“However great the work that God may achieve by an individual, he must not indulge in self-satisfaction. He ought rather to be all the more humbled, seeing himself merely as a tool which God has made use of.” — St. Vincent de Paul
Niagara University was recently named to the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for the sixth consecutive year. The honor roll is the highest federal recognition a school can achieve for its commitment to volunteering, service learning and civic engagement.

U.S. News & World Report ranks Niagara among the top 24 institutions in the nation in terms of offering students a wide range of service-learning opportunities. In that study, NU was selected as one of only two schools in New York state (Wagner College in Staten Island was the other) to be distinguished for outstanding programs aimed at enriching the students’ experience.

That being said, we do not plan to rest on our laurels. In fact, less than two weeks after the latest results were released by U.S. News & World Report, we announced the opening of Niagara University’s new Institute for Civic Engagement. An initiative developed through my office, the institute formalizes Niagara’s commitment to the region. Under the direction of Dr. David Taylor, it will strengthen NU’s existing community partnerships and form new town-gown relationships, while serving as the university’s primary point of contact for community members and organizations. (You can read more about Dr. Taylor and the institute on page 15.)

As Niagara alumni and friends, you know that our commitment to serving others, especially those most in need, comes from our mission as a Catholic and Vincentian university. Through the teachings of St. Vincent de Paul, we consider it our responsibility to teach students about the challenges and causes of poverty, and we support activities where our students reach out with compassion to serve people’s basic needs.

It is this vision that drives our faculty, staff and administration to incorporate service into everything that we do as a university. Once it is determined that students have a firm grasp on subject matter, they are encouraged — required, in many cases — to carry this new knowledge with them into their communities, thereby enhancing the living environments of their neighbors.

Examples of this unique approach to learning can be seen across campus (and detailed in this magazine). NU’s relationship with the Heart Center of Niagara at Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center, for instance, has helped student and faculty researchers to more effectively diagnose and treat coronary heart disease, the primary cause of mortality in Niagara County. Construction of the B. Thomas Golisano Center for Integrated Sciences will only amplify these partnerships, making Niagara a key player in discovering new knowledge related to society’s most pressing challenges.

Of course, the life sciences comprise just one of the many areas where our students are making a difference. The strong liberal arts foundation offered at Niagara allows the young men and women entrusted to our care to lead lives of responsibility and integrity regardless of their major. In 2011 alone, NU students contributed more than 50,000 hours of service in more than 40 social service agencies and organizations across the globe.

The important, lasting piece from these service-learning opportunities is the students’ reflection on what they have accomplished, and how it relates to classroom topics and broader world issues, as well as their own faith. It is critical that our students understand why they are performing this service, how it impacts those they are serving and the extent to which their efforts are part of a greater cause to make this world a better place to live — for everyone. And all of this is part of Niagara’s desire to always live out its mission, and to be faithful to its Catholic and Vincentian traditions.

I am always interested in hearing your ideas on how Niagara University can expand its service-learning opportunities. Should you have any thoughts on this topic, or anything else, please feel free to contact me at jll@niagara.edu.

Rev. Joseph L. Levesque, C.M. 
President
Al Oddo, longtime professor of accounting at Niagara, retired in June. In November, he was unanimously approved as a professor emeritus of accounting by the university’s Board of Trustees. “As one of the few people who have known Al since he embarked upon his remarkable career at NU, it brings me great pleasure to see him recognized with this well-deserved honor,” said the Rev. Joseph L. Levesque, C.M., NU’s president. “Not only has he been an excellent educator for nearly four decades, but he has been a dedicated promoter and outstanding example of one who lives the Catholic and Vincentian mission of Niagara University.”

Al earned a bachelor’s degree in accounting from Niagara University in 1968. He became a certified public accountant in 1971 and an assistant professor at NU two years later. By 1977, Al had acquired an MBA and was named an associate professor at Niagara, a capacity he served in until earning full professorship in 2001. Throughout, he published numerous books, journal articles and business reports, and made countless presentations on accounting, business standards and ethics. Al is a member of the New York State Society of CPAs, the Institute of Management Accountants and the American Accounting Association.

Beyond his duties as a professor, Al has acted as dean of the College of Business Administration; chaired the Accounting Department; mentored junior faculty members; advised Beta Alpha Psi, the honorary organization for financial information students and professionals; and consulted with local companies through the university’s Family Business Center. In addition, Al has coordinated NU’s volunteer income tax assistance (VITA) program for low-income and elderly residents and served as director of university mission for many years. He has received Niagara University’s Vincentian Mission Award and the College of Business Administration’s Excellence in Teaching Award.

In observance of his committed efforts on behalf of the university, the Alfonso Oddo Endowed Scholarship in Accountancy was established in his honor upon his retirement.

National Hockey League pioneer Willie O’Ree took part in a ceremonial puck drop at the Feb. 16 Niagara men’s hockey game vs. Canisius as part of a celebration of Black History Month. Willie was the first black player in the NHL and paved the way for future players of diverse ethnic and economic backgrounds.

The Canadian native played 45 games for the Boston Bruins from 1958–61 as part of a 21-year career, spent mostly with the Los Angeles Blades and the San Diego Gulls of the Western Hockey League. He now serves as the NHL’s director of youth development, working with the Hockey Is For Everyone initiative that exposed more than 45,000 boys and girls of diverse backgrounds to unique hockey experiences.

Niagara University’s four-year graduation rate of 61.1 percent topped all public and private colleges or universities in Western New York, according to a 2010 graduation-tracking website produced by The Chronicle of Higher Education (http://collegecompletion.chronicle.com/).

The four-year graduation rate is based on first-time, full-time undergraduates who entered Niagara as a cohort. The calculation of graduation rate does not include students who began as part-time freshmen or those who transferred to the school.

The Chronicle’s “College Completion” report also indicates that Niagara’s four-year graduation rate of 61.1 percent also tops the New York state average of nearly 56 percent for four-year private schools and 37.8 percent for the state’s four-year public schools.

In response to the increasing number of veterans choosing to pursue degrees at Niagara University, alumni from the Class of 1980 have established the Sergeant Major Fred E. Kirtchen Memorial Scholarship Fund, an endowment that will financially assist returning veterans who are attending NU. The fund is named in honor of Kirtchen, a member of the Class of 1980, who was decorated for valor in Vietnam and rose to the highest levels of responsibility in the Army.

Bill Newton, assistant director of campus activities, has been named Campus Event Planner of the Year by Power Performers Inc., a national speakers and entertainment bureau. Chosen for the honor from among more than 4,000 of his peers at college campuses nationwide, Bill received special commendation for the role he played in bringing acclaimed mentalist Robert Channing to Niagara last fall.

Shawn P. Daly, Ph.D., P.E., has been named dean of Niagara University’s College of Business Administration following a nationwide search. He comes to Niagara from the University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio, Texas. He assumed his new position at Niagara on April 10, 2012, replacing Dr. Mark Wilson, who retired from NU last summer to enlist in the AmeriCorps.

For the third straight year, the Club Managers Association of America’s Student Chapter of the Year resides on Monteagle Ridge. Niagara University’s student chapter of the CMAA topped 56 other colleges and universities from throughout the country to receive the prestigious annual award at the association’s 85th World Conference on Club Management and Business Exposition in New Orleans, La., on Feb. 25. The award is a CMAA-sponsored recognition program for outstanding work and successful accomplishments in the association’s student sector.
Three College of Education graduate students had the opportunity to present their research at Kappa Delta Pi International Honor Society in Education's biannual convocation in November. Ryan Coram, president of Niagara’s Alpha Alpha Beta chapter; Chelsea Riedl, vice president; and Michael Montanaro, secretary, traveled to Indianapolis to discuss multiculturalism and constructivist practice as a way to prepare students for a globalized world.

Father Michael J. Tumulty, C.M., who served in a variety of capacities at Niagara University over the course of 42 years, passed away Nov. 26, 2011, at St. Catherine’s Infirmary in Philadelphia, Pa. He was 89. Father Tumulty entered the Congregation of the Mission in 1944 and was ordained in May 1951. That same year, he was assigned to Niagara University as an English instructor, a role he would serve in for the majority of his career at NU. Father Tumulty had been assigned to Niagara on two other occasions, also acting as a prefect of discipline and registrar.

At the start of the fall semester, members of the university’s EAGLE (Experience And Growth in Leadership Education) Leadership student group began collecting can tabs for the Tabs for Kids Fund, an organization that recycles aluminum, using the proceeds to purchase wheelchairs and related equipment for children with physical disabilities. On Dec. 6, 2011, they presented Robert Hampson, the blind young man who essentially founded Tabs for Kids at age 5, with the more than 37,000 tabs that had been collected on Monteagle Ridge. Supplemental cash donations and a $1,000 contribution from the Niagara University Student Government Association (NUSGA) brought the NU community’s total monetary gift to $1,101.
The Healing Project

In 1892, Sister Marie de Mandat-Grancey, a Daughter of Charity, purchased and began restoring Meryemana Evi (Mary’s House) in Ephesus, Turkey, the site where the Virgin Mary is said to have lived her final years.

One hundred twenty years later, a Niagara University professor is hoping to discover why both Muslim and Christian pilgrims visit the sacred site. And her research just might help the beatification initiative for Sister Marie.

“As a student of Islam, what intrigued me about the house was that the pilgrims were predominantly Muslim,” says Dr. Amelia Gallagher, associate professor of religious studies. “Of course, there’s a prominent position of Mary in the Koran in Islam, and these kinds of shrine pilgrimage spots in Turkey tend to be really local, but I just found it interesting. I had since then read evidence here and there of people going there, proclaiming healings, and that is actually what my project is about: studying how Christians and Muslims approach the same place, known for the same sanctity, for the purposes of procuring healing for illness.”

Dr. Gallagher will leave for Turkey this summer and take a fall sabbatical to conduct her research. She has visited the site before and remembers thinking that it was a very beautiful place and being surprised that, despite being a student of religion, she had never heard of it before. But she was visiting friends at the time and paid little attention to the reasons why others were visiting the house. This time, she’s planning to investigate what is leading pilgrims, by the millions, to this small stone house on a mountain in Ephesus.

“There’s a spring at the house,” she notes. “A lot of these Marian sites are places of miraculous springs with water taps, and people drink from the water and bring the water back home to somebody who’s sick. Those are the kind of practices that I’m looking at.”

While Dr. Gallagher’s research is not directly focused on Sister Marie’s connection to the house, she admits the association adds to her interest in the project, because of its ties to the Vincentians and the fact Sister Marie was a nurse.

“Her story is quite compelling,” Dr. Gallagher says. “She just sort of gave up everything and chose to be a nurse in the strong Daughters of Charity tradition of nursing. That’s why I’m so glad I brought it back here.”

