcomed the Class of 2018 during New Student Orientation Aug. 29 – Sept. 1, 2014. More than two dozen of these new students were “Legacy Freshmen” — children of alumni who joined the NU family this fall. Scan the QR code to view photos of the students and their parents.

Niagara University moved up four places on the list of top-tier institutions in the U.S., as ranked by U.S. News & World Report. NU was also included on its list of institutions deemed 2015 Up-and-Comers, Best Value, and Best for Veterans. In addition, NU was the only WNY institution to make Princeton Review’s Best in the Northeast and Green Colleges lists.

Niagara unveiled its new main entrance in early November. Coming in from Witmer Road, visitors will see a beautifully landscaped entry to the campus. The work was undertaken as part of the Shared-Campus Initiative between the New York Power Authority and Niagara University. An official grand opening is scheduled for spring.

Leadership Niagara’s executive offices are now housed at Niagara University, thanks to a memorandum of understanding recently signed by the institutions. The Rev. James J. Maher, C.M., president of NU, and Molly Anderson, executive director of Leadership Niagara, signed the agreement that will provide Leadership Niagara with rent-free office space in Timon Hall. Twenty-nine Niagara University employees have “graduated” from the Leadership Niagara program, with another two set to participate in 2015.

Niagara University Athletics: The Gallagher Center court was named after Frank, ’55, and Barbara Layden. Frank played basketball at Niagara and later coached here, leading the team to its first-ever NCAA Tournament in 1970.

The Clet Hall cupola, a familiar identifier of Niagara University since its inception in 1856, was returned to its perch high above Monteeagle Ridge this summer. The previous dome-like structure was severely damaged during a windstorm in July 2013. In its place now stands a new fiberglass and steel cupola, which was blessed during a ceremony led by the Rev. Kevin G. Creagh, C.M., Niagara’s vice president for university mission and ministry.

NU’s nursing program has reason to celebrate. Plans to construct a state-of-the-art nursing simulation center have received a major shot in the arm, thanks to a $100,000 grant from the George I. Alden Trust.

The center, which will be housed in Dunleavy Hall, will provide “hands-on” opportunities for students to manage patient encounters and skills in a risk-free, virtual reality environment, complementing traditional classroom learning and clinical practice experiences.

In addition, its programs, which include a B.S. in nursing, an RN-to-B.S. post-associate completion program, and an accelerated B.S. in nursing, were reaccredited for 10 years by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education.

Kudos to our student-athletes! Their Graduation

Success Rate is seven percent higher than the Division I national average, according to figures released in October by the National Collegiate Athletic Association for the 2004-07 cohort. Niagara posted a cumulative GSR of 91 percent, which is tied for its highest ever percentage, set during the 1997-2000 cohort.

In addition to the overall department score, six programs — men’s and women’s basketball, men’s golf, women’s soccer, women’s tennis and volleyball — registered a perfect (100) GSR. In the MAAC, seven programs — men’s and women’s basketball, men’s golf, women’s soccer, women’s tennis, volleyball, and men’s swimming & diving — ranked first or tied for first in their respective sport.

The NCAA also released the Federal Graduation Rate as part of the report. Niagara’s FGR score is 73 percent, which is also seven percent higher than the national average. This is a new record for the Purple Eagles.
Congratulations to Tom Lowe, director of ReNU Niagara; Kathleen Heim, ’07, Opportunity Corps program manager at The Service Collaborative of WNY Inc.; and Shannon (Bloomquist) Patch, ’07, chief of staff for New York State Sen. Timothy Kennedy, who were honored by Business First during the newspaper’s 30 Under Thirty awards program in August.


Jeffrey R. Holzschuh, ’82, chair of NU’s Board of Trustees (left), smiles with Father Maher, C.M. (center), and 2014 President’s Dinner honorees Robert M. Bennett (second from left), Maryalice Demler, ’86, and James V. Glynn, ’57.

Kathleen Heim, ’07, Tom Lowe, and Shannon (Bloomquist) Patch, ’07, were honored with 30 Under Thirty awards.

Members of the NU community gathered for a photo before the cupola was placed on top of Clet Hall.

Frank, ’55, and Barbara Layden (pictured with the Rev. James Maher) were honored on Dec. 6, when the court in Gallagher Center was named after them.

NU’s new campus entrance.
A Niagara University-led initiative to transform the regional tourism industry is officially underway.

The Niagara Global Tourism Institute, headquartered in the historic Power City Building at the corner of Third and Old Falls streets in the heart of the downtown tourism district in Niagara Falls, opened in September. The NGTI seeks to leverage the university’s significant history and resources in hospitality and tourism management to enhance Niagara Falls’ tourism industry, which has been identified as a key economic driver by the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council.

The program’s development also correlates with NU’s service-centered mission and the objectives of New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, who has made the revitalization of Niagara Falls a top priority.

“The university’s mission in this and every effort is dictated by the founder of our Vincentian community, St. Vincent de Paul, and is part of our responsibility as an institution to invest in the community of our 1856 founding,” said the Rev. James J. Maher, C.M., NU’s president.

“We recognize that poverty is not just economic, but also personal and social, and firmly believe that tourism is the best way to seize the moral imperative to drive the economy of this region. We will put our prestigious faculty and administration to work side-by-side with students in the area of research. We see the NGTI as a way to improve the quality of life for every citizen in this community,” he continued.

The initial $50,000 study that recommended the formation of the NGTI was funded by the generous support of New York state, through the USA Niagara Development Corp. Niagara University then matched a $250,000 New York Power Authority Proceeds funding award to establish the institute.

Working with local, state, and federal agencies in partnership with the tourism industry, the NGTI will seek to create the conditions to turn around the reputation and economic viability of Western New York. It will have four core components:

- Innovation-oriented, industry-specific research to help meet the demand from all sectors of the industry throughout the Buffalo-Niagara region.
- Creation of a framework to use technology platforms in tourism marketing, product development, and destination revitalization.
- Identification of tourism workforce needs and development of a skills and abilities pipeline to provide support for the tourism industry and make career paths and training available regionally and internationally.
- Tourism business incubation to encourage entrepreneurial creativity and the development of new businesses in the tourism sector.

“Our region employs over 50,000 people in the tourism sector, with well over $2 billion in economic impact. Technology is changing the face of tourism and tourism marketing, and the Global Tourism Institute at NU will establish Western New York as a world leader in developing and leveraging these emerging technologies in order to grow our tourism economy, and to attract talent to our tourism industry and to our region,” said Howard A. Zemsky, Western New York Regional Economic Development Council co-chair and managing partner of Larkin Development Group.

“The Rust Belt is fighting back and the cities of Buffalo and Niagara Falls are challenging outmoded perceptions with a clearly focused economic development strategy, where the tourism industry has been identified as a major driver of regeneration,” noted Dr. Edward Friel, director of the NGTI. “We are in the early stages of reclaiming our cities and returning them to our communities as places we can be proud of again. The Buffalo Niagara region of today is not the same place it was five years ago. Effective reputation management strategies have created the conditions that have resulted in considerable new investment in the region. Our key role now is to engage in a collaborative process with all stakeholders to transform Niagara Falls from a visitor attraction to a global tourism destination.

“The NGTI is focused on winning for our communities by building on the enormous foundation we have already inherited,” he continued. “Rich in assets, unique in its history, heritage and culture, and blessed with the magnificent Niagara Falls, the days when we apologized for Western New York will soon be consigned to the dust bin of history.”

In addition to the role it will play in the revitalization of Niagara Falls, the NGTI will further position Niagara University as a recognized leader in the tourism industry, as well as facilitate increased professional development and internship opportunities for faculty and students.
Gacioch Family Alumni and Admissions Center Dedicated

For more than 80 years, Meade Hall served as the residence of the Vincentian priests and brothers who staffed the university. Since fall 2013, it has served as the hub for admissions and alumni engagement, thanks to a generous $2 million gift from William Gacioch, ’61.

On Sept. 9, Niagara held a ceremonial opening and blessing of the renovated facility. Those in attendance included Gacioch and his family; the Rev. James J. Maher, C.M., Niagara University president; the Rev. Joseph L. Levesque, C.M., the former NU president, now president emeritus, who oversaw the university’s capital campaign; Pamela R. Jacobs-Vogt, a trustee of Niagara University; as well as numerous students and faculty members.

“We are forever grateful to the Gaciochs for the extraordinary generosity that they have shown to Niagara University through the years,” said Father Maher. “Even though we are nearly 55 years removed from when Bill first stepped foot on our campus, he has never forgotten where his journey started. We know that the development of this mission-critical facility is very personal to him, and we are pleased that it will ensure the Gacioch family’s legacy on Monteagle Ridge.

As a freshman in 1957, Gacioch knew that he could only afford his first year at Niagara, so he met with the Rev. Edward Burke, C.M., to discuss his financial options. Gacioch was selected to participate in the university’s newly developed work-study program. He was assigned to Meade Hall, the residence of the Vincentians, where he waited tables and manned the switchboard for four years.

“My parents believed in good schools and my mother encouraged me to look at Niagara even though we didn’t have the money,” said Gacioch. “Father Burke was very instrumental to my education, and my experience working in Meade Hall had a direct impact on who I am today.”

Gacioch is extremely appreciative of this work-study assistance, and also of the education he received while attending Niagara. Since graduating, he has served the university in a number of ways, including membership on the Board of Trustees, and contributed $1 million in 1999 toward the renovation of St. Vincent’s Hall.