Sister Marie was born in 1837 to French aristocrats. In 1858, she joined the Daughters of Charity, and ultimately was stationed at a French hospital in Smyrna (now Izmir), Turkey. While there, she became aware of the visions of a German nun named Anne Catherine Emmerich, which suggested that the Virgin Mary accompanied the Apostle John to Ephesus and lived in a house in the mountains there. She encouraged Father Henri Jung and Father Eugene Pulin, two Lazarist (French Vincentian) priests, to investigate the site as detailed in the book The Life of the Blessed Virgin Mary from the Visions of Anne Catherine Emmerich. The two priests came upon a first-century set of rooms on the mountain. Sister Marie subsequently purchased the mountain and spent the rest of her life and her considerable fortune restoring the site. This devotion earned her the distinction of Foundress of Mary’s House.

A year ago, Sister Marie’s case for canonization was opened by the Diocese of Kansas City. Although Dr. Gallagher is conducting her research independently of the historical commission working on the canonization efforts, the group has contacted her about her research of the site. Should she discover anything that establishes Sister Marie as a prominent figure in Ephesus, or finds someone who proclaims a healing that is attributed to Sister Marie, Dr. Gallagher will pass that information along.

“I’m not going to approach my research that way,” she explains, “but I would be intensely interested if anybody mentions her.”
Arnold Wins the Battle

It was a day he will surely remember for the rest of his life.

And happily, it should be a long and healthy life.

It was late last August when Scott Arnold, terrified but still positive, had recently undergone surgery for testicular cancer and was scheduled for a follow-up with his physician.

“I had to go to the hospital to meet my doctor because he had gotten my lab results back,” remembered Scott, a 22-year-old sophomore power forward on the Niagara University hockey team. “I went and spoke to him, and my parents came with me. I waited for an hour and then finally went in and saw him. He gave me the details on how the surgery had gone well, and that I wouldn’t be needing any further treatment.”

Scott was diagnosed on Aug. 21 and had surgery four days later.

“It was definitely mixed emotions, and I was definitely scared at first, knew it was 2012, and I knew it was treatable,” Scott said. “I was worried that I would need more treatment than just the surgery. I was worried, but a big key was to stay positive.”

It would be normal for someone in that situation to become angry and feel self-pity. Scott was no different.

“At first, I thought, ‘Wow, I have terrible luck, it is awful,’” said Scott, who has played in all 36 Niagara games this season. “When I was able to get treated and get through it quickly, I was really happy that I was coming out on top.”

If you think that was hard on Scott, actually it was nothing. A nightmarish waiting period of two weeks followed, and one can just imagine what churned stormily in Scott’s mind.

“It was the worst part,” Scott admitted. “School was starting, guys were back here for the preseason, and I was frustrated that I couldn’t be here with them. At the same time, I was nervous because I was waiting to hear if I was going to be home for the first half of the year getting second treatments or not.

“I was on pins and needles for two weeks.”

But now, months after everything went down, Scott has a busy life with school, hockey and, of course, family and social activities. And as destiny dictated, he is keenly intent on communicating about the disease.

“It is very important to make sure people are aware of this,” he said. “It is sincere to me, it is close to my heart. I want to make sure kids are aware of it, and kids can take care of it the way I did.”

Scott was recently told by his doctor that he is 100 percent past the disease. He has been blessed with two invaluable gifts — good health and a perspective few of us possess.

“Going through something like that, you appreciate the little things a lot more,” he said. “Things that I might have taken for granted before, I don't now.

“I make the most of my opportunities now.”
A Degree With a Difference

Sol Kang and her family left their native Korea and moved to Canada in search of better services for her Deaf brother. When she enrolled at Niagara, she discovered that the university offered courses in American Sign Language. She is taking the courses to better communicate with her brother and to learn how to help him become part of the area’s Deaf community.

Abdulmajeed Altamimi came to Niagara from Saudi Arabia to study business. He enrolled in ASL 100 simply to meet his degree’s cultural diversity requirement, but has become so fascinated with the Deaf world that he now plans to return home to work with the Saudi government and improve opportunities for the Deaf in that country.

Although she was less than a year from graduating, senior Kelly Pass was still not sure of her career plans. She enrolled in ASL 100 and found her passion. She was so inspired by her experiences in the class that she now wants to become an interpreter.

These are the kinds of stories Nanette Harmon, one of the two instructors teaching American Sign Language at Niagara, readily shares. “I’ve been delighted by the level of enthusiasm the students have for something new and challenging,” she says. “I’ve seen students who have embraced this whole understanding that there’s many ways to be Deaf, because we focus on people, we focus on how to interact with another cultural group that exists.”

For years, an introductory course in ASL was the only option for students, but demand for the course, and for additional training, led to the establishment of an undergraduate minor in American Sign Language and Deaf Studies last fall. Niagara University is the only institution in the area to have one.

“We have a sequence of five classes,” says Nanette, who joined the faculty when the program began expanding about six years ago. “Four of those are language classes and they all include some degree of information about culture. And then we also have a strictly culture class — American Deaf Culture. The whole minor is designed to give the kids the knowledge and the skill base that their competitors with the same degree don’t have. We like to call it ‘a degree with a difference,’ because if you take any major at NU, you can add ASL Studies to it.”

Nanette shares teaching responsibilities with Krista Rahelich, a speech pathologist who began teaching ASL at Niagara in 2003. Krista has been teaching sign for 18 years and has interpreted in the Deaf community. She says that she fell in love with ASL after taking a course and decided to continue to learn the language. “Having a linguistics background, I found ASL both beautiful and fascinating, which led me to pursue my education in ASL,” she says. “I truly believe that our passion for the language rubs off on the students and they in turn learn to love ASL and Deaf Culture.”

For Nanette, who holds a master’s degree in Deaf education and has been teaching ASL in some fashion for more than 30 years, ASL is a support language. An autoimmune disease she developed as a child destroyed her hearing, and in addition to ASL, she uses lip reading and a hearing aid to help her communicate. She says that she considers her work a ministry.

“It’s amazing to me that while this is the thing that I have to deal with, God has given me such an incredible outlet to focus on what I have and what I can do and not what I’ve lost,” she says.

Both instructors emphasize that being Deaf is a linguistic and cultural difference, not a disability. Their students develop a respect for the Deaf community and the skills to teach others general information about deafness as it relates to their chosen career field.

“We’re not training interpreters,” Nanette says. “We’re just trying to create students who will then be the expert in deafness no matter what their field is. So they would be the go-to person, whether it’s in hospitality, education, business, criminal justice … we think it fits everywhere.”

On this Wednesday afternoon in February, about a dozen students have gathered in the Gallagher Center to practice signing during the first American Sign Language Social Hour of the semester. Nanette and Krista host it as a casual way to practice ASL outside of the classroom. Today, the students play games like Family Feud, taking turns fingerspelling their answers to questions about animals and places where people have tattoos. They were silent except for occasional clapping of hands, laughter, and the buzzing sound Nanette made when someone gave an incorrect answer. As the games went on, the group more than doubled and the hour came and went, evidence of the popularity of the course and the enthusiasm of the students taking it.
The national French-language touring company Le Théâtre de la Chandelle Verte performed a special presentation of *La Farce de Maitre Pathelin* (*The Farce of Mr. Pathelin*) at Niagara University for area high school students studying the French language. Henrik Borgstrom, Ph.D., chair of the Department of Modern and Classical Languages and founding member of the touring company (pictured here with Francine Conley-Scott), wrote the new adaptation of the text, and Marilyn Deighton, assistant professor of theatre and fine arts, designed and built the costumes for the performance. The designs were based on figures from medieval puppet shows, with highly exaggerated body shapes and features. This collaborative project was funded by a $5,000 summer research grant awarded by the Niagara University Research Council. *La Farce de Maitre Pathelin*, a 15th century farce originally performed by itinerant companies in the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance, will be performed by Le Théâtre de la Chandelle Verte for French language students at universities all across the United States this spring, with a stop at Niagara’s Leary Theatre in May.
Sean Farber, ’13, remembers the exact moment when he had what he calls “an epiphany” that changed his life. It was in June after his freshman year at Niagara. He was driving home after attending a national Vincentian Young Adult Convocation hosted by DePaul University, an event that included service, workshops and liturgical celebration to commemorate the 350th anniversary of the deaths of St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac. As he reflected upon his experience, he realized that he wanted service to be a focal point of his career.

“I was so inspired by the people I met,” he says. “I realized that they are the type of people I wanted to be surrounded by — service-minded, caring individuals — and I wanted to serve others, too, because that’s where I feel the most comfortable.” Although he had done some community service activities in high school, he says, “I never thought of making a career out of it until then.”

When he returned to Niagara, Sean became more active in service opportunities, both on and off campus. Two such opportunities were a trip to Emmitsburg, Md., with the university’s BASIC (Brothers and Sisters in Christ) program, and a volunteer position with AmeriCorps over the summer as a member of a YMCA camp’s weekend support staff.

“AmeriCorps reaffirmed my beliefs that I want to have a rewarding job when I graduate from NU,” he says. “I worked hard, but I got to see the campers benefit from my hard work first hand.”

Last semester, Sean, a member of the student EAGLE (Experience And Growth in Leadership Education) program, and fellow EAGLE leader Gabi Sorrentino, ’13, spearheaded a can tab drive to benefit the Tabs for Kids Fund, an organization that recycles aluminum and uses the proceeds to purchase wheelchairs and related equipment for children with physical disabilities. In addition to setting up collection bins in the residence halls, Sean constructed a necklace of two water bottles and two jars, which essentially served as a traveling donation center.

“Wearing something that big and obnoxious around your neck is bound to spark a conversation,” Sean says. “A lot of people would ask me what I was doing, so the word of the fundraiser spread quickly.”

Sean also undertook an endeavor to raise awareness of the situation in Somalia and to support Dr. Abdiweli Ali, the Niagara University professor who was appointed prime minister of that country last year. For two weeks, he chose to follow a 1,000-calorie per day diet to gain a deeper understanding of hunger, and he blogged about his experience to inspire others to take action in support of the Somali people. The experiment served to capture the attention of many people as well as to instill in Sean a greater appreciation of the availability of food and water in America.

With his junior year coming to an end, Sean is working to complete his double major in communication studies and computer and information systems and continuing to participate in a wide range of service opportunities. He’s also finishing a study-abroad experience in England. He hopes to put his skills to use at a small, nonprofit organization that he’s “passionate about” after he graduates. “Right now,” he says, “I’m leaning toward something internationally related, but we’ll see.”
When members of the New York state judiciary question whether or not their conduct is in accordance with the standards and policies established by the Chief Administrator of the Courts, they turn to the Advisory Committee on Judicial Ethics, a committee of their peers. Three of the members of this influential group are Niagara University alumni.

State Supreme Court Judge Jerome C. Gorski, ’58, and Town of Lewiston Justice and longtime professor in the College of Education Thomas J. Sheeran, M.S.Ed.’77, are among the 26 members of the ACJE. Valley Stream Village Justice Robert G. Bogle, ’79, is a faculty advisor. Collectively, they have served for more than a quarter of a century, debating and interpreting the rules that regulate judicial conduct for the state’s more than 3,000 full- and part-time judges and justices and other quasi-judicial officials, including judicial hearing officers, support magistrates, and court attorney-referees.

The ACJE was formed in 1987 to help New York state’s judges and justices adhere to the high standards set forth in the Rules Governing Judicial Conduct. In 1988, the New York State Legislature codified the ACJE’s creation. Since then, the committee has issued approximately 140 to 220 formal opinions annually in response to questions from judges, justices and quasi-judicial officials about the propriety of their own conduct.

Inquiries can range from possible ethical concerns regarding membership in various legal and community organizations to election campaign conduct and contributions. More recently, inquiries have been made concerning issues of the day; for example, may a judge hear a case that involves a Facebook “friend”? While the inquiries are confidential, the decisions are public and offer valuable guidance to the members of the state judiciary, particularly in circumstances that are not specifically governed by a particular rule.

“To my knowledge,” notes Gorski, “no judge in the state has been disciplined by the Judicial Conduct Commission after they have been advised by our committee that the course of conduct about which the judge has inquired comports with the rules and is otherwise ethical.”

Because committee members represent a wide variety of constituencies, from courts in the Bronx and Manhattan to those from the rural parts of the Adirondacks and the Finger Lakes, they often engage in considerable debate and discussion before coming to a decision. Interestingly, the three NU alumni find that, more often than not, their opinions are aligned, something Sheeran attributes to their shared Niagara experience.

“Once made, these decisions are published as formal opinions. Judges who take actions in accordance with these opinions are “presumed proper” for purposes of any subsequent investigation by the New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct.

“It is clear that we serve a very serious and vital function for the judges throughout the state of New York and it is well into the thousands in terms of individuals we give guidance to,” says Bogle. “The major concerns that we face would be unaddressed if our committee did not exist, and judges who want to do the right thing would be left to face either impeachment or removal.”

“Once made, these decisions are published as formal opinions. Judges who take actions in accordance with these opinions are “presumed proper” for purposes of any subsequent investigation by the New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct.

“It is clear that we serve a very serious and vital function for the judges throughout the state of New York and it is well into the thousands in terms of individuals we give guidance to,” says Bogle. “The major concerns that we face would be unaddressed if our committee did not exist, and judges who want to do the right thing would be left to face either impeachment or removal.”

“Once made, these decisions are published as formal opinions. Judges who take actions in accordance with these opinions are “presumed proper” for purposes of any subsequent investigation by the New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct.

“It is clear that we serve a very serious and vital function for the judges throughout the state of New York and it is well into the thousands in terms of individuals we give guidance to,” says Bogle. “The major concerns that we face would be unaddressed if our committee did not exist, and judges who want to do the right thing would be left to face either impeachment or removal.”
Being Faithful: Christian Commitment in Modern Society
Judith Merkle, SNDdeN, Ph.D.
Professor of Religious Studies
This book explores how the Christian life is lived in a pluralistic situation where different contexts of belonging give rise to different moral challenges. We seek to gather out of the fragments of modern life the sustenance of a network of belonging, belief and practice which comprise a faithful life and serve as the framework for our moral commitments.

City of Shadows
Shannon Hodges
Associate Professor of Counseling
When Bob Gifford takes up a one-year appointment as counselor at Biltmore College, he has no idea his life will soon be in danger. Someone, or some organization, believes Bob is on the brink of uncovering a conspiracy. And just when a new appointment in back-of-beyond Texas appears to offer an escape route, Bob comes closer than ever to death.

Conservative Realizations of Herglotz-Nevanlinna Functions
Eduard Tsekanovskii, Ph.D.
Professor of Mathematics
With Yuri Arlinskii and Sergey Belyi
This book is devoted to conservative realizations of various classes of Stieltjes, inverse Stieltjes, and general Herglotz-Nevanlinna functions as impedance functions of linear systems. The main feature is a new approach to the realization theory profoundly involving developed extension theory in triplets of rigged Hilbert spaces and unbounded operators as state-space operators of linear systems.

The Cost of Free Speech: Pornography, Hate Speech and Their Challenge to Liberalism
Abigail Levin, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Philosophy
This book argues that how courts resolve freedom of expression cases involving pornography or hate speech reveals more about the power of state speech to potentially oppress women and minorities than it does about the power of pornography and hate speech themselves.

The Madame
Shannon Risk, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of History
History professor Tilda Maples has been on the trail of the famous 19th-century lecture circuit healer and seer, Madame Graveri, for years. The trail, however, seems to grow cold by the eve of the stock market crash. Through a series of fateful events, Tilda is thrown into Graveri’s world of intrigue.

The Problem of Negligent Omissions: Medieval Action Theories to the Rescue
Michael Barnwell, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Philosophy
Through insightful interpretations of the action theories propounded by Aristotle, Anselm, Aquinas, Scotus, and Suárez, this book demonstrates the philosophical and theological importance of negligent omissions and constructs a model by which the problem of their voluntariness can be solved.

Religion and Language in Post-Soviet Russia
Brian Bennett, Ph.D.
Chair and Associate Professor of Religious Studies
This is the first book devoted to Church Slavonic in the contemporary period. Ranging over such diverse areas as liturgy, pedagogy, typography, mythology, and conspiracy theory, the book illuminates the complex interrelationship between language and faith in post-communist society, and shows how Slavonic has performed important symbolic work during a momentous chapter in Russian history.

If you’ve recently written a book, please let us know. Contact Lisa McMahan at lmcmanon@niagara.edu.
A NU Look at Service Learning

On paper, the mission of Niagara University’s Institute for Civic Engagement is to reinforce the university’s commitment to the region by strengthening existing community partnerships and forming new town-gown relationships. But in practice, the institute’s director, Dr. David Taylor, is envisioning a much greater purpose for the institute. He wants it to be a catalyst to transform higher education, and to perhaps even change the world.

“One of the long-term visions for the institute is to develop programming and opportunities that are distinctly Niagara,” Dr. Taylor says. “In a Vincentian community and university, we can help nurture an idea someone has to change the world and bring it to fruition. That’s what we should be doing, particularly things designed to help people in need.” He adds that the creation of a social entrepreneurship incubator within the institute might be one way to achieve this.

While this vision has a decidedly global perspective, the steps needed to bring it about start on the Niagara campus. Dr. Taylor notes student learning must be at the heart of everything the university is doing, and that the institute’s partnerships are being developed with the intention of making experienced-based learning opportunities increasingly available to students. While Niagara has long offered a service-learning component in the classroom, Dr. Taylor says this initiative looks at service learning in a different way.

“I understand the value of service and its potential to greatly impact students, but we have to remember that students are at a university,” he says. “There needs to be a stronger connection between what the students do in terms of service and the specific learning outcomes associated with course content.”

This doesn’t mean that he advocates against the traditional service-learning Niagara’s students have been doing for decades. In fact, the institute will assist NU’s Learn and Serve Niagara program in identifying opportunities for creating these kinds of experiences. But Dr. Taylor is hoping that the partnerships he forges also lead to hands-on work that students can detail on a résumé as applicable experience for a job. He references a Niagara computer and information sciences course during which students earn a nationally recognized certificate in forensic computing and says he’d like to help create more of these kinds of learning opportunities.

“Students, on average, take 30-40 classes here at Niagara,” he says. “Imagine if in every one of those classes they did something that was worthy of being put on a résumé. Imagine what that résumé would look like after 40 classes.”

With his knowledge of the university’s capabilities and his numerous contacts in the community, Dr. Taylor says he can serve as a matchmaker between university professors who want to add résumé-building practical experiences to their course curriculum and the community organizations that are looking for assistance. The institute can also be a resource for professors who want to design and conduct research-based projects in the community.

Dr. Taylor notes that it is becoming increasingly important for students to have an international experience, and that the institute can help create those opportunities as well, whether they are through partnerships with international agencies in the local community or through connections with organizations that have a worldwide presence, like the Vincentians.

The institute, which officially opened in September, is the formalization of an initiative launched by the Rev. Joseph L. Levesque, C.M., when he was named president of the university more than 10 years ago. At that time, the Committee to Assist in the Revitalization of Niagara Falls was formed to help build capacity in that city. Numerous community relationships have been built since then, and the institute was established to ensure the continuation of this important work. It will also serve as the home for two of Niagara University’s flagship community-minded programs, Border Community SERVICE and ReNU Niagara.

Dr. Taylor was the obvious choice for director, due to his experiences prior to coming to Niagara (he lived homeless as part of his dissertation research) and his recent immersion into Vincentian history, spirituality and service as part of the initial cohort of the Vincentian Mission Institute, a program designed to address the distinctive nature of Catholic and Vincentian higher education by developing successive generations of lay leaders to support the unique identities of these universities.

The VMI experience culminated in a trip to France beginning at the birth place of St. Vincent de Paul and tracing his life throughout the south of France. “It became clear to me that Vincent was an incredible organizer, someone who could inspire his contemporaries to serve the poor and oppressed,” Dr. Taylor says. “But he was also able to refocus his efforts as the needs of the community changed. As Father Robert Maloney, C.M., once wrote about Vincent, ‘He had the courage and skill to walk where none had walked before.’”

Inspired by St. Vincent, Dr. Taylor is ready to help Niagara refocus its efforts to prepare for the dramatic transformation in higher education he believes will happen soon. “It will be one unlike anything that those currently working in the field have experienced,” he says. “Thus, it is important for colleges and universities to revisit their mission and purpose and to develop both a short- and long-term strategy to guarantee the highest quality education possible for their students.” He’s confident that the institute can be a valuable asset in this regard.

To that end, Dr. Taylor’s goals for the immediate future are to build a full slate of partnerships between the community and the university: big and small; formal and informal; with and without academic components. In five years, he’s hoping that this effort leads to a “tremendous increase in very targeted, high-impact, high-quality experiential learning opportunities for students.” And long term?

“The choice of the words ‘civic engagement’ in the name of the institute was intentional,” he says. “So any way that we can better engage everyone in our university community in the civic life of not only our local and regional community, but also at the national level, would be a broad but long-term goal.”