“Niagara was critical in helping me realize what I could do and how to do it, and guided me in the right direction,” said Gacioch. “I continue to be very impressed with every aspect of Niagara — the quality of the alumni, the academics, and the current students. I believe in giving back to help others and, through this gift, our entire family is making an investment in Niagara.”

Work was undertaken on the Gacioch Center during the summer of 2013, and special care was taken to preserve its heritage. Visitors to the Gacioch Center are welcomed by a plaque denoting the contributions of Father Meade, while the building’s lobby area is named in honor of the Rev. Michael J. Flannery, C.M., a former prefect and spiritual advisor at NU who also taught math, history and religion. The small chapel in the Gacioch Center has also been restored.

Interestingly, this is not the first name change for Meade Hall. The three-story building was originally called Our Lady of Angels Faculty House because it housed the faculty of the College and Seminary of Our Lady of Angels. In 1967, it was rededicated in honor of the Rev. Francis L. Meade, C.M. (1894-1958), who served from 1947 to 1957 as the 16th president of the university.
The Dynamic Embrace of Service and Learning

By Lisa McMahon, MA '09

In October, Niagara’s Learn and Serve Niagara program celebrated a milestone no one originally expected — its 20th anniversary.

“We thought we’d be lucky if we made it through the first three years of our original grant,” recalls Dr. Marilynn Fleckenstein, the program’s founding director.

That was in 1994. Fast-forward to 2014. The flagship service-learning program has become a permanent fixture on the NU campus and has been recognized by the President’s Honor Roll for Community Service, the Carnegie Foundation, and national publications for the positive impact it has had on the City of Niagara Falls and its environs. Courses with service-learning components are offered in every college and in almost every academic department, engaging students in a wide range of projects that improve lives and strengthen the local community.

Of course, Niagara University has a longstanding tradition of community service, rooted in the very mission of the university and inspired by the work begun by its patron, St. Vincent de Paul. In 1965, the launch of the Niagara University Community Action Program formalized the involvement of students in community service projects. Nearly 30 years later, a grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service enabled the university to expand its efforts by establishing Learn and Serve Niagara. NUCAP served as an integral partner to Learn and Serve and eventually became part of the program.

In the early days of Learn and Serve, the focus was on two projects: a tutoring program in collaboration with Niagara County Community College, and a health assessment project at the Niagara Falls Boys and Girls Club.

Since then, projects as diverse as developing a video series on domestic violence prevention that was used by the District Attorney’s Office, to organizing records at the Holocaust Resource Center of Buffalo, N.Y., to performing mental

By the Numbers

20 Years since Learn and Serve Niagara was founded

$100,000 Amount of original grant

64 Number of institutions that received community-service grants from the Corporation for National and Community Service in 1994

200 Number of students who participated during the first years of the program

81 Percent of NU’s student body that currently participates in Learn and Serve activities

40+ Local organizations that host NU students

1,800 Number of one-day activities completed, on average, each year

1,000 Hours each week during the academic year students volunteer with local organizations

7 Number of years Learn and Serve has been named to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll
The Sandal Falls Project is one of the Learn and Serve opportunities available to students. Volunteers sort, sanitize, and box sandals that are gently worn by tourists who visit the Cave of the Winds attraction in Niagara Falls. The sandals are then distributed to individuals in need of footwear locally, nationally, and internationally.

As part of the Learn and Serve anniversary celebration, six university employees, alumni, and partners who have demonstrated a commitment to lifelong engagement in the pursuit of social justice were recognized. Honorees included Dr. Marilynn Fleckenstein, founding director of Learn and Serve (pictured here with the Rev. James Maher, C.M., NU’s president); Osman Kabia, ’99, founder of S.H.A.R.E., a program that endeavors to foster sustainable and holistic advances in rural education in Kabia’s home country of Sierra Leone; Evelyn Hope Nowak, a longtime cook and volunteer for Meals on Wheels of Niagara Falls; the late Carol L. Murphy, proprietor of Murphy Orchards in Burt, N.Y., who volunteered with the Underground Railroad Commission and the Western New York Service Learning Coalition’s Faculty Fellows training; and the Niagara Falls City School District and the Francis Center, community partners of the Learn and Serve program.

Health work at the Behavioral Health Unit at Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center, have been completed by Learn and Serve students.

What makes these activities different from other community service endeavors, what makes them Learn and Serve, is the emphasis on academics, Fleckenstein notes. “The idea was that this service component actually became part of the learning experience within the course,” she explains. “We used the service experience as a vehicle to learn the course material first and foremost, so that students could understand how they could use what they learned in the classroom for a practical purpose.”

Reflection after the activity is also a critical piece of the Learn and Serve experience, and again is inspired by St. Vincent, who viewed action and contemplation as inseparable.

“It’s not enough for the students just to do the service,” Fleckenstein says. “It is important that they think about what it means, what effect it has on them in particular and on the community, and to understand why they’re doing it.”

This reflection often leads the students to take an even larger role in the lives of those they serve. For instance, one student accompanied a mother to see her child’s teacher because she was afraid of walking into the school by herself. Another took someone to the bank to help him open a bank account.

Over the past 20 years, Learn and Serve’s impact on the community has been significant, and partnerships with agencies in areas such as aging, animals, children, the environment/outdoors, healthcare, law enforcement, government, politics, special events, business, and sports are now thriving. More than 80 percent of the student body participates in service-learning projects, dedicating 1,000 hours each week during the academic year.

But perhaps the most significant change comes from within the students themselves.

“The greatest joy is watching somebody become invested in the community,” says Fran Boltz, director of Learn and Serve. “And then they realize they can do that for the rest of their lives. They’re not limited to a four-year period.”

This was exactly the experience Ashley Serwon, ’11, M.S.Ed.’13, had as a Learn and Serve student. Now a campus minister at NU, Ashley credits the program with leading her to this position because it gave her an opportunity to put into practice the Vincentian values she learned in the classroom.

“Service through Learn and Serve allowed me to connect with peers, faculty and staff, and community members on a deeper level, while we all walked in the footsteps of St. Vincent de Paul,” she says. “My experiences allowed me to step out of my comfort zone, try new things, serve my brothers and sisters on the margins of society, and ultimately see the face of Christ in each person I encountered. The blessings I have received from Learn and Serve are exponential, and have helped me to continue to live out my Vincentian heritage and to understand and be the person God has called (and is still calling) me to be.”

As part of the Learn and Serve anniversary celebration, six university employees, alumni, and partners who have demonstrated a commitment to lifelong engagement in the pursuit of social justice were recognized.

Honorees included Dr. Marilynn Fleckenstein, founding director of Learn and Serve (pictured here with the Rev. James Maher, C.M., NU’s president); Osman Kabia, ’99, founder of S.H.A.R.E., a program that endeavors to foster sustainable and holistic advances in rural education in Kabia’s home country of Sierra Leone; Evelyn Hope Nowak, a longtime cook and volunteer for Meals on Wheels of Niagara Falls; the late Carol L. Murphy, proprietor of Murphy Orchards in Burt, N.Y., who volunteered with the Underground Railroad Commission and the Western New York Service Learning Coalition’s Faculty Fellows training; and the Niagara Falls City School District and the Francis Center, community partners of the Learn and Serve program.
Niagara University welcomed more than 440 graduates of classes ending in 4s and 9s and their guests to Monteagle Ridge during Alumni Weekend 2014. Activities included traditional favorites such as the annual golf outing, the Welcome Back Party, ReunionFest, and the Alumni Celebration Dinner. This year, a special Mass and brunch to celebrate alumni who graduated more than 50 years ago were added to the weekend’s festivities.

The reunion also provided an opportunity for Niagara to honor several of its graduates. Sister Evanne Hunter, IBVM, M.S.Ed.’79, and Capt. (Ret.) Rocco LaRocca, ’39, D.D.S., USN, received Alumni of Distinction awards; Brian, ’68, and Kathleen Cichy Mylod, ’69, were named Alumni of the Year; and Dr. Thomas Summers, ’84, received the Dunleavy Award.

In addition, a number of alumni were recognized during special ceremonies held in conjunction with the weekend. Tomasina Cook, ’00, M.S.’05, and Helene Wiens, M.S.Ed.’07, were named Counselors of the Year; and Ronni McGrath, ’01, M.S.Ed.’11, was named Teacher of the Year at the College of Education’s annual professional recognition dinner. The Niagara University Nursing Alumni Council bestowed awards for Clinical Excellence, Community Health, and Leadership (respectively) to Ann Venuto, ’64, Judith Quigley Ruse, ’69, and Col. (Ret.) Lorraine Fritz, ’84, and honored Barbara Malinowski, ’59, for Lifetime Excellence in Nursing Practice at a Saturday afternoon reception. The military science program inducted alums Joseph Sheridan, ’69, and Col. (Ret.) George Crowe, ’54, into the ROTC Hall of Fame during the Alumni Celebration Dinner.

A club and intramural sports reunion, several athletics matches, receptions for the Golden Eagle Class of 1964 and the Silver Eagle Class of 1989, and a renewal of marriage vows wrapped up a picture-perfect fall weekend of events.

ROTC cadets Peter Salat, Stephen Siedlecki, and Alexander Daddone; NU junior Morgan Bicknell; and Alumni Engagement employee Samantha Howell assisted in delivering 210 lbs. of non-perishable goods to Heart, Love & Soul soup kitchen. The items were donated during Alumni Weekend as part of the university’s celebration of Learn and Serve Niagara’s 20th anniversary. (See page 8 for more on the anniversary.)