Given the progress that’s been made so far and the passion Dr. Taylor has for the work, Niagara University’s Institute for Civic Engagement just might change the world after all.
The Castellani family, founders and longtime patrons of the Castellani Art Museum on the Niagara University campus, made a $1 million gift in March for continuing support of the museum.

“The art museum is a very special place for our family,” said Robert Castellani, a 1964 Niagara University graduate and current member of NU’s Board of Trustees. “We want to continue the legacy that our parents left and support the museum as a premier resource for students, the university and the community.”

“We continue to be grateful to the members of the Castellani family for their generous support of Niagara University and the museum,” said the Rev. Joseph L. Levesque, C.M., president of Niagara University. “Their legacy on our campus is very clear and this gift will allow the museum to thrive and continue to be a regional asset for Western New York.”

Mr. and Mrs. Armand J. Castellani began collecting art in the 1960s about the same time that Armand Castellani’s grocery business grew into a corporation. Mr. Castellani started in the grocery business at age 16 as manager of his father’s grocery store in Niagara Falls, N.Y. After serving in the military, he returned to the grocery business in Niagara Falls, where he opened the Great Bear Market in 1951. In partnership with Thomas A. Buscaglia, he founded Niagara Frontier Services, the forerunner to Tops Markets, which now operates the largest chain of supermarkets in Western New York.

In 1978, Mr. Castellani helped support the construction of the Buscaglia-Castellani Art Gallery on a satellite campus of Niagara University as a remembrance to Thomas Buscaglia, who died in 1967, and as a gift to Niagara University and the Western New York community. At that time, the Castellani’s collection consisted of about 300 artworks from the 19th and 20th centuries.

By 1989, their collection had grown to over 3,000 works, and the new Castellani Art Museum was built on Niagara University’s main campus in 1990, largely through the support and vision of Armand Castellani and his wife, Eleanor.

It was Armand and Eleanor Castellani’s dream that the museum they founded would serve as “the education museum” for both Niagara University students and the Western New York community. “The ongoing support of the Castellani family through this generous gift will allow us to enhance educational programming for learners of all ages,” said Kate Koperski, director of the museum. “In all of our programming, we strive to make learning about art both an eye-opening educational experience and a pleasure.”

The museum currently offers a wide variety of educational opportunities. During the annual Kids ’n Arts summer camp, children are introduced to both the visual arts and theater, and work with a different teaching artist each week. The museum’s popular art history lecture series, Meet Me at the CAM, pairs works from the permanent collection with award-winning DVD series such as the BBC’s The Private Life of a Masterpiece. During free monthly docent tours, visitors get to know the museum in greater depth and see the latest exhibitions on view.

“This gift will help us to revitalize our school tour program,” said Kate. During the past year, the museum has developed a series of lesson plans that highlight works from the permanent collection and adhere to New York State Learning Standards and Curriculum, as well as the new Common Core Learning Standards for English, history, science, math and other subject areas. “Using the visual arts to teach across the curriculum has been shown to strengthen critical thinking and communication skills, helping to ensure that students are college and career ready,” noted Kate. “The Castellani family gift will help us to market these new curriculum-based school tours to educators and to offer tours at no cost.”
William Gacioch, ‘61, and his family gave Niagara University a $2 million gift in February for the renovation of Meade Hall, which will be renamed the Gacioch Family Alumni and Admissions Center. “Bill Gacioch’s continuing commitment to Niagara University is very inspiring,” said the Rev. Joseph L. Levesque, C.M., president of Niagara University. “He has served the university in a number of ways, including his membership on the Board of Trustees. His support of the Meade Hall project is very personal for him, and the development of the Gacioch Family Center will ensure his legacy on the Niagara campus.”

As a freshman in 1957, Bill 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. Bill 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 Bill. “Father Burke was very instrumental to my education, and my experience working in Meade Hall had a direct impact on who I am today.”

Bill is extremely appreciative of this work-study assistance, and also of the education he received while attending Niagara. “Niagara was critical in helping me realize what I could do and how to do it, and guided me in the right direction,” said Bill. “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.”

The donation from the Gacioch family is a part of Niagara University’s $80 million capital campaign, “The Promise of Niagara ... The next 150 years,” which is nearing completion. In 1999, the Gaciochs donated $1 million to the renovation of St. Vincent’s Hall on the Niagara campus.

Niagara University presented Bill Gacioch with an honorary degree in 2007 and the university’s prestigious Dunleavy Award in 2011. Bill and his wife, Nancy, were presented with the Father John J. Lynch Award in 2000, and the Gacioch family was honored with the St. Vincent de Paul Award at the Niagara University President’s Dinner in 2010.

Bill is currently the chairman and chief executive officer of National Property Management Associates Inc. Bill’s son, Michael, serves as president while his son, David, is senior vice president of the IT department. Bill’s daughter, Katherine Hannon, is senior vice president of human relations.

Gacioch Family Alumni and Admissions Center

For more than 80 years, Meade Hall served as the residence of the Vincentian priests and brothers who staffed Niagara University. It was originally called Our Lady of Angels Faculty House because it housed the faculty of the College and Seminary of Our Lady of Angels. The three-story building was rededicated in 1967 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 Gacioch Family Alumni and Admissions Center will be a mission critical facility for Niagara University. Through the development of the Gacioch Center, prospective students and their families will have the opportunity to learn the strengths of the academic programs and feel the heritage of Niagara alive in the building.

The renovation schedule for the Gacioch Center will be announced at a future date.
As defined by the National Academies, interdisciplinary research is “a mode of research by teams or individuals that integrates information, data, techniques, tools, perspectives, concepts, and/or theories from two or more disciplines or bodies of specialized knowledge to advance fundamental understanding or to solve problems whose solutions are beyond the scope of a single discipline or area of research practice.”

As performed on the Niagara University campus, interdisciplinary research is forming new connections, solving societal problems, and preparing students for careers in new fields.

“The liberal arts foundation itself is an interdisciplinary one, where students learn from a variety of fields to gain knowledge that can be applied to their majors,” notes Dr. Tim Downs, Niagara’s vice president for academic affairs. “As a liberal arts based institution, it’s imperative for us to encourage what I would call integrative thinking. And what this means is that from the student-learning perspective, we value students applying knowledge and skills across all domains of learning.”

Niagara’s liberal arts foundation is established through its general education curriculum, which emphasizes active, integrative learning. Through courses in writing, religious studies, history, philosophy, mathematics, foreign language, natural science, social science, and the humanities, students gain the intellectual and ethical background to search for, create, and assess solutions to real-life problems in the local and global community.

This focus on interdisciplinary education was first introduced at Niagara in 1980, when the University Studies program was launched as a way to demonstrate how diverse academic disciplines contribute to the discussion and solution of common intellectual issues and practical problems.

“In the late 1970s, many of the leading educational foundations, particularly the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, had been urging universities to undertake such programs, reminding faculty that most important issues in life are rarely one dimensional,” notes university professor Dr. John Stranges, who served as academic vice president at that time. “The University Studies program was the first true attempt to introduce the idea of interdisciplinary education into the Niagara University curriculum. We chose the general education component as the entry point to ensure that all students, regardless of choice of major, would undergo the experience.”

Students were required to take one UST course in their senior year. Two instructors from two different departments taught the courses, which were offered until 2003.

Although UST courses are no longer part of Niagara’s curriculum, numerous projects that involve interdisciplinary work are still being conducted across Monteagle Ridge.

For example, under the auspices of the university’s Academic Center for Integrated Sciences and in cooperation with the Heart Center of Niagara, faculty and students from the college’s biology and chemistry departments have been working together for several years to research the use of biomarkers and biological and molecular mechanisms for the diagnosis and treatment of coronary heart disease. Senior scientist Dr. Deborah Leonard is the research coordinator for the project, which is a collaboration among Dr. Robert Greene, chair of the biology department; Dr. Mary McCourt, chair of the chemistry department; Dr. Chris Stoj, assistant professor of biochemistry; Dr. Michael Merhige, a cardiologist at the Heart Center of Niagara at Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center; and Dr. Brent Williams of the Geisinger Health System, an integrated health services organization.
“This research has had a positive impact on our students,” Dr. Leonard says. “Students interested in the clinical aspects of the project have had an opportunity to work at the Heart Center collecting patient data, and others have been involved in the analysis of biological samples here at Niagara. Some students have also had the opportunity to have their research presented at national and international conferences.”

In August of 2011, professors from the psychology department joined their colleagues to look at the way psychological factors, such as depression, anxiety and optimism, interact with the biological factors of CAD.

“We felt it would be a good opportunity for collaboration as there were no psychological or behavioral data on the patients in the study,” says Dr. Peter Butera, chair of the psychology department, who has been working with psychology professor Dr. Timothy Osberg on the project. “We saw this as a unique opportunity to incorporate the study of psychological factors in the database on biological markers of CAD severity.”

Dr. Greene is also conducting research with Dr. McCourt and Dr. Ron Priever, associate professor of chemistry, on two projects studying the effects of therapeutic agents on cancer cells in culture. These projects have resulted in the publication of two papers with students as co-authors. Dr. Greene notes that in addition to the dynamic created as a result of the interaction between the two disciplines, another benefit of this partnership is “the pleasure of exchanging ideas and experiencing new vistas with colleagues who provide different ways to view a common challenge.”

Another biology professor, Dr. William Edwards, is working with hydrologists, chemists, engineers and geologists from the University at Buffalo, as well as students from his classes and graduate students from UB, on stream restoration research to predict what physical conditions will result in restored ecosystem function in two local streams, something single-disciplinary studies have been unable to do.

“The most interesting experience is to see the undergrads working their way through our research program with the UB graduate students,” he says. “They are truly interdisciplinary researchers — they’ve never experienced anything else. So when we ask them for hypotheses to address a new problem or application of our research, they immediately go for the multidisciplinary approach — it doesn’t even occur to them that this is unusual.”

In the English department, Dr. Joseph Little has been collaborating with Dr. Maritza Branker, an assistant professor of mathematics, to examine the role of analogy in the development of Irish mathematician William Rowan Hamilton’s theory of conjugate pairs. Their work, which will be published in Technical Communication Quarterly, is the first of its kind to extend the traditional scholarly discussion of technical analogy, which usually focuses on scientific discourse, to that of research-level mathematics, notes Dr. Little. It’s also the first research manuscript co-authored by a mathematics professor and an English professor to be published in either field.

“Our driving question was: To what degree did Hamilton think in terms of analogies to develop his theory of conjugate pairs? Neither Maritza nor I could have answered that question alone. We simply did not have the expertise for it. But together we could. In that way, this project required a truly interdisciplinary effort, a synthesis of our different disciplinary approaches into a single, commensurate conceptual scheme,” Dr. Little says.

For the past two years, social work professor Dr. Kevin Blair has collaborated with colleagues in the math, sociology and criminal justice departments to develop a survey that measures Niagara students’ knowledge of and attitudes toward poverty, as well as Niagara’s effectiveness in fulfilling its mission by educating students about the poor. The collaboration enabled the professors to take advantage of their particular skills. “Todd (Schoepflin) brings the broadest base of thinking via sociology; Marlo (Brown) knows less about poverty but knows the math; Dave (Taylor) looks at poverty and its relationship to crime and criminology; and I bring the more practical problem solving; for example, how do we get people food, clothing, shelter and jobs,” Dr. Blair explains.

While much of the interdisciplinary work is being done between departments, there are interesting collaborations taking place between colleges as well. John Overbeck, a visiting professor of marketing in the College of Business, is tapping into the expertise of the Theatre Department in the College of Arts and Sciences to help students in his sales communication course overcome their inhibitions about public speaking and improve their presentation techniques. As part of the course, students attend a theatre workshop, during which they participate in activities that enhance their verbal communication skills.

“The idea to do this stems from my belief that my theatre experience as a student helped my business career,” says John, who is a member of Niagara’s Class of 1975. He added that CEOs often list acting among the top five academic subjects one should take for success in business.

Another College of Business professor is working with a colleague in the College of Education to employ secondary teaching techniques into a freshman-level managerial accounting course. The experiment between assistant professor of accounting Christopher Aquino and Dr. Paul Vermette, a professor of education, began in the spring of 2011, Chris’ second year of teaching at Niagara, and has led to an increase in student test scores and improved ratings by students regarding how the in-class activities contributed to their learning.

“That’s the one that made me a believer,” Chris says. “All I did between the two years was put some tools in place.”

The two published a paper that they presented in March at a regional meeting of the American Accounting Association. The paper received Best Manuscript in the Teaching, Learning and Curriculum section.

“I’m unabashedly proud of getting the outstanding paper at an accounting conference,” Dr. Vermette says. “That says to me that there’s a lot of people out there interested in collaborations like ours.”

Niagara also encourages students to perform interdisciplinary work through a variety of academic options. One such option is the master’s program in interdisciplinary studies, during which students take graduate courses from the colleges of Business Administration, Education, and Arts and Sciences and conduct research in these varied disciplines to complete their capstone projects and papers. Students find that the interdisciplinary nature of their work gives them a diverse skill set and a new appreciation for the connections between fields.

Since its beginnings in the 1980s, interdisciplinary education has become a hallmark of a Niagara education. And the opportunities for continued work in this vein will only be enhanced with the construction of the university’s new science building, positioning Niagara to be a key player in helping discover the new knowledge needed to provide solutions to society’s increasingly complex problems.
Dear fellow alumni,

The excitement on campus continues into the spring of 2012 as the construction of the B. Thomas Golisano Center for Integrated Sciences progresses. Please check the Eagle’s Nest (www.niagaraalumni.com) for further updates, completion and opening dates.

More exciting news involves the nursing program. During our last NUAA board meeting, Barb Malinowski, ’59, noted that the four-year bachelor of science in nursing program was reinstated and will begin this fall. The number of applicants has greatly exceeded the capacity of the first-year class. Congratulations to everyone who was involved in bringing the nursing program back to Niagara University.

The NUAA Board of Directors recently approved the establishment of the Niagara University Alumni Legacy Scholarship. The scholarship will provide financial assistance to children of Niagara University alumni. The board discussed ways to fund the scholarship and is currently researching ideas. Please consider making a donation to the Alumni Legacy Scholarship when contributing to Niagara University.

The Promise of Niagara campaign is closing in on its $80 million goal. Please help NU reach this goal by making your gift to the campaign.

We continue to identify local community-service projects for our alumni. Please consider making time to volunteer and keep the Alumni Office abreast of events that take place in your region.

Remember that you can stay in contact with Niagara through our online community, the Eagle’s Nest. Please take time to visit www.niagaraalumni.com to find the latest information regarding alumni events near you, including these upcoming ones:

• Saratoga Day at the Races, Saturday, July 28
• Alumni Weekend, Oct. 5-7

Niagara University’s graduation weekend is May 12-13. Commencement ceremonies will be held on campus this year.

Thank you for your support of the Niagara University Alumni Association. We continue to grow and look forward to your feedback and involvement.

Sincerely,

Martin F. Byrne Sr., ’78
President, Niagara University Alumni Association

---

Alumni Events

We have a lot in store for our alumni in the upcoming months. Don’t forget to add these dates to your calendar and check out the Eagle’s Nest at www.niagaraalumni.com for more information.*

Don’t receive our emails about events?
Send your updated information to alumni@niagara.edu!

May
24  SOLA Reunion on the NU campus

June
8  Atlanta — Presidential reception — Dinner
   Melinda Smith, ’78
   404.934.6135 or 770.935.4511 • msfundraiser@bellsouth.net
11  Buffalo/Niagara — Kist Golf Classic, Niagara Falls
    Country Club
    Deb Conde, Niagara University Alumni Relations
    716.286.8787 • dconde@niagara.edu
16  Central Maryland — Beer Tasting Event, Wharf Rat at Fells Point
    Maureen Becker, ’90
    410.744.2400 • maureen@ipmba.org
25  Buffalo/Niagara — The Little Three Golf Tournament,
    Seneca Hickory Stick Golf Course
    Deb Conde, Niagara University Alumni Relations
    716.286.8787 • dconde@niagara.edu

July
28  Albany — A Day at the Races, Saratoga Race Track
    Robert Sheehan, ’85
    518.441.2738 • rjsheehan2002@yahoo.com
    Patrick Noonan, ’03
    518.482.5677 • p_d_noonan@hotmail.com
    Deb Conde, Niagara University Alumni Relations
    716.286.8787 • dconde@niagara.edu

How do I register for an event?
1. Online at the Eagle’s Nest: www.niagaraalumni.com
2. By phone: 716.286.8787
3. By mail: Alumni Relations Office
   P.O. Box 2008
   Niagara University, N.Y. 14109-2008

Save the Date: Oct. 5-7
AlumNi Weekend 2012
regenerate. rediscover. relive.

This year, we celebrate classes with years ending in 2s and 7s but, as always, we welcome back all alumni to join in the party and the fun! Mark your calendar now and look for a formal invitation in a couple of months!

If you are interested in assisting with the planning of your class reunion, please contact Michele Smith at micheles@niagara.edu or 716.286.8775; or Art Cardella at cardella@niagara.edu or 716.286.8791.

Check us out online at:
EAGLE’S NEST
Niagara University Alumni Community

*Event calendar is subject to change. The listing includes only the confirmed events as of this printing. Check the Eagle’s Nest for the full listing and details.
Who Was There


Who Was There


Who Was There


Sandra Festa Ryan, ’83: A Pioneer in the Changing Landscape of Healthcare

By Lisa McMahon

Sandra Festa Ryan, ’83, is apologetic. She’s had to interrupt our conversation a few times almost before it began to take care of business in her office at the Conshohocken, Pa., headquarters of Take Care Health Systems, Walgreens. “It’s such a crazy day here,” she laughs.

It’s understandable that Sandra would be busy. One of six founding officers of Take Care Health, the largest and most comprehensive manager of worksite health and wellness centers and in-store convenient care clinics in the country, she is responsible for managing and overseeing all clinic-related operations and the more than 1,300 nurse practitioners in the organization’s 360 clinics located in select Walgreens stores nationwide.

It’s a job she is passionate about, because it enables her to advocate for nurse practitioners and their increasingly growing role in the healthcare industry. In fact, it was the opportunity to be a voice for nurse practitioners that first interested her in becoming involved with Take Care Health Systems.

“I had heard about a company that was forming, that was looking to utilize nurse practitioners while trying to improve access, cost and quality of care for patients,” she explains. When she discovered that Take Care Health would give her a platform “to increase the visibility of nurse practitioners so that people really understand how they were educated, trained, and what an impact they have been making in healthcare delivery,” she accepted the position of chief nurse practitioner officer for the company and became the first such officer in the convenient care industry.

For the past six years, she has helped to build a transformational national system of nurse practitioner-centric healthcare and become a leading spokesperson on behalf of a collaborative healthcare team for patients. Her contributions to the convenient care industry are significant: she spearheaded the creation of a companywide quality assurance program; contributed to the establishment of a proprietary electronic medical record system that is lauded as exemplary in the industry; was instrumental in the development and implementation of the convenient care industry’s Quality and Safety Standards; and launched a third-party certification process. She also orchestrated the first Retail Clinician Education Congress to address the educational needs of industry providers. Her work has earned her numerous awards and recognitions; most recently, she was elected as the first nurse practitioner to the Fellowship of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, the nation’s oldest medical society; and selected as a Robert Wood Johnson Executive Nurse Fellow.
Sandra’s talent and tenacity opened doors that enabled her to continue developing her skills as a nurse. She was chosen for the Air Force’s competitive six-month internship program shortly after enlisting. Later in her career, she was selected for its Institute of Technology, which enabled her to attend Arizona State University to earn her master’s degree in maternal child nursing and certification as a pediatric nurse practitioner.

In 1999, Sandra, who was now married with three children and one on the way, decided to take advantage of the Air Force’s early retirement option. She moved to New Jersey and took a couple of years off before accepting a part-time position with a pediatric office close to her home. Here, she became acutely aware of the high cost of healthcare for families and the difficulties they faced in juggling work and time off for doctor visits, knowledge that encouraged her to find a way to provide improved access, affordability and quality of care for patients.

When the Take Care Health opportunity came her way, she accepted it with the desire to change the way healthcare is delivered. “Everybody should have access to healthcare,” she says. “We shouldn’t have children who are not immunized; we should be focused on promoting health, preventing disease versus treating disease.”

Take Care Health clinics are the realization of these goals. Today, in clinics at select Walgreens stores across the country, nurse practitioners see patients on a walk-in basis, seven days a week, providing a variety of healthcare services including treatment for acute illnesses, minor injuries, vaccinations, and high blood pressure screening and diagnosis. The clinics accept most insurance plans, but they are also an attractive option for the uninsured and those without a primary care provider, and have earned top scores in Gallup polls measuring customer engagement.

“It gives me the chills, knowing that you really can make a significant difference in people’s lives and hopefully save them from any kind of suffering and pain if you can get them the right care at the right time,” Sandra says.