Dan Thompson, Gene Zambarda, Kevin Mulvey, and Rich Neville won the Niagara Cup in the Class of 1969 golf tournament, a competitive event held during the 30th annual Alumni Weekend golf outing. John Zdrowjewski, John Greene, Jim Hart, and Brian Mylod earned second place honors.

Sister Evanne Hunter, IBVM, M.S.Ed.’79 (pictured with Father Maher), and Capt. (Ret.) Rocco LaRocca, ’39, D.D.S., USN, were named Alumni of Distinction at Saturday’s dinner celebration.
Alumni who graduated more than 50 years ago were treated to a 50+Eagles Mass and brunch, an inaugural event that featured a special presentation by Dr. John Stranges, university professor (back row, third from left), on his book, *The Rainbow Never Fades: Niagara University 1856-2006*. The group is pictured with Rev. James J. Maher, C.M., NU’s president (back row, left).

Tomasina Cook, ’00, M.S.’05 (pictured with Father Maher and Dr. Timothy Downs, provost and chief academic officer), was named a Counselor of the Year at the College of Education’s annual professional recognition ceremony. Tomasina is a licensed mental health counselor and chair of the criminal justice department at Erie Community College. She is also an adjunct faculty member at NU and Medaille College.

Nick DeMonte, ’01, Rachel Pennings, ’07, and Ryan, ’07, and Katie Kofron Virtue, ’07, reconnected at the reception before the NU vs. Clarkson men’s hockey game.

Monte was on hand to greet alumni at Saturday afternoon’s ReunionFest in the Gallagher Center. Here, he catches up with Jack Pickering, ’64.
College of Nursing alumnae were given a sneak peek of the plans for a nursing simulation center during a reception in Dunleavy Hall on Saturday.

Dr. Thomas Summers, ‘84, received the Dunleavy Award during the Alumni Memorial Mass on Sunday.

Joe Kassel, ’74, M.S.’76, and Joe Shanahan, ’79, reconnected at the club and intramural sports reunion at the Kiernan Center.

Col. (Ret.) George Crowe, ’54 (pictured with Father Maher) and Joseph Sheridan, ’69 (pictured center with Father Maher and Capt. Brian Wheat) were inducted into the ROTC Hall of Fame during the Alumni Celebration Dinner.
A Golden Eagle Mass in Alumni Chapel was held for the members of the 50th year anniversary class. A cocktail hour, dinner, and pinning ceremony followed.

Members of the 25th year anniversary class gather for a photo with Father Maher (back row, left). They enjoyed a cocktail reception and pinning ceremony before the Alumni Celebration Dinner.
Quick question: Who is the only American-born priest who has been canonized as a saint in the Catholic Church?

It’s a trick question: The answer is none. While the United States celebrates St. John Neumann as one of our own (he was born in Bohemia and served at parishes in both Niagara Falls and Buffalo), and we do have some home-grown women saints such as Katherine Drexel, Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton, and Kateri Tekakwitha, as well as the naturalized St. Frances Mother Cabrini, no American-born male has yet been canonized.

However, that may — may — be about to change: Two Niagara men, one an alum, the other a transfer, have been declared Venerable Servants of God, which puts them just one step away from being declared Blessed (beatified), and two steps away from the ultimate goal of any Catholic-Christian: sainthood (canonization).

But perhaps the most mind-bending part of this is that both men attended Niagara University’s Our Lady of Angels Seminary at the same time! Indeed, it is even possible, though unlikely, that they may have been classmates.

Father Nelson H. Baker — universally known as “Father Baker” — was the eldest man in his class. He had left a lucrative business career to study for the priesthood and entered Niagara as a seminarian in 1869. He finished his course of studies in 1874. His official story, which I had the distinct pleasure of editing, is told in Father of The Fatherless: The Authorized Biography of Father Nelson Baker by the noted church historian Rev. Richard Gribble, CSC.

Father Michael J. McGivney, however, had an even farther-reaching impact on the church: He founded the Knights of Columbus, the Catholic laymen’s society that brought life insurance to millions of Catholics who formerly could never afford such a “luxury.” He attended Niagara’s seminary from fall 1871 through the summer of 1872. Father McGivney’s definitive biography was penned by Douglas Brinkley and Julie M. Fenster in Parish Priest: Father Michael McGivney and American Catholicism.

Although both men were formed by the Vincentian priests who ran Our Lady of Angels Seminary at Niagara, neither apparently aspired to be a member of the Vincentians or any other religious order, though Father McGivney would eventually wind up studying his theology at a Jesuit seminary in Montreal, and one run by the Sulpicians in Baltimore. Father Baker, of course, began a quick and meteoric climb up the ecclesiastical ladder, culminating in his titles of Protonotary Apostolic (Monsignor) and Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia for the Diocese of Buffalo.

However, the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul, especially that saint’s love for the poor and suffering — what the church terms its “preferential option for the poor” — is obvious in both men. Father Baker spent his nearly 100 years (he lived well into the second administration of FDR, who phoned him on his 95th birthday) on this earth serving orphans, abandoned babies, troubled youths, the steelworkers of the “dark, satanic mills” of South Buffalo, and African-American Catholics at a time when it was unpopular, even unheard of.

Father McGivney, whose life was cut short by pneumonia in only his 38th year in 1890, did one thing that has forever changed the face of American Catholicism: he founded a men’s benevolent organization’s worldwide charitable programs.

And the closer we look at these two Venerable Servants of God, the more different they seem: Father Baker, the eldest member of his class, a lifelong Western New York resident, was a member of the drama and singing clubs. Father McGivney, still a teenager when he arrived at Monteagle Ridge, excelled in baseball and seemed to have had a bit of a peripatetic existence: After being born and raised in Connecticut, young McGivney began college studies for the priesthood at St. Hyacinthe in Quebec, then moved to Niagara and, after only three semesters, moved again to Montreal to study at the Jesuit’s Sainte-Marie College. After the death of his father, Father McGivney’s bishop preferred to keep him closer to Connecticut (or at least out of Canada), sending him to Baltimore’s St. Mary’s Seminary (run by the priests of Saint Sulpice), before being ordained and incardinated back in his native Connecticut.

So what are the chances that two Niagara classmates could possibly be declared Venerable Servants of God? Slim: There are only eight current venerables from the United States (or naturalized citizens).
Venerable Solanus Casey, O.F.M., a Franciscan friar, is American born, but unlike Fathers Baker and McGivney, he is not a secular (diocesan) priest. Ironically (and incredibly), the only other American-born diocesan priest to be named Venerable Servant of God is Fulton J. Sheen, bishop of nearby Rochester, N.Y., from 1966-69, and a holder of an honorary degree from Niagara University!

It would be an archivist’s dream to come across an ancient daguerreotype of Fathers Baker and McGivney, circa 1871, side by side, heads bent in prayer in Alumni Chapel, or a candid of the two saintly men walking and talking on the verdant swards of Monteagle Ridge. Alas, no such photo exists. Indeed, due to the fact that Father McGivney was just entering the seminary while Father Baker was well on his way to finishing — and due to their age difference and preferences in how to spend their free time — it is unlikely (though not impossible) that the two men spent much, if any, time together, aside from group functions for seminarians in general.

No matter: The Vincentian spirit of Catholic social justice fired both Michael J. McGivney, the young, restless, wandering spirit, and Nelson H. Baker, the already elderly, former businessman and homebody, to take St. Vincent’s example to heart and to help the poorest of the poor. In this they were also echoing St. Francis’s famous phrase: “Preach the Gospel at all times — use words if necessary.”

And yet, when we step back from these two Venerable Servants of God whom Niagara is proud to call its own, they are very much in keeping with the tradition of service that Niagara is known for: the Vincentian Service Corps, Learn and Serve Niagara, Urban Plunge, and the myriad community-service opportunities that Campus Ministry coordinates. In fact, when I look back at my own years at Niagara, it’s hard to think of a friend or classmate who didn’t give back in a spirit of Christian charity: from Compeer Volunteers with the mentally ill, to Big Brothers/Big Sisters, to Helping Hands visits to the elderly and infirm — it was just something you did, that almost everybody did, not because you had to, but because it was part of the esprit that pervades Niagara.

It’s a tradition both Venerable Fathers Baker and McGivney can be proud of!

Kevin DiCamillo, ’92, is a contributing editor to Publishing Perspectives and the former poetry editor of Traffic East. His work has appeared in magazines and journals ranging from James Joyce Quarterly to Daedalus: The Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He holds a Master of Arts degree from the University of Notre Dame and is a doctoral fellow at St. John’s University. He currently resides with his wife and twins in New Jersey.
Dear fellow alumni,

I thought I would preface my parting remarks with a little history of the relaunching of the Niagara University Alumni Association to memorialize the past and help guide my successor for the future.

In 2006, Father Joe Levesque asked the NU Board of Advisors to look into the resurrection of the former NU Alumni Association, which had been inactive since the 1980s. An NU Alumni Relations workgroup was formed, which I co-chaired with Jack Holland, ’58. In that same year, Art Cardella was hired as the new director of the Office of Alumni Relations. He was the first non-Niagara alum to hold that position.

The relaunch of the NUAA took place in 2007, with Dr. Greg Hudecki, ’68, selected to be president. He served three years. Marty Byrne, ’78, was then named president for a two-year term, 2010-2012. Marty was instrumental in developing the NU Alumni Legacy Scholarship during his tenure, and in establishing the NUAA as co-sponsor of the President’s Scholarship Dinner with the NU Board of Advisors.

In 2012, I agreed to take over as president to help the newly relaunched organization navigate a host of transitions occurring that same year, including the announced retirement of Father Levesque as president of the university, the retirement of Art Cardella, and the universitywide assessment and reorganization of the Office of Alumni Relations. The reorganization created the new Office of Alumni Engagement and the promotion of Christine O’Hara, ’88, M.S.Ed.’06, as its new executive director. That was just my first year!

I also wanted to help the Alumni Engagement staff and volunteers to redesign the Alumni Association into one that would be better aligned with what was emerging to be the future model of these kinds of organizations. At that time, I noted that success would be measured by the level of awareness you, our alums, have of the association; your participation in local alumni activities; and the amount of annual gift-giving we are able to achieve.

Reflecting on my two-year term, I’m happy to say we have made significant progress toward those goals.

• We’ve created stronger links with our chapters and launched new chapters in Texas, Ontario, and Hungary.
• Alumni Engagement staff has visited alumni in areas that we previously haven’t been able to, including Phoenix, Las Vegas, Raleigh, Pittsburgh, and Binghamton.
• The number of alumni events has nearly doubled, each chapter has hosted at least one event, and there’s a new focus on organizing service activities.
• Alumni attendance at events has appreciably increased.
• New initiatives connecting our alumni with potential students have successfully launched.
• And, most importantly, support for the Niagara Fund has grown.

As I turn over the leadership of this organization to Frank Fiannaca, ’85, I am encouraged by these accomplishments and confident that we will continue to move the Alumni Association forward.

Jeff Dann, ’74

Dear fellow alumni,

As I begin my term as president of NU’s Alumni Association, I would first like to thank those alumni who have preceded me, including Greg Hudecki, ’68, Marty Byrne, ’78, and Jeff Dann, ’74. Under your leadership, the association has built a firm foundation for success and growth.

I want to continue this positive movement by increasing alumni involvement in events and service activities and, especially, support of the Niagara Fund. Roughly 10 percent of our alumni support this important fund; I want to encourage the other 90 percent to participate, whatever amount they can. With 32,000 alumni, even a $5 gift makes a difference!

Much has been happening at Niagara over the past few years, and Monteagle Ridge is a great place to be! If you haven’t reconnected with your alma mater recently, I urge you to do so. If you have, consider becoming even more involved ... contact me, or any member of the Alumni Engagement team.

I look forward to working with Alumni Engagement and you, our alumni, to create more opportunities to engage with and support Niagara University, and have fun while doing so!

Frank Fiannaca, ’85
Trip to Hungary Culminates in Establishment of Alumni Chapter

As the Berlin Wall was being razed in the early 1990s, Dr. Péter Forgách was watching closely from afar. The young, Hungarian-born medical doctor had been practicing ophthalmology in Buffalo for years, yet remained concerned about his birth country’s capacity to establish an effective democratic government.

In 1994, Dr. Forgách and Balazs Borka, an electrical engineer, co-founded the Calasanctius Training Program to train Hungarian students in the United States so that they would be fitted with the tools they’d need to help develop a new democratic society. The only caveat to the private scholarship program was that participating students were required to return to Hungary upon graduation. Niagara University is one of eight American universities who have partnered with CTP, and 20 of the program’s 170 students are Niagara graduates. This October, an alumni chapter was established in Hungary to enable these graduates to continue their connection to NU.

The announcement was made by the Rev. James J. Maher, C.M., Niagara’s president, who had traveled to Budapest to present Dr. Forgách with the university’s prestigious Caritas Medal in recognition of his formidable leadership and generosity, and to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the program. Jaclyn Rossi, ’08, M.S.Ed.’10, associate director of alumni engagement, and Dr. Hung Le, vice president for international relations, accompanied Father Maher on the trip.

“Niagara University gave the Calasanctius Training Program alumni more than an education,” Rossi noted. “It gave them an opportunity to learn, grow and live in a new setting and culture. NU changed their lives and they are all so grateful for the chance to have studied in America and specifically at NU. It’s especially important for us to build upon this relationship and the love they have for the university. Establishing an alumni chapter in Hungary will allow us to do that.”

The following night, Father Maher accepted the Calasanctius Training Program’s Person of the Year Award on behalf of Niagara University. The honor was presented during a fundraising dinner; Father Maher became the first university president to attend.
Pete Strobl coaches a player at The Scoring Factory.
Pete, ’99, MBA’00, and Sheryl (Klick) Strobl, ’00: Kindred Spirits

By Lisa McMahon, M.A.’09

Drive, focus, ambition. It’s what Pete Strobl, ’99, MBA’00, fosters in the young players he works with at The Scoring Factory, a training facility he established in 2009. It’s what first attracted him to his wife, Sheryl (Klick), ’00, with whom he’s traveled the world and is raising four children. And it’s what started him on his journey in the first place.

Growing up in Los Angeles, watching arguably the best basketball team at that time, the Lakers, young Pete set his sights on becoming an NBA basketball player. When college offers began coming in, he chose the Division I school that was farthest from his home because of the new experiences it could present. That school was Niagara University.

Meanwhile, Sheryl was choosing between college offers herself for both basketball and soccer. She felt comfortable with the NU coaching staff and sensed a chance to earn playing time early on at Niagara, and because the school was “just far enough away” from her home in Pittsburgh, Pa., yet close enough that her parents could come to see her play, she opted to attend college on Montagle Ridge.

As business majors and basketball players, Pete and Sheryl had similar schedules and their paths would frequently cross in the classroom and the gym. But their friendship took a while to develop.

“Pete was the driven guy who read the Wall Street Journal in the cafeteria while he ate and was always doing a project or working in the library,” Sheryl recalls. “He wasn’t one of those guys that you really got to know quickly unless you were also doing whatever it was that he was involved in.”

Over time, they discovered that they were kindred spirits — both very focused on working hard to achieve their goals, both interested in seeing how far their basketball careers could progress. They became friends and, as they got to know each other better, their friendship blossomed into romance.

This relationship was tested shortly after graduation, when both Pete and Sheryl were signed to play basketball overseas, he in France and she in Turkey. Over the next several years, they went on to play for teams throughout Europe, including the UK, Austria, and Germany. The long-distance relationship was challenging, Pete admits, but their commitment to each other enabled them to make it work. Eventually, they got engaged and were married in July 2004.

Pete and Sheryl continued their successful basketball careers for several years. In 2007, while they were playing for teams in Austria, their first son, Pete Jr., was born. Sheryl completed her contract before retiring from professional basketball, while Pete went on to play for teams in Ireland, Iceland, and Switzerland. In late 2008, they returned to the United States, settling in Pittsburgh where they could be close to Sheryl’s family.

Pete’s “European adventure” satisfied some of his wanderlust. Now, he had to make a plan for the next stage in his life.

He soon discovered that there was a demand in the Pittsburgh area for someone who could provide training for basketball players. He began doing private training, and then led group clinics, which evolved into The Scoring Factory, a high-intensity basketball skills development academy. The venture enabled him to combine his experience as a basketball professional with his business education and put his MBA to use.

“I took a large leap and made some sacrifices along the way to start my own business,” Pete says. “We started small and had a lot of luck along the way. We have worked exceptionally hard behind the scenes to make sure it grows but still stays true to the initial plan of what I wanted it to be.”

The Scoring Factory offers training clinics, private training, and group sessions throughout the year for basketball players who run the gamut from middle school students to professional players. Many have gone on to play for top basketball programs at the collegiate and professional levels. Athletes from other sports, such as football and track, also take advantage of the speed and agility training The Scoring Factory provides. This mix of athletes fosters a motivational environment and relationships that span beyond the court.

“There’s a lot of camaraderie between the older and younger players,” Pete says. “It feels like a family to them. It’s nice when you have a foundation like that, a support system that’s always there for you.”

Sheryl is part of The Scoring Factory team as well, although she balances her involvement with raising the couple’s growing family, which, in addition to Pete Jr., now includes sons Kaiser and Bastien, and daughter, Vienika, who was born in March 2014.

“She is exceptionally driven and it’s nice for young girls to see that success is possible, through hard work, dedication and a strong desire to make it happen.”

“We take a lot of satisfaction in seeing the look of joy and accomplishment on the faces of many young players that come through The Scoring Factory as they learn and improve,” Sheryl says. “It’s a very rewarding experience and it feels really good to give back to the next generation.”

In addition to his work with The Scoring Factory, Pete released a book, Backspin, which chronicles his journey from Montagle Ridge to Europe to Pittsburgh, taking a humorous and inspirational look at the playing career of a professional athlete. It is available as a paperback or ebook through Amazon.

Drive, focus and ambition have served Pete and Sheryl well, and they share this philosophy with the athletes they train as well as their children. However, time and experience have inspired them to add an additional principle to these ideals, one that they have taken to heart: Enjoy the journey.

Additional alumni stories are available at www.niagara.edu/alumni-news/.
Rhonda with a resident of a local assisted living facility.
Rhonda Rotterman-Palmiero, ’88: Promoting a Different Way of Caring

By Lisa McMahon, M.A. ’09

A chance encounter with a frail woman set Rhonda (Goodberry) Rotterman-Palmiero on a career path that she never expected.

Nursing jobs at hospitals were scarce when Rhonda, a member of the College of Nursing’s Class of 1988, graduated. Despite the fact geriatrics was one of her least favorite clinical rotations, she began applying for jobs at nursing homes to supplement her income and help pay for educational expenses. While completing an application at a local facility, Rhonda heard a woman screaming for help. No one came to assist the woman, so she went over and began to talk to her about her family, her home, and her pets. The conversation had a calming effect on the woman, named Mary.