Throughout her career, Sandra has remained true to the Catholic values she was raised with and strengthened during her time at Niagara. “Once you’re out of college,” she notes, “what you do with your life reflects on your core values. Niagara built on the foundation that I had growing up, which is the core of who you are in your day-to-day interactions and how you look at the world and what difference you want to make in the world. By being someone who has strong core values and is willing to stand by them in order to do the best thing possible by patients or by the colleagues that I lead, I’ve been able to make a positive impact.”
When their eldest daughter, Julia, was ready for kindergarten, Mike, ’76, and Suzanne (Kowalczyk) Hogan, ’76, wanted to enroll her in a Catholic school because of the strong foundation it would provide and their desire that the values she was learning at home would be reinforced at school. However, there were few Catholic schools in their neighborhood in North Atlanta. So they, along with 17 other local families, established Pinecrest Academy, which has been named one of the top 50 Catholic high schools in the United States by the Acton Institute.

“Through providence, I met another mom at church who had gathered a group of like-minded families together, intent on starting a private Catholic school,” Suzanne explains. “Some moms were teachers, others office support, some fundraisers, but everyone was involved, hands on, in some way or another.”

Suzanne says that the first year was exciting and fun, despite the fact launching the school presented several challenges. They had to seek and secure the blessing of the bishop of Atlanta, locate a school building, obtain financing, and hire and retain top-notch teachers. But the founding members were a strong, committed group and remained focused on their vision. “To work together on a large and important project such as a school is very motivating,” Suzanne says. “What really struck me about this group of parents was how they worked together in charity to build something lasting for their kids.”

With an initial enrollment of 29 students, the school began in rented facilities in a former elementary school. Its high standards of academic excellence and spirituality led to continued growth, and by its fifth anniversary, the school occupied a six-building, 15-classroom facility and had received accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in its very first year of eligibility. Today, the school has an enrollment of 1,200 students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade, and is considered one of the premier schools in the Atlanta area.

Mike and Suzanne both had a strong foundation in the Catholic faith when they attended Niagara, but acknowledge that the school deepened that faith and their trust in God. “Niagara built the platform for us to launch our adult lives,” Mike says. “In all of our moves (Mike’s job as an executive in the logistics industry took the family to Cleveland, Chicago, California, and Atlanta), our life centered around our parishes and being involved. We were blessed while living in Atlanta to be a part of the group that started Pinecrest Academy, and we continued the mission after moving to Chicago to help similar start-up Catholic schools.”

“Our Catholic values were solidified for us at Niagara, and we were able to pass them on to our children,” Suzanne adds. “The formation we give our children is priceless, because it is our legacy to them and future generations. I am humbled by the fact that we were privileged to be there at the start of the school. The blessings our family has received from this encounter have been too numerous to mention.”

Read more alumni stories at www.niagara.edu/featured-alumni/
1958
William G. Sites was elected to the Avon Grove (Pa.) School District’s board of directors in November for a four-year term. William served 21 years in the Army before retiring as a lieutenant colonel, and was Temple University’s director of internal audit for 14 years. He notes that it was at Niagara that the seed of service to the community was first planted.

1965
Pauline (Bumbalo) Fugazzotto received her master’s degree in theological studies on May 7, 2011, from Spring Hill College, the Jesuit College of the South, in Mobile, Ala. She began these studies at the age of 62 with a desire to deepen her knowledge of the Catholic tradition. Pauline is putting her degree to practical use, in conjunction with her BSN from Niagara, in the pastoral care ministry at St. Francis Xavier Church in Birmingham.

Francis J. Waller, Ph.D., recently published Writing Chemistry Patents and Intellectual Property: A Practical Guide, which gives advice to chemists in four areas — patents, copyrights, trademarks, and trade secrets — to enable them to write their own patent application drafts in conjunction with a patent attorney. Francis spent more than 30 years as a researcher and group leader in industry, retiring as senior research associate at Air Products and Chemicals, Inc., in Allentown, Pa.

1970
Thomas D’Angelo was appointed vice president of the Syracuse chapter of SCORE, “Counselors to America’s Small Business,” for the organization’s 2011-2012 fiscal year. Tom, who served as vice president of customer operations at Excellus BlueCross BlueShield before retiring, brings nearly 40 years of management experience in marketing and corporate communications to SCORE, a nonprofit organization that assists entrepreneurs start and grow their businesses.

1973
Mark A. Totaro, Ph.D., has been recognized by Cambridge Who’s Who for showing dedication, leadership and excellence in religious administration. Mark is executive director and chief executive officer of Catholic Charities of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg.

1975
Mary Roickle was named head coach of Manchester Community College women’s basketball team in August, marking a return to coaching after a 25-year career in the pharmaceutical industry. A member of the Niagara University Athletics Hall of Fame, Mary led the Purple Eagles to an 84-19 record and appearance in the NCAA Division II Final over four seasons (1976-80) as head coach and women’s athletic director, before moving on to build a nationally ranked Division I program at the University of Detroit. She is a registered nurse in New York and Massachusetts and a member of the American Society of Training and Development and Healthcare Businesswomen’s Association.

1976
Thomas P. Mimnaugh is a senior vice president — investments, and senior partner with the Messina-Burriss-Mimnaugh Wealth Management Group of Wells Fargo Advisors in Red Bank, N.J. He started his career at a Wells Fargo Advisors predecessor firm in 1982 and has been a member of the group since 2000. The group specializes in investments, credit, risk management and estate planning for an exclusive group of individuals in the Monmouth County, N.J., area. Thomas holds the designation of certified financial
planner professional and senior PIM portfolio manager. He resides in Fair Haven, N.J., with his wife, Lisa, and their three children, Kelly, Matthew and Teddy.

**Joseph Temperato** retired after 30 years of service from the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. Joe was a senior counselor at the Industry Residential Center.

**1977 REUNION**

Fred Heuer was appointed chairman of the board of directors for the Center of Renewal Retreat and Conference Center at Stella Niagara. He is assistant vice president for marketing at Niagara University.

Ernest K. Smith was elected treasurer of the Niagara Falls Bridge Commission at its annual meeting in February. First appointed to the commission in November 2009, Ernest, a resident of Niagara Falls, Ontario, is retired from Canada Immigration after more than 31 years of service with experience in such areas as enforcement, operations and intelligence. Since retiring, Ernest has been contracted by the International Region of Citizenship & Immigration Canada to work as a visa officer in England, Hong Kong, Trinidad, Saudi Arabia and the United States.

**1978**

Michael S. Gawel accepted the position of vice president and tax principal for White Accounting and Tax Specialists. He is in charge of estate and not-for-profit tax returns.

Paul Leonard received the Emergency First Responder of the Year Award from the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce at the organization’s annual awards banquet, held in November. Paul has been involved in city and emergency management for more than 30 years. Currently the township manager, he also acts as the governor’s appointed emergency management coordinator and has responded to numerous incidents acting as incident commander of three “disasters,” as designated by national criteria. In addition, Paul has trained and responded as an active firefighter, having served with four fire departments, including some eight years as a fire officer at the company operations level.

**1980**

Joseph P. Quinlan was named one of Irish America’s 2011 Wall Street 50 honorees in September. Joe has served as chief market strategist and managing director at Bank of America, U.S. Trust since 2003 and is responsible for the firm’s global thematic research. He also is a lecturer on global finance at Fordham and is on the faculty at New York University. In 1998, Joe was nominated as an Eisenhower Fellow and is presently a senior fellow at the German Marshal Fund in Brussels and a fellow at the Center for Transatlantic Relations. He is the author of several books, including *The Last Economic Superpower*, which was voted as one of the best business books on globalization in 2011.

David L. Sengstock has been named the new executive director of Auxilliary Campus Enterprises and Services, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation that supports the mission of Alfred State College. He has been with the corporation for 32 years.

**1982 REUNION**

Theresa DeConinck-Gration is the external relations director, U.S. market, for the Geneva, Switzerland-based MCI Group, the world’s largest association management, event management and consulting company. Theresa assists the U.S. not-for-profit industry in its strategies to grow globally.

Dr. Brendan Dowd was installed as the president of the Eighth District Dental Society. Dr. Dowd is a clinical instructor at the SUNY at Buffalo School of Dental Medicine’s Department of Restorative Dentistry and has a private office in Niagara Falls.

**1983**

Sandra (Festa) Ryan was inducted as the first nurse practitioner into the Fellowship of The College of Physicians of Philadelphia, the oldest professional medical organization in the country, at a formal ceremony on Nov. 18. A highly decorated U.S. Air Force officer, Sandra has more than 25 years of healthcare and leadership experience and is currently the chief nurse practitioner officer and clinical advocate for Walgreens Take Care Health Systems. Read more about Sandra on page 22.

**1984**

Dominick M. Oliver, Ph.D., was named 2011 Outstanding Adjunct Faculty Member in the Workforce Development area at Niagara County Community College. He also received a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition in January for his dedication and contributions to the college. He has been with NCCC since 2000 and has taught business education, computer information systems, and math divisions. Dom was one of the original instruction team members in the Learning Pathways program (which is now merged in Workforce Development) where he teaches GED prep, health careers prep, precollegiate math, pathways: workplace essentials, and a variety of computer courses.
CATCHING UP

1985
Theresa (Toennies) Baginski has earned her master’s degree at the University at Buffalo and U.S. Army War College.

Lucy Muto joined M&T Bank as vice president/business development officer. She is responsible for developing relationships with existing and new commercial business owners and working with their employees and retail clients to maximize the current and future success of their overall financial needs. She previously served as senior branch manager with HSBC bank.

1986
David P. Kraus has been promoted to director of contact centers at KeyBank. He is responsible for supporting sales and service delivery for KeyBank’s retail, business, commercial, high net worth and treasury management segments, as well as internal support for policy and procedures and service issue resolution.

John M. Rovison was promoted to global technology director for FMC Corp.’s Peroxynex Division in September 2011. The Peroxynex Division is a worldwide producer of hydrogen peroxide, persulfates, and peracetic acid products with production facilities in the United States, Canada, Spain, the Netherlands and Thailand and supply from Mexico. John is based in the company’s Tonawanda, N.Y., facility.

Monica Saltarelli was honored with the Distinguished Alumni Award from St. Francis of Assisi School, Tonawanda, N.Y. She is a campus minister and adjunct professor of religious studies at Niagara University, and vice president of St. Vincent de Paul Society Niagara District. She was one of the key leaders in developing the St. Vincent de Paul Society Thrift Store in Niagara Falls.

1987 REUNION
Ed Bradley completed his second Niagara Falls International Marathon in the wheelchair division on Oct. 23, 2011. The marathon started at the Albright Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo and finished in Niagara Falls, Ont. He finished 2 minutes faster than last year at 4:34.

Joseph DioGuardi was named superintendent in the Addison Central School District. He previously served as the district’s business administrator, director of curriculum and instruction, and high school principal during his seven years in Addison.

Wende Lewis Dixon recently accepted the position of administrator/clinical director of Mohawk Valley Endoscopy Center, a new ambulatory surgery center in Utica, N.Y.