Later that week, when Rhonda was offered the job, she remembered Mary and decided to accept the position, thinking she could make a difference for her. “It was certainly not a career that I chose. I always tell people it kind of chose me, and Mary was the catalyst.”

As Rhonda pursued her career in long-term care, she began to recognize that the focus on task, rather than on people as individuals with unique needs and desires, was leading to poor outcomes: apathy, behavioral outbursts, and feelings of loneliness, helplessness, and boredom.

“I used to define success as getting all my tasks done by the end of my shift,” she says. “My epiphany came when I would see that the people we were trying so hard to make a difference for were absolutely miserable. By health care’s definitions, maybe I was successful, but by my patients’ and their families’ definitions, I was failing miserably. And that became more important to me.”

So Rhonda began looking beyond the classic standards of care to the people themselves to find ways to bring a meaningful existence to them. This completely changed the way she did her job, and she became a passionate advocate for person-centered care, an approach that focuses on the uniqueness of the person, and on their relationships, life experiences, abilities, and preferences.

“The social world that surrounds people can have a positive or negative effect on well-being,” she says.

“There’s so much more to life than three square meals a day, making sure you get your medications, and Bingo on Tuesdays. Person-centered care really speaks to knowing people as individuals and bringing a quality of life to them, whatever that means for them, as opposed to the health care environment dictating everything.”

Rhonda’s change in perspective enabled her to improve care and services for the people she directly interacted with, but she wanted to effect change on a broader scale. In 2002, she earned a master’s degree in health care administration and quickly moved into executive-level positions.

At these organizations, Rhonda led by example and encouraged her staff to engage the people they cared for in the process of life, including assisting in developing activities that were meaningful to them and offering them the opportunity to take on work functions that interested them.

“Giving these individuals responsibilities provided a deep sense of purpose,” Rhonda says, “and gave staff a feeling of empowerment in making a difference for those they cared for, which had positive effects for everyone involved in both their emotional and physical health.”

In 2009, Rhonda was named executive director of the Western New York Alliance for Person-Centered Care, a grant-funded initiative sponsored by the John R. Oishei Foundation that was launched to assist nursing homes and assisted living facilities transition from institutional environments to person-centered care environments. The one-year grant was extended to three years because of the significant progress the alliance made.

As executive director, Rhonda developed and provided training and educational resources for providers, spoke at national conferences, and lobbied for regulatory changes in long-term care. After the funding expired, she joined the University at Buffalo, where she assisted in creating the Institute for Person-Centered Care, a collaborative effort of UB faculty and the WNYAPCC. As program director, Rhonda was instrumental in developing courses, workshops and continuing education programs for both professional and lay caregivers. She also became involved in the university’s interprofessional educational initiative by partnering with several other departments to create a culture of “positivity” that focuses on autonomy and a sense of self-worth and purpose, despite physical or cognitive impairment.

When her contract with UB ended in December 2013, Rhonda shifted her attention to managed care programs and joined Family Choice of NY, a subsidiary of Independent Health, as staff development coordinator.

“Managed care is the direction health care is going in, so it’s imperative that I get person-centered care into that forum,” she says.

Rhonda’s efforts have helped to transition health care to a more holistic model, which is really the foundation of the nursing profession, she points out, and she is proud to be part of this national paradigm shift.

“I get to share this new philosophy with thousands of people,” she says, “who then take that information and go and make a difference for millions of people because they’ve learned that we can care in a different way. A way that has positive impact on those providing service but, more importantly, a way that has tremendous impact for those receiving services, and that is really what it’s all about.”

Editor’s Note: In addition to her work in health care, Rhonda has made physical fitness a priority. In 2011, at the age of 44, she entered her first body building competition and took second place in three divisions. Since then, she has been the first-place finisher in three National Physique Committee competitions, and now competes at a national level across the U.S. She has been featured in No Nonsense Magazine, a national publication on fitness and health, and in “Refresh Buffalo,” published by The Buffalo News. A certified personal trainer and dietary consultant, Rhonda enjoys sharing her journey in health and wellness to inspire others on their own fitness paths.

Additional alumni stories are available at www.niagara.edu/alumni-news.
1965 REUNION
John Sanborn received the Franciscan Peace Award from the Secular Franciscan Order’s St. Kateri Tekakwitha Region during the annual regional gathering Sept. 12-14 at Stella Maris Retreat and Conference Center, Skaneateles, N.Y. A secular Franciscan and former minister of St. Patrick Fraternity in Buffalo, John has served the order as national treasurer, national vice minister, and national chairman of the 2007 Quinquennial Congress, as well as regional treasurer.


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1966
Frederick Dunne Jr., and his son, F.R. “Chip” Dunne III, were named to The National Trial Lawyers Top 100 of 2014. They practice in New Jersey, New York, and California.

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1970 REUNION
Mark Kelly joined the Armed Forces Services Corp. as project manager for the Special Compensation Branch, Army Program Records Division, The Adjutant General Directorate, Army Human Resources Command in Ft. Knox, Ky.

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1971
Thomas O’Connor retired from practicing law and has relocated to Florida.

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1972
Bill Bradshaw was one of five former athletic directors inducted into the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics Hall of Fame in June. Bill, who served as president of the NACDA from 2001-02, retired from Temple University in 2013, where he had been athletic director for 11 years. He previously served as AD for DePaul and LaSalle universities. In addition, Bill was invited to testify before the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation in July. The hearing discussed the well-being and academic success of college athletes.

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1973
Kevin J. Clarke has been appointed to the board of directors of Niko Resources Ltd. During his 40-year management career, Kevin has led global high performance organizations of up to 15,000 people with over $1 billion in sales and with manufacturing facilities across the U.S., Canada, and Latin America.

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1974
Douglas Dean accepted a Lifetime Achievement Award at the Business and Industry Association’s 101st Annual Dinner, Lifetime Achievement, and New Hampshire Advantage Awards Celebration in October. Award recipients help shape their local communities and the state through their successful business endeavors, active participation in civic and town organizations, involvement in boards, and service to local and state government. Douglas is the immediate past president and chief executive officer of Elliot Health System, where he served for 16 years.

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1975 REUNION
Kevin Hanley was named to the Notre Dame High School Hall of Fame for his achievements in cross country and track.

Anne Theresa Hart retired from the Catholic Health System. She continues her volunteer work with Immaculate Conception Parish in Ransomville, N.Y., and with the Erie County SPCA.

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1976
Christine Cassert was named a Nurse of Distinction by the Western New York Professional Nurses Association. Christine, who is senior director-patient care services at Mount St. Mary’s Hospital, Lewiston, N.Y., and director of the Critical Care Unit/Intensive Care Unit at the hospital, was cited for her leadership of the clinical teams that led to Mount St. Mary’s designation as a New York state stroke center and a certified chest pain center.

Thomas Ferrara has been appointed chair of the investment committees of Calvary Hospital and Providence Rest nursing home in New York City. He also initiated the renaming of River Avenue
and 161st Street in the Bronx, right outside Yankee Stadium, to Mariano Rivera Avenue.

Chuck Marra was named executive director of the Western New York chapter of the American Red Cross. He first joined the organization in June as chief development officer.

**1977**

Mitch Dolan has been named chief operating officer for Times-Shamrock Communications. He will manage radio and billboard operations for the Scranton-based media company’s radio and outdoor media division.

Michael Anthony Rossi has been named to Business First and Buffalo Law Journal’s 2014 Legal Elite of Western New York. The list selects the top 150 lawyers in WNY from more than 1,100 nominations. Michael, a civil and criminal trial attorney, practices with his son, Nicholas Michael Rossi, and focuses on serious personal injury, complex divorce and custody, and criminal and DWI defense. The Rossi Law Firm has offices in downtown Buffalo and midtown Manhattan.

Eileen Whalen was named president and chief operating officer of Fletcher Allen Health Care, Burlington, Vt., effective early 2015. Eileen has more than 35 years of experience in health care, and comes to Fletcher Allen from Harborview Medical Center in Seattle, Wash., where she served as the chief executive.

**1978**

Nancy Langer received the 2014 Trocaire College Reflections Award, which is given to an individual who has demonstrated meaningful contributions to the WNY community that exemplify the spirit of the Sisters of Mercy and the mission of the college. Nancy is president of NativityMiguel Middle School in Buffalo, N.Y.

Linda Nowachek celebrated the 25th anniversary of her business, Lockie and Nowachek Family Chiropractic. She notes that she is “enjoying life and making sure everyone has a ‘well-adjusted day!’”

**1979**

Rita Tweedie assumed the interim CEO/executive director post at Niagara Cerebral Palsy, shifting from the chief fiscal officer position. She has served at the agency for 25 years.

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**60 SECONDS WITH:**

Tim Gabel, ’91

Chapter Leader, Washington, D.C.

**Hometown:** Arlington, Va.  
**Degree:** B.A. in communication studies and sociology (double major)  
**Current job:** Concierge at Sofitel and events consultant at Tony and Joe’s Seafood Place and Nick’s Riverside Grill

My best memories of NU are: the lifelong friends and experiences we had/still have.

My favorite hangouts were: the Student Government or Index offices.

My favorite parts of my job are: the smiling faces after an event I assist with planning or the appreciation from a guest after he or she takes advantage of a recommendation I made.

When I’m not working, you’ll find me: biking (road bike) — I have participated in ADA Tour de Cure and the MS100 fundraising rides, as well as the Seagull Century — or at any of the museums and art galleries in Washington, D.C.

I still want to learn how to: skydive.

I decided to become a chapter leader because: we needed one. With the passing of longtime chapter leader Paul McCarthy, ’60, a few of us decided we would band together and continue what Paul did successfully for so many years — keep people from the D.C./Va./Md. areas involved and informed.

Our chapter is planning: a night at Ford’s Theatre, game watches, Honor Flight meet and greets.

Alumni should stay connected to Niagara by becoming involved in their local chapters because: it gives them an opportunity to network. A strong alumni group can assist recent grads, alumni interested in a career/job change, or a transplant with business connections, area information such as schools, neighborhoods, etc., and be a friendly face in a new and sometimes intimidating area. It is also a way to be social. We enjoyed the social aspect of Niagara, now we can share it with alumni of all ages, telling stories about the “old days” to new grads and creating new memories. Most importantly, it provides a way for Niagara University alumni to continue in the tradition of St. Vincent de Paul to help others. Our chapter is fortunate enough to be in Washington, D.C., and we serve our military families through Honor Flight, Wreaths Across America, and Wounded Warrior events. We also participate in inner-city projects to help brighten up schools or playgrounds. We live the Niagara tradition away from Monteagle Ridge.

More information on our chapters can be found at www.niagara.edu/alumni-chapters/.
James Waggoner was ordained a deacon by the Most Rev. Richard J. Malone, bishop of Buffalo, N.Y., in June.

1981

Steven Schumer was ordained a deacon by the Most Rev. Richard J. Malone, bishop of Buffalo, N.Y., in June. He is assigned to his home parish of St. Bernadette in Orchard Park, N.Y., and to ministry of charity with Catholic Charities of Western New York. Steve and his wife Mary (Ostaszewski), ’81, have two children, Elizabeth and Timothy.

1982

Thomas LeRoy was sworn in as the chief of police for the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry Police Department. He is a former lieutenant with the Baldwinsville Police Department.

Laurie Napoleone received the annual Italian-American of the Year award from Batavia Downs Gaming in October during a special trackside ceremony. She is an instructor in the Genesee Valley Educational Partnership’s Health Careers Academy and co-founder with her husband of the Michael Napoleone Memorial Foundation, named after their youngest son, who passed away from Burkitt’s lymphoma at the age of 8.

David Sears owns the South Buffalo Bowling Center and Perfect Shot Sports Bar.

1984

Anthony Hahn has joined the Niagara Falls Water Board as director of administrative services. He previously served as administrative director of the Niagara County Sewer District.

Mary Laski Hoffman, RN, MBA, FACHE, was named senior vice president of operations at Erie County Medical Center Corp. She most recently held the position of chief operating officer for Lawley Benefits Group and previously served as president and chief executive officer of Kenmore Mercy Hospital. She is a member of NU’s Board of Advisors.

Lawrence Piselli, MBA’89, has been named executive director of Elderwood at Cheektowaga skilled nursing facility. He formerly served as administrator. In his new role, Lawrence has operational responsibility for the range of services offered on campus, which includes assisted living care and an independent living patio home community.

Diane Perri Roberts was selected to the 2014 New York-Upstate Super Lawyers list in the practice area of business litigation. She is special counsel at Lipsitz Green Scime Cambria LLP.

Henry Poreda, ’63, shows off his Purple Eagle golf headcover, which he says brought him luck on the links.

Helping Hands — Niagara University signed a memorandum of understanding with a Haiti-based humanitarian organization founded by Ed Brennan, ’78. The Rev. James J. Maher, C.M., Niagara president, and Brennan inked the agreement during Vincentian Heritage Week, the university’s annual celebration of its heritage.

Brennan founded Hand in Hand for Haiti as a means of helping Haitians recover from the devastating earthquake that struck the nation in January 2010. The retired chairman of DFS group, Brennan generated extraordinary monetary support for the endeavor from the travel retail industry, the fruits of which largely went toward constructing a world-class educational facility.

Lycée Jean-Baptiste Pointe du Sable opened its doors Oct. 3, 2011. In August, Father Maher and a group of NU administrators visited the school to determine ways that the university could advance its relationship with the institution in St. Marc. The MOU signing marked the fruitful partnership in which NU pledges to provide service, research, and educational opportunities that support the comprehensive development and operation of Lycée Jean-Baptiste Pointe du Sable.

Ed Brennan and his wife, Debbie, are pictured here with Father Maher.
1985 REUNION

Renee Abdou-Malta, M.S.’89, received a 2014 Woman of Excellence award for Excellence in Management by the Women's Business Council and the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce. Renee is the New York region vice president of ValueOptions, Inc., a health improvement company specializing in mental and emotional well-being and recovery.

Daniel Christian was promoted to Army Reserve brigadier general in July. Daniel assumed command of the 95th Training Division late last year. As a civilian, he is vice president of information systems for AAA Cooper Transportation in Dothan, Ala., a private national transportation carrier in the United States and international territories. He has earned a Bronze Star, a Meritorious Service Medal, an Army Commendation Medal for Valor, and an Army Combat Badge.

Rob Silbaugh has been named national business development manager of Messenger Eagle Communications, the faith-based division of the strategic marketing, advertising communications company Renegade Communications. In this role, Rob will be responsible for helping the Catholic market grow and succeed while promoting the mission of Messenger Eagle’s various clients. Prior to joining Messenger Eagle, Rob spent more than four years as president, CEO, and owner of R&S Consulting.

1986

Laura Firch is a senior inventory planner with Adams Golf in Plano, Texas.

Vicki Smith has been appointed director of women's services at Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center. Her patient care experience includes two years as a clinical nurse specialist and five years as nurse manager of women's services at Sisters of Charity Hospital, Buffalo. She previously served as director of women's services at Memorial and recently completed a two-year stay as a faculty fellow in Niagara's Department of Nursing.

Barb and Art actively serve their community, their church, professional organizations, and their community. They also serve their alma mater. Both have been officers and board members for the Friends of NU Theatre for a number of years. In 2011, they were presented with The Spirit of Niagara University Theatre Award in recognition of their support. Barbara has also been a member of the College of Nursing's mentoring program, co-founded the Niagara University Nursing Alumni Council, and serves on the nursing department's advisory committee. To thank Barbara and Art for their outstanding support of and devotion to Niagara, the university presented them with the Alumni Award in 2004.

In addition to the time and treasure the couple currently shares with Niagara, they have named Niagara University’s theatre program as the beneficiary of life insurance policies that they both own, leaving a legacy that will benefit NU’s future theatre students.

For more information on how to include Niagara University in your estate plans, please contact Leslie K. Wise, ’82, at 716.286.8590 or lwise@niagara.edu. You may also visit us online at http://niagara.givingplan.net.

John, ’75, and Nancy Kessing Prior, ’77, visited with the Rev. John Maher, C.M., ’76, during a vacation in Italy.

Arthur, ’69, and Barbara Traver, ’69: Leaving a Legacy

Barbara (Nagengast) Traver wanted to be a nurse. When it came time to choose a college, she selected Niagara University because of its excellent nursing program. She also thought that, with a 5:1 male to female ratio, she might find a husband. It all came to pass. Barbara met and married Arthur Traver, a Niagara University accounting major. They both graduated in 1969 and went on to have three children and fulfilling careers in their respective fields.

Barbara and Art actively serve their community, their church, professional organizations, and their community. They also serve their alma mater. Both have been officers and board members for the Friends of NU Theatre for a number of years. In 2011, they were presented with The Spirit of Niagara University Theatre Award in recognition of their support. Barbara has also been a member of the College of Nursing's mentoring program, co-founded the Niagara University Nursing Alumni Council, and serves on the nursing department's advisory committee. To thank Barbara and Art for their outstanding support of and devotion to Niagara, the university presented them with the Alumni Award in 2004.

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1987
Michael Knight Sr. was recently elected ninth president of the National Client Protection Organization, Inc., at the NCPO’s annual meeting May 30, 2014, in Long Beach, Calif., which was held in conjunction with the American Bar Association’s 30th National Forum on Client Protection. The office holds a two-year term. Michael previously served as counsel and president-elect for the NCPO, an educational resource for the exchange of information among law client protection funds throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Greg Setter, MBA ’87, was named to the board of directors for Financial Executives International. He is vice president, finance, at Rosina Food Products Inc.

1988
Andrew Altenburg Jr. was appointed to the bench for the United States Bankruptcy Court for the District of New Jersey in Camden, N.J., in May. He lives in Marlton, N.J., with his wife, Kelly, and three daughters.

Kimberley Minkel was named to Buffalo Business First’s Buffalo 612 list of Western New York’s most dedicated and visionary leaders. She is executive director of the Niagara Frontier Transportation Authority.

1989
Susan Mitchell joined the Onondaga County Public Library as its executive director. She will oversee operations of the Robert P. Kinchen Central Library, city branches, and the OCPL System. Previously, she served as library plan manager in the University of Wisconsin Technique Administration at Madison, Wis.

Thomas Ross has been promoted to master police officer for the City of Orlando Police Department. He is assigned to the Orlando International Airport, where he works with Homeland Security, the Secret Service, the Metropolitan Bureau of Investigations, and the FBI to protect airline passengers. He is also assigned to dignitary protection of high-ranking U.S. officials.

1990 REUNION
James Pernick Jr. opened All In Sports Complex in Cheektowaga, N.Y. The facility focuses on baseball and softball training.

1991
Kimberly A. (Smith) Boynton was appointed chief executive officer of Crouse Hospital in Syracuse, N.Y. She was hired by Crouse in 1998 as a financial analyst and most recently served as CFO.