Edward Kent wrote and illustrated Stop Bullying Me! I’m a Zombie. So What?, the fifth in his Zombie Ed series of children’s books. He is also a member of the Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators.

1988
Diane Walsh Giaquinto was appointed audit supervisor in the Buffalo office of Freed Maxick and Battaglia CPAs. Most recently, Diane, a CPA, was controller at Lustig & Brown Attorneys at Law.

Stephanie Heil, merchandising manager for Heineken USA, Inc., has been recognized by Cambridge Who’s Who for showing dedication, leadership and excellence in business development. At Heineken, she is responsible for developing point of sale materials and ensuring that Heineken’s guidelines for brand and logo usage are understood and followed by all suppliers.

In 1990, Terry Sharkey, ’77, launched the inaugural Hacker Cup golf tournament, a four-day outing that is typically held in September in locations including Atlantic City, N.J.; Myrtle Beach, S.C.; Ocean City, Md.; and Pinehurst, N.C. Niagara alums from classes spanning the ‘70s and early ‘80s attend the event each year, including: Jim Danahy, ’74; Cliff Sharkey, ’74 (who has taken over organizational duties from his brother); Tom Mimnaugh, ’76; Jim Bowe, ’74; Steve Pesarchick, ’81; Terry Sharkey, ’77; Tom Barbieri, ’75; Bob Wylie, ’74; Dick Mavissakalian, ’74; Jim Sharkey, ’81; Bill Janowski, ’74; Peter Ferrigno, ’77; Jim Hillary, ’74; and Tom Hogan, ’74 (not pictured).

1990
Melissa (Kerwin) O’Neil recently accepted a position with MedPro RX, Inc., a neurology practice in Alexandria, Va., as the infusion suite coordinator.

1991
Doug Bailey was appointed controller at J. Fitzgerald Group, a marketing technology company based in Lockport. Doug most recently was controller at Mount St. Mary’s Hospital and Health Center in Lewiston.

Lt. Col. Rich Rouleau has recently been assigned as an Army advisor to the Saudi Arabian National Guard.

1992 REUNION
Darren Graff was appointed a manager in The Bonadio Group’s business appraisal subsidiary ValuQuest. He has more than 15 years of appraisal experience in the Buffalo and Rochester markets.

Sean H. McCabe was reelected to a three-year term on the Greece Central Board of Education.
1995

Roberta Smeal was recently promoted to the position of consulting manager with Emeritus Corp., a national provider of senior living services, with 478 communities in 44 states.

Susan Swiatkowski accepted the position of director of marketing for The Conference and Event Center Niagara Falls/Old Falls Street.

1996

Sara Bergen DelVecchio received a master’s degree in psychology with a specialization in business psychology from the University of the Rockies in Colorado Springs, Colo., in September 2011.

1998

Kelly Cruttenden was inducted into the Victor Central School District’s Blue Devil Athletics Hall of Fame in October. She was a three-sport star at Victor, playing volleyball, basketball and softball, and serving as team captain in all three sports. A former Niagara University Female Athlete of the Year, Kelly was inducted into the NU Athletics Hall of Fame in two sports: volleyball and softball. She is assistant athletic director for compliance at the University at Buffalo.

Kathy A. Kurtz was recently named a nurse practitioner by Gastroenterology Associates. She is board-certified as a family nurse practitioner through the American Nurses Credentialing Center and has 12 years’ experience in family practice. She will work in the Williamsville, N.Y., office.

Aimee Qualiana joined M&T Bank as a relationship banker at the Niagara Falls N.Y., branch. She previously served as a premier relationship manager at HSBC.

Galeb Rizek was named vice chairman of the Niagara Tourism and Convention Corp., the official tourism promotion agency for Niagara Falls and Niagara County. He is the owner of the Econolodge in Niagara Falls.

1999

Thomas Devereaux has been promoted to the position of senior manager in the accounting and auditing department at Tronconi Segarra & Associates LLP, a certified public accounting and business consulting firm with offices in Williamsville, Niagara Falls and Clarence, N.Y. A CPA, Thomas has practiced in public accounting for more than eight years. He joined the firm in 2009.

2000

Dr. Frank Trovato joined the Stanford Who’s Who network of professionals for his exceptional work in the education industry. A professor in the School of Social and Community Services at Humber College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning, and in the Justice Studies Department at the University of Guelph-Humber, Frank served with the Toronto Police Service for 30 years, and is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Community Service College Presidents Award. He is a life member of the Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police.

2001

Jennifer Hibit served as campaign manager for Mark Poloncarz in his bid for Erie County executive. Her efforts led to a victory for Mark.

2002 REUNION

Matthew C. Curcione earned a juris doctorate degree from Regent University Law School, Virginia Beach, in May 2011.

Laura (Sagar) Stevens has been promoted to staff associate in the Office of Student Accounts at the University at Buffalo.

2003

Frank Strangio was recently elected chairman of the Niagara Tourism and Convention Corp., the official tourism promotion agency for Niagara Falls and Niagara County. He is the owner of the Quality Inn Niagara Falls/Antonio's Banquet & Conference Center.

2004

Thomas B. Stack was named principal of Newfane High School, effective Jan. 1. He had previously served as assistant principal for the high school.

2005

Edwin Negron was among the honorees at the second annual Hispanic Leadership Awards in Dutch Kills/Astoria in October 2011. Edwin has been an officer of the NYPD’s 114th Precinct’s Community Affairs Unit since 2008.

2006

Charles D. Brooks was promoted to commercial loan officer at Lake Shore Savings Bank, Orchard Park, N.Y. He also obtained commercial lender certification through the Independent Community Bankers Association.

2007 REUNION

Sam Bruno was promoted to senior accountant at Champaou Travis Besaw & Kershner, an Amherst accounting firm. He joined the firm in 2008.

Maria A. Dojka has been promoted to the position of senior accountant in the Accounting and Auditing Department at Tronconi Segarra & Associates LLP, a certified public accounting and business consulting firm with offices in Williamsville, Niagara Falls and Clarence, N.Y. She has been with the firm since 2008.

Sara Uphold-Harrell earned a master's degree in public health from Benedictine University, Lisle, Ill. She is a radiological specialist for the Oswego County Emergency Management Office.

2008

Tim Alberts was re-signed by the Amarillo Sox Baseball Club. Tim was a standout outfielder for NU, where he achieved a career .360 batting average producing Metro Athletic Conference All-Star Selections in 2006 and 2007. He began his professional career in Washington in the Frontier League in 2009, before moving on to Joliet in the Northern League. He briefly returned to the Frontier League in 2010 with Windy City, before joining Sioux City in the American Association, where he hit .338 in just 45 games. Last year with the Sox, Tim appeared in 94 games posting a career second-best .332 batting average in 382 at-bats with 72 runs batted in to go along with his eight home runs.

Stephanie Q. Cattarin was appointed executive director of the Center for Professional Development at Canisius College’s Richard J. Wehle School of Business. Previously, she was assistant director of graduate admissions at the college.

Cali (Carol Lea) Gilbert published her second book, It’s Simply...GOLDEN: 75 Years of Inspiration. This book contains original photography and inspirational phrases celebrating the 75th birthday of San Francisco’s Golden Gate Bridge. Cali is an award-winning photographer whose work has been exhibited in galleries throughout California and New York City. In 2011, Cali published her first book, It’s Simply...Sausalito: An Inspirational Journey. Both books can be found on Amazon and other online retailers.

Molly Gurman is a program specialist for the Town of Wheatfield’s Youth Center. Molly is also serving as a literacy program assistant at a Buffalo charter school through AmeriCorps.

Janelle M. Kita completed her master’s degree in literacy education at St. John Fisher College in Rochester, N.Y. She also accepted a teaching position at St. Mary’s Catholic School in Canandaigua.
Eric Schottke has successfully completed the requirements to practice as a certified public accountant and has been promoted to senior accountant at Lumsden & McCormick, LLP. Eric joined the organization’s auditing and accounting team in 2011, bringing with him two years of public accounting experience serving commercial businesses and exempt organizations. He is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the New York State Society of Certified Public Accountants.

2009
Kristine Doll was promoted to senior accountant at Chiampou Travis Besaw & Kershner, an Amherst accounting firm. She joined the firm in 2009.

Amanda N. Moses has successfully completed the requirements to practice as a certified public accountant and has been promoted to senior accountant at Lumsden & McCormick, LLP. Amanda joined the organization’s tax department in 2009 and is responsible for compliance and tax planning services to individuals and businesses. She is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the New York State Society of Certified Public Accountants.

William Rafferty was promoted to advanced staff accountant in the Audit and Accounting Department at Firley, Moran, Freer & Eassa, P.C., certified public accounts. He joined the firm in October 2010.

Michelle Wienke completed her master’s degree in mental health counseling at Medaille College. She is a family support counselor at Upstate New York Transplant Services.

2010
Derek Gerega was named audit staff accountant in the Buffalo office of Freed Maxick and Battaglia CPAs.

Mark W. Hubbard was named staff accountant at Szymkowski and Associates CPAs, an Amherst accounting firm.

Steven Rizzo was named staff accountant at Chiampou Travis Besaw & Kershner, an Amherst accounting firm.

Julie Syruws was named staff accountant at Chiampou Travis Besaw & Kershner.

Derek J. Vallese was named staff accountant at Szymkowski and Associates CPAs, an Amherst accounting firm.

2011
Caitlin Long has been named the new head coach of the Geneseo Community College women’s soccer program. She previously served as assistant coach for the Lady Cougars under Charlie Woods during the fall 2011 season. At Niagara, she was a member of the MAAC Conference Rookie Team in 2007 and a team captain during the 2010-11 season. She was also a member of the Empire State gold-medal winning teams in 2005, 2006 and 2010. In addition to serving as assistant coach at Geneseo, Caitlin also coached in the Ken-Ton Soccer Association for the girls travel soccer and micro soccer programs.

Johnathan Miles joined the Buffalo tax department at Freed Maxick CPAs, PC, as a staff accountant.

Jacqueline C. Shoen was appointed a staff accountant at Lougen, Valenti, Bookbinder and Weintraub, an Amherst accounting firm.

MARRIAGES


Theresa Ditlow, ’02, married Nicholas Griffiths on Dec. 11, 2010.


Courtney Rowan, ’07, married Kyle Gramza, ’08, on Aug. 6, 2011.

Brandon J. Wright, ’08, married Kathleen L. Stegle, ’09, on July 22, 2011.

BIRTHS AND ADOPTIONS

Dr. Kathy Cosentino Mayo, ’93, and her husband, Dr. George Mayo, welcomed a daughter, Michaela Dominique, on Sept. 6, 2011.

Barbara J. Panza, ’96, ’98, and her husband, Jeffrey T. Leskiw, welcomed identical twin sons Peter Francis, on Aug. 19, 2011, and Thomas Anselm, on Aug. 20, 2011. They joined brother Henry. We are sad to note that Peter died in utero shortly before Thomas was born. Our condolences to Barbara, Jeffrey, and their family.

Cristin Padgett Ryan, ’96, and her husband, Colin, welcomed a daughter, Caitlin Cristin, on May 3, 2011.

Michael Gutchell, ’98, and his wife, Susan, welcomed a daughter, Kieara Rachael, on Nov. 23, 2011.

Kelly (Filippi) DeStefano, ’99, and her husband, Andy, welcomed a daughter, Audra Rose, on May 12, 2011.

Eric Frass, ’99, and his wife, Jamie, welcomed a son, Owen Michael, on April 21, 2011.

Kelli (Riley) Harris, ’00, and her husband, Kristopher, welcomed a daughter, Emily Margaret, on May 12, 2011.

Claire (Zimmerman) Freeling, ’01, and her husband, Alan, welcomed a daughter, Natalie Mary, on Oct. 18, 2011.

Owen T., ’01, and Megan (Opera) Hondrf, ’01, welcomed a daughter, Lauren Kate, on Aug. 31, 2011.

Rebecca (Pennamacoor) Meltzer, ’01, and her husband, Chris, welcomed a son, Evan, on Oct. 25, 2011.

Mike Taberski, ’01, and his wife, Melissa, welcomed twins Caroline Marie and Thomas Peter on Oct. 3, 2011.

Aimi (Maggiolino) Grysko, ’02, and her husband, Mark, welcomed a daughter, Sophia Rose Louise, on April 4, 2011.

Courtney LeAnne (Shonk) Johnson, ’03, and her husband, Mike, welcomed a son, Bradley, on Sept. 14, 2011.

Diane (Carter) Kirchue, ’05, MS’06, and her husband, Jason, welcomed triplets Ava Diane, Giuliana Grace, and Leah Madelyn, on Dec. 2, 2011.

Nichole (Tubiolo) Siwicki, ’05, and her husband, John, welcomed a daughter, Sadie Rose, on Oct. 6, 2011.

Kari Anne (Dettbarn) Wright, ’06, and her husband, Aaron, welcomed a son, Liam Daniel, on May 15, 2011.

IN MEMORIAM
To have a Mass celebrated at Alumni Chapel, call NU’s Campus Ministry Office at 716.286.8400. For expanded obituaries and an opportunity to leave your condolences, please visit the Eagle online at http://eagleonline.niagara.edu. * Expanded obituary available.

Ralph H. Wilcox, ’40, passed away on April 9, 2011.

Edward R. Wright, ’47, passed away on Sept. 29, 2011.

William F. Lynch, ’48, a former assistant professor of economics and labor relations at NU, passed away on April 11, 2011. Our condolences to his daughter, Kathryn Fabian, ’76; his son, John Lynch, ’79; and his granddaughter, Lauren Fabian, ’08.

Our condolences to Joe Lawton Jr., ’50, on the death of his wife, Mary Lawton, Oct. 26, 2011.

Robert A. Rosa, ’50, passed away on Nov. 25, 2011.


Eugene Sentiff, ’51, passed away on Dec. 4, 2011.

Thomas J. Bennett, ’52, passed away on June 28, 2011.


Charles J. Wilson, ’52, passed away on Dec. 25, 2011.


James Gaebel, ’54, passed away on Dec. 25, 2011.


Thomas F. Conte Jr., ’57, passed away on Jan. 12, 2012. Our condolences to his wife, Joan (Kase) Conte, ’55, and his son, Kenneth Conte, ’80.


William J. Casey, ’59, passed away on Sept. 25, 2011. Our condolences to his daughter, Catherine Cooper, ’81.

Robert H. Kase, ’59, passed away on Aug. 9, 2011.

Henry “Hank” T. Santulli, ’63, MA’64,* passed away on March 11, 2011. Our condolences to his wife, Patricia (Casale) Santulli, ’63.


James K. Cavanagh, ’68, passed away on Sept. 12, 2011.

Barbara A. (Scrivano) Bobby, ’70, passed away on Sept. 9, 2011.

Our condolences to Daniel Hauck, ’72, on the death of his mother, Mary Hauck, Nov. 21, 2011.

Our condolences to Thomas Barbieri, ’75, and Anne (Barbiere) Cohen, ’84, on the death of their father, Louis J. Barbieri, Dec. 1, 2011.

Our condolences to Marilyn Healy-McDermott, ’75, on the death of her husband, Tom McDermott, Nov. 28, 2011.

Judith (Amorelli) Reeves, ’76, passed away on Sept. 11, 2011.

Our condolences to Fred Heuer, ’77, on the death of his father-in-law; and to Ann (Rooney) Heuer, ’78, on the death of her father, Francis Rooney, Nov. 13, 2011.


Marguerite D. “Marnie” Eydt, MS’90, passed away on Dec. 18, 2011.


Lindsey Cooper-Lydic, ’10, passed away on March 31, 2011.
Behind Daniel Guariglia, director of Facility Services and Niagara University emergency coordinator, is the digital layout of campus that was created with funding from a $394,000 Department of Education Emergency Management for Higher Education grant.
Natural disasters, acts of violence, fires and other emergencies affecting college campuses have raised questions about the safety of our students. At Niagara University, we have been proactive in preparing for emergency situations. In 1999, a cross section of administrators, management and staff developed an initial Emergency Response Plan with goals of reducing risk, providing timely and effective response, minimizing property damage and maintaining business continuity. Over the years, Niagara has made a significant investment to secure the resources necessary to help implement this plan. The plan, which is reviewed at least annually, is a living document that has been updated and enhanced many times to keep it current and accurate. With assistance from the New York State Office of Emergency Management, Department of Homeland Security and FEMA guidance, our latest revision in June 2011 has made our plan National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliant. This will allow the university, first responders, and local and state agencies to speak and work under the same guidance during an emergency.

Three separate committees have oversight of the university’s Emergency Response Plan. The Crisis Policy Team is responsible for and has the authority to establish new policy, amend existing emergency plan procedures, and approve budget requests for the relevant material and fiscal resources required to effectively mitigate the emergency while maintaining NIMS compliancy.

The Committee on Crisis Management is charged with maintaining the readiness of the institution during emergencies, assure crises management activities are NIMS compliant, and provide consultation to ensure all divisions and functional units have prepared plans that are functional and effective. This committee meets at least annually and/or upon request of the CRT to review the overall Emergency Response Plan, individual plan annexes, and to evaluate training and emergency notification procedures.

The Crisis Response Team is the “boots on the ground staff,” responsible for managing the university’s response to an incident. Comprising seven director-level members selected on the basis of their role in the day-to-day operation of the university and how that knowledge, responsibility and experience could be a benefit in an emergency, the CRT determines and implements all appropriate measures to respond to emergencies or disasters.

The CRT members — Niagara’s executive vice president and the directors of facility services, campus safety, contract services & risk management, information technology, recreation & intramural sports, student health services, and residence life — have received extensive training in a variety of areas. All have completed the appropriate level of NIMS training in accordance with their assigned role, and each has participated in at least one tabletop exercise and one functional exercise. Most of this training was conducted by the New York State Emergency Management Office, the Niagara Falls Fire Department, the American Red Cross, and the Department of Homeland Security, and consisted of lectures, exercises, drills and hands-on learning. Because training is a continuous process, several sessions are scheduled for 2012, including a functional exercise in the fall.

In addition, several CRT members have also received training by the American Red Cross in shelter operations, search and rescue, and first aid, and most are members of the Citizen Emergency Response Team (CERT) and have received additional training through Niagara University’s Border Community SERVICE (Special Emergency Response Volunteer Initiative for Community Empowerment).

In compliance with our Emergency Response Plan, a number of initiatives have been implemented on campus. For example, an Emergency Preparedness Reference Guide, which features a flip chart detailing how to respond to various incidents, was developed and placed in all classrooms on campus. It can also be downloaded from our website.

Two locations have been identified as possible shelters on campus and provisions for food, communication, first aid, and security have been addressed. The university’s current supplies consist of cots, pillows, blankets, personal products, attire, basic food and water to shelter 425 people.

Recognizing that a particular incident could outpace our resources, we have a mutual aid understanding with Canisius College to share physical resources, including manpower. In the event that an incident affects both Niagara and Canisius, we have a memorandum of understanding with DePaul University to host each other’s websites and technology needs.

We have also implemented a mass notification network to provide information in the event of a campus emergency. This information will be delivered via the NU web page, our on-campus email and voicemail systems, automated text and cell phone messaging, campus-wide digital signage, and the intrusive mass notification loudspeaker system, which consists of speakers that can be heard outdoors from any area of the campus and is used to alert those in transit on campus or those using the ground and/or fields.

Some of the most recent improvements to our Emergency Response Plan are the result of funding from a Department of Education Emergency Management for Higher Education grant. The $394,000 award also enabled us to install additional video cameras to monitor campus entrances; purchase an Automated Record Management System for Campus Safety, which includes computers in all patrol cars to access the system; and create a digital layout of campus that will provide valuable information for first responders.

Dealing with emergencies is an ongoing, complex undertaking. Through implementation of risk reduction measures and comprehensive training, coupled with the availability of provisions for both short and long-term recovery assistance, Niagara University is well-prepared to save lives and minimize property damage.

Daniel Guariglia
Director of Facility Services and
Niagara University Emergency Coordinator
The annual Saratoga Day at the Races, hosted by the Albany chapter, has been booked for July 28, 2012. Join fellow alumni in the clubhouse in At the Rail Pavilion, where you will have a trackside view of all the live racing action. Your ticket includes admission, buffet, and conveniently located betting facilities. There will also be an informal alumni gathering on Friday, July 27.

As in previous years, there will be a room block at the Courtyard by Marriot, Saratoga Springs.

There is always a strong demand for these tickets, so we recommend that you register early to secure yours before they sell out. Updated information on this event will be posted to the Eagle’s Nest at www.niagaraalumni.com as soon as it is available.

A Day at the Races with Niagara University

Charitable gift annuities are a very flexible way to make charitable gifts to Niagara University providing a fixed income for life for you and/or others you choose. They are easy to create and can be funded with gifts of relatively modest amounts. The charitable gift annuity is a win-win donation option.

Become a member of the Niagara University Heritage Society by including Niagara in your estate planning. To learn more visit http://niagara.aboutgiving.net/plan-your-gifts-greatest-impact or contact Leslie K. Wise, ’82, director of planned giving, at 716.286.8590.