Joseph Falbo Jr. was elected president of the New York State Society of Certified Public Accountants. Joseph, CPA and CGMA, is a partner and member of the executive committee at Tronconi Segarra & Associates in Williamsville. He has been a member of the society since 1994 and is a current member of the Buffalo chapter.

Marquelle Mingo was named 2013 Manager of the Year for the Hyatt Regency Crystal City in Arlington, Va., where she serves as sales manager.

Lt. Col. Dave Powell has been selected to become the next commander of the New York National Guard’s Camp Smith Training Site garrison. The 1,585-acre facility, located on the Hudson River just north of Peekskill, is the New York National Guard’s premier training facility.

1992
Dr. Stephen Cook was asked to give testimony on the Child Nutrition Act Reauthorization to the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture. He was among a group of education, medical, and military officials who discussed some of the ways child nutrition programs affect issues such as national security, economic vitality, and the health of children and families. Dr. Cook is an associate professor at the University of Rochester Medical Center’s Golisano Children’s Hospital and associate director of the American Academy of Pediatrics’ Institute for Healthy Childhood Weight.

Sean McCabe was elected president of the Greece, N.Y., Central Board of Education.

Theresa Lang has accepted the position of vicariate administrative consultant for Vicariate V in the Archdiocese of Chicago.

1993
Polka Publishes Second Book — Dr. Walter Polka, M.A.’70, M.S.Ed.’71 (right), a professor in Niagara University’s Ph.D. program in leadership and policy, co-authored his second book on school superintendency, titled Living on the Horns of Dilemmas: Superintendents, Politics, and Decision-making, with Dr. Frank Calzi (left) a former associate professor of education at NU, and Dr. Peter Litchka, director of educational leadership at Loyola University Maryland. Dr. Polka is a former superintendent of schools at Lewiston-Porter Central, and has served as an adjunct professor at NU since 1970. Since 2008, he has coordinated NU’s leadership and policy program. He has conducted numerous research studies about technology, curriculum, instruction, school administration, and diversity with NU colleagues and graduate students.

1994
Dr. Michael Greco has been named associate director for the CRNA graduate program at Columbia University School of Nursing, New York, N.Y.

Jacquelyn Leppert was named to the Cheektowaga Chamber of Commerce board of directors. She is employed by Residence Inn by Marriott Buffalo Cheektowaga.

Stephen Ventura has been appointed vice president and general manager of WFXV, WPNY, and CNYHomepage.com by Nexstar Broadcasting. Additionally, he will oversee WUTR through Nexstar’s operating agreement.
with Mission Broadcasting. Stephen previously served as the company’s director of sales for Utica-area operations, a position he accepted in 2006. Prior to that, his positions have included director of advertising for the Carbone Auto Group and local sales executive positions at several TV stations.

1995 **REUNION**

Stephen Poole was named North American General Manager of the Year by Hilton Hotels in April. He is general manager at the DoubleTree Club by Hilton in Boston.

1996

Charles Cutler retired from the U.S. Army Reserves as a first sergeant after 22 years of service. He completed three tours in Iraq and is the recipient of three Bronze Stars and a Combat Merit Badge. He recently started a new position as health operations field coordinator with the Idaho State Department of Health and Welfare.

Kim Zenger was named director of special events at Niagara Catholic Jr./Sr. High School.

1997

Tammy (Call) Arnone is an accountant with the Niagara Falls Water Board.

Timothy M. Connolly, M.S.’05, a technical sergeant in the Air Force Reserve, completed the seven-week Knowledge Operations Management course at Keesler Air Force Base in Mississippi. He continues to work both as a detective with the Town of Tonawanda, N.Y., Police Department and as a senior lecturer of criminal justice at Niagara University.

Michael Meaney has been promoted by Northrop Grumman to vice president of advanced land and self-protection systems within the company’s electronic systems sector. He will oversee the development of new electronic warfare, tactical information processing, electro-optical/infrared sensor and self-protection technologies for customers’ ground and airborne missions in his new position. He is a 20-year veteran of the company.

1998

K. John Bland has been named associate vice president and counsel at Cannon Design in Grand Island, N.Y.

1999

Dr. Leslie Maloney, M.S.Ed.’05, has been named acting principal of Penfield High School.

2000 **REUNION**

Greg Gardner has been named assistant coach at Mercyhurst University. He spent the last three seasons as an assistant coach at Princeton University.

Kelli (Riley) Harris was appointed chief financial officer of Crouse Hospital in Syracuse, N.Y. She has been with the hospital since 2002, most recently serving as director of finance and patient financial services.

Jonathan Marshall, D.O., has joined the medical staff at Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center. He is an interventional radiologist and holds board certification from the American Osteopathic College of Radiology.

Kristy (Cragg) Sokol is starting a new career as an academic advisor in the College of Education at the University of South Carolina.

2002

Brandie (Rutledge) Brown is an eighth grade English teacher at Gaskill Preparatory School in Niagara Falls, N.Y.

2003

Giulio Colangelo was named head boys’ basketball coach at Niagara Catholic Jr./Sr. High School.

Eric Wells, M.S.Ed.’04, accepted a position as district compliance/program specialist for exceptional student education with the School District of Osceola County, Fla.

2004

Rev. Dennis Baker, S.J., has been named to the board of trustees of Fairfield University.

Emily Kraus is operations manager for Wolfgang Puck Catering in Los Angeles, Calif. She notes that it is her “dream job” to work for “one of the most well-known names in the culinary and events world.” The company provides custom catering services and event planning for some of Hollywood’s biggest events, including the Governors Ball for the Academy Awards and the Emmys.

James Reaves is a school counselor at University Preparatory Charter School for Young Men in Rochester, N.Y., and is pursuing his graduate degree in school counseling at Roberts Wesleyan College.

Thomas Stack was named principal of Maryvale High School in Cheektowaga, N.Y.
2005 REUNION
Lisa Chetney was appointed shift leader, assembly, at General Motors Powertrain – Tonawanda Engine in Tonawanda, N.Y, where she builds V8 engines for the Corvette Stingray. Lisa has been with GM since 2002 in various roles in engineering and machining.

Amanda Kelly was recognized as a 2014 Upstate New York Super Lawyers Rising Star in the field of directory estates and trusts. She is an attorney with HoganWillig in Buffalo, N.Y.

Melissa Lanigan has been promoted to tax manager at Dermody, Burke & Brown, CPAs, LLC. She joined the firm in 2007.

Ryan (Brunner) Lindemuth is a family service counselor with the Acacia Park Cemetery Association, Inc., in North Tonawanda, N.Y.

Daniel Pautz was recognized as a 2014 Upstate New York Super Lawyers Rising Star in the field of business litigation. He is an associate in Bond, Schoeneck & King PLLC’s Syracuse office.

2006
David Bialas was named vice president of Fireman’s Mutual Benevolent Society of New Jersey, Branch No. 9, a community organization that represents and promotes the interests of firefighters in the City of Elizabeth, N.J., Fire Department and provides civic betterment and benevolence in the city.

Peter Hubbard is a research assistant at Via Evaluation.

Anthony Restaino, Esq., joined the board of directors for Niagara Cerebral Palsy. He is a partner at the law offices of RestainoReddien, LLP, in Niagara Falls, N.Y.

2007
Jennifer Berry obtained a master of public health degree in epidemiology of microbial diseases from the Yale School of Public Health.

Doug Crumb was promoted to CFO of Canusa Corp. in Baltimore, Md. He joined the company in 2011 as a controller.

Cali Gilbert is a transformational author, award-winning photographer, and social entrepreneur. It’s Simply Serendipity, her fifth book, was named a #1 Amazon International Bestseller.

Kathleen Heim was named to Buffalo Business First’s 30 Under Thirty, an annual list of young professionals who are achieving at high levels at work and in the community. Kathleen is chief of staff in the office of New York State Sen. Timothy Kennedy.

2008
Kara Hegarty, MBA’09, was promoted to manager of the Assurance Department at Lougen Valenti Bookbinder & Weintraub LLP. She is responsible for management of assurance engagements and related projects, supervision of assurance associates, and engagement in business development activities.

Kaylin Ranagan, M.S.Ed.’11, was selected as one of the 2014 Top 30 Under 30 Future Leaders of Charlotte. She is a third grade teacher at Devonshire Elementary School in Charlotte, N.C.
Whitney Walker was promoted to community impact coordinator for the Mobile Safety-Net Team. In this new role, Whitney will coordinate collaborative efforts in Cheektowaga, the cities of Tonawanda and North Tonawanda, Lockport, and Newfane and serve as workforce development point person for the team. The Mobile Safety-Net Team is an initiative of the John R. Oishei Foundation, supported by and located at Goodwill of Western New York.

2009
Zachariah Gonyea earned a master’s degree in American history from American Public University.
Erika Harris has been named an assistant coach of Niagara University’s women’s basketball.
Kate Piazza has been named executive director of the Boys & Girls Club of Northern Chautauqua County.
Eric Reeners, MBA’10, was promoted from senior associate to supervisor in Freed Maxick CPAs P.C.’s Buffalo office.
Christine Stolzenburg, MBA’10, was promoted from senior associate to supervisor in Freed Maxick CPAs P.C.’s Buffalo office.

2010 REUNION
Derek Gerega, MBA’11, was promoted from associate to senior associate in Freed Maxick CPAs P.C.’s Buffalo office.
Camille Granchelli is convention services administrative assistant for Visit Baltimore. She previously worked at the Baltimore Marriott Waterfront in positions including assistant event services manager, banquet captain, and front office supervisor.

2011
Ralph Epstein-Rosso, MBA’12, was promoted from associate to senior associate in Freed Maxick CPAs P.C.’s Buffalo office.
Latoshia Hubert joined People Inc. in Williamsville, N.Y., as accounts payable manager.
Kristen Masood earned her Pharm.D. from the University of Saint Joseph School of Pharmacy in Hartford, Conn., on May 12, 2014. She began her pharmacy career with CVS/Caremark in the Hartford area.
Ashley Serwon, M.S.Ed.’13, has been appointed to the position of campus minister in Niagara University’s Office of University Mission and Ministry.
Jonathan Smaldon was promoted to senior account executive with the Syracuse Crunch. He is entering his third season with the club.

2012
Kyle Breloff was promoted to senior accountant at Lumsden & McCormick.
Taryn Burkholder has joined Morrisville State College as assistant coach for the women’s lacrosse and field hockey programs for the fall 2014 season. She previously served as assistant coach of Buffalo State’s women’s lacrosse program.
Jessica Teddy joined M.J. Teddy & Associates, her father’s financial planning firm, as a producer.

2013
Ashley Dilcher is special events coordinator at HARBORCENTER in Buffalo, N.Y.

MARRIAGES
Alexis Szczur, ’05, married Jared Lelito, M.S.Ed.’08, on Aug. 10, 2013.
Elizabeth Koprucki, ’06, M.S.Ed.’10, married Scott Danni on April 26, 2014.
Nicole Buchheit, ’07, married Mike Whitt on June 11, 2014.
Jim Sorge, ’07, married Kelsey Schiappa, ’11, on Sept. 6, 2014.

Lunch with the President — Seven Niagara University friends gathered on campus in May to reconnect and enjoy lunch with the Rev. James Maher, C.M., president. Front row (l-r): Karen McLeavy, ’80; Dr. Deborah (Tansey) Zimmerman, ’80; Father Maher; and Dr. Joanne McKeown, ’80. Back row (l-r): Carol (Millert) Barnett, ’82; Nadine (Wolff) Zernik, ’80; Isabel Menendez, ’80; and Priscilla (Pfeifer) Hipkins, ’80.
BIRTHS AND ADOPTIONS

Kristen (Colucci) Hojnacki, '97, M.S.Ed.'99, M.S.Ed.'06, and her husband, Dr. David Hojnacki, welcomed a daughter, Marina Angelina, on March 17, 2014.

Kelly (Filippi) DeStefano, '99, and her husband, Andy, welcomed a daughter, Adriana Craig, on Aug. 1, 2014.

Julie (Rogers) Munoz, '99, and her husband, Emilio, welcomed a daughter, Emilia Juliana, on May 2, 2014.

Aaron, '01, and Janelle (Cardamone) Mierzwa, '01, M.S.Ed.'04, welcomed a daughter, Maria Lee, on May 25, 2014.

Thomas Henderson, '02, and his wife, Terra, welcomed a son, Stanley Raymond, on July 19, 2014.

Jared, '02, and Jennifer (Curro) House, '02, welcomed a son, Grant Irving, on May 12, 2014.

Ryanne (Fullerton) Phillips, '02, and her husband, Daniel, welcomed a daughter, Vietta Mae, on Feb. 25, 2014.

Shannon (Woodruff) Taylor, '02, and her husband, Chuck, welcomed a daughter, Molly Marie, on Jan. 9, 2014.

Ryan (Brunner) Lindemuth, '05, and her husband, Richard, welcomed a daughter, Grace Elizabeth, on June 25, 2014.

Mark, '08, and Brittany (Shafer) Zeager, '10, welcomed a daughter, Abigail Catherine, on June 17, 2014.

Zachariah, '09, and Amber (Smith) Gonyea, '09, welcomed a daughter, Madison Ruth, on Aug. 16, 2014.

IN MEMORIAM

To have a Mass celebrated at Alumni Chapel, call NU's Campus Ministry Office at 716.286.8400.

Patrick Kreckel, '40, passed away on Oct. 21, 2014.
Dr. John Fraser, '47, passed away on May 27, 2014.
Our condolences to his son, Daniel Homik, '78.
William Holroyd, '49, M.S.Ed.'61, passed away on July 12, 2014.

Chester Jablonski, '53, passed away on April 25, 2014.
Florence R. Young, '54, passed away on June 29, 2014.
Our condolences to his wife, Joan (Braas) Tyszka, '74, M.S.Ed.'76.
Hon. Philip S. Caponera, Esq., '63, passed away on Nov. 1, 2014.
Our condolences to his daughter, Tracey Caponera, '91.
Francis Reilly, ’64, passed away on May 17, 2014.
Maryanne Barranco-Byrne, ’68, passed away on Oct. 17, 2014. Our condolences to her husband, Kevin Byrne, ’66.
Our condolences to Catherine (Brinda) Hauck, ’72, on the death of her father, Leonard P. Brinda, who passed away on June 12, 2014.
Mark A. Cavanagh, ’73, passed away on May 3, 2014.
The Rev. Donald E. Buck, M.S.Ed.’74, passed away on June 22, 2014.
Sister Leo Marie Curry, ’74, passed away on Sept. 18, 2014.
Keith M. Fox, M.S.Ed.’75, passed away on July 2, 2014.
Timothy J. Cain, ’78, passed away on May 21, 2014.
Dr. Matthew Violante, ’80, passed away on July 20, 2014.
Our condolences to Michael Pendergast, ’82, on the death of his father, and to Andrew Pendergast, ’14, on the death of his grandfather, William Pendergast, who passed away on Aug. 7, 2014.
William S. Shea Jr., ’82, passed away on Oct. 9, 2014.
Dan Stahura, ’89, passed away on May 24, 2014.
Calvin Nigh, M.S.Ed.’92, passed away on Oct. 28, 2014. Our condolences to his wife, Andrea Nigh, M.S.Ed.’92.
Our condolences to Gina (DeFlippo) Marciano, ’94, on the death of her mother, Joan DeFlippo, who passed away on Feb. 12, 2014.
Our condolences to John Sandecki, ’01, M.A.’14, and to Mark Sandecki, ’04, on the death of their mother, Anita Sandecki, who passed away on April 30, 2014.
Deanne L. Stafford, ’14, passed away on Aug. 23, 2014. Our condolences to her mother, Susan Piddock Stafford, ’84.
Paul Gibson Jr., a longtime Niagara University trustee, passed away on July 11, 2014.
Rev. Daniel F. O’Leary, OMI, passed away on Oct. 8, 2014. He served Niagara University in many capacities from 1972 to 2010, including dean of the College of Education and associate vice president for Academic Affairs.
congratulate Niagara University for 20 years of successful partnership activities through NU Learn and Serve! Well done! As well as a celebration, this moment is also a call to action. Our local, national, and global communities need our service more than ever.

St. Vincent de Paul, the patron saint of the order that founded Niagara, challenges all of us to go deeper in the way we serve others and society. He said, “It is not enough to do good, it must be done well.” And he demonstrated what he meant by his actions.

St. Vincent was an organizer and advocate. He leveraged his influence with the wealthy of 16th century France to garner resources to help him address the desperate circumstances of the poor. He worked to improve their living conditions. He worked for change.

So what does doing good well in the 21st century mean? Like Vincent, we must work to move from service — individual acts of charity and philanthropy — to change, change that affects systems and policies and results. A trajectory from service to change would move from individual accomplishment to community action to collective impact to systemic change. So, for example, one could start by getting involved in a food drive; then realizing food insecurity is a community issue, start a food bank. The food bank might then join a cross sector group of organizations making a collective commitment to end food insecurity in the county. The work of this coalition winds up influencing regional food distribution policies that get locally grown produce into every grocery store in the region.

So what does all this have to do with a university? One of my favorite quotes about the power of education to transform comes from Kofi Annan, the 2001 Nobel Peace Prize winner and the seventh Secretary General of the United Nations. He said, “Education is a human right with immense power to transform. On its foundation rest the cornerstones of freedom, democracy, and sustainable human development.”

So if we follow St. Vincent’s call to do good well in light of Annan’s powerful statement about education, then perhaps higher education’s call involves moving from tutoring and mentoring programs to working to guarantee that all children in our local school districts graduate. Maybe it means working to prepare all of our students to succeed in post-secondary education — working for and expecting results.

Doing good well in higher education might also mean guaranteeing that all of our students understand the roles and responsibilities of an educated citizen in our troubled world. The challenges that humanity faces require deeply thoughtful, patient, and educated problem solvers. The resolution of climate change, the widening chasm between rich and poor, food and housing insecurity will all require our institutions to do good well ... to educate citizens, not just workers; to help our students move from service to change; to do good well.

Laurie Worrall, Ed.D.
Executive Director
New York Campus Compact
“A Best Value”  
- U.S. News & World Report

“Military Friendly”  
- Victory Media

“Up-and-Coming”  
- U.S. News & World Report

“Best in the Northeast”  
- The Princeton Review

Niagara University is a comprehensive institution, blending the best of an engaging liberal arts and professional education, grounded in our Catholic and Vincentian tradition.

- 95% of recent Niagara graduates are working or attending graduate school.
- 98% of Niagara’s incoming freshmen and transfers receive financial aid.
- Niagara students graduate in four years or less at a higher rate than any other institution in WNY.
- Niagara offers more than 80 majors, 56 minors, six pre-professional options.
- 29 graduate programs, including a doctoral program in leadership and policy.

Schedule a personal visit by calling 1.800.462.2111 or visit us online at www.niagara.edu.