What Now?

LAYOFF NOTICE

We regret to inform you that your position with our company has been terminated. Please note this is not a reflection on your job performance but a reflection of current market conditions. We wish you all the best in your future.

Making Faces pg10
Walking in Their Shoes pg16
Matiash Takes the Baton for a Twirl pg18
One of the popular pursuits of those concerned with education today is determining outcomes. In other words, what was the return on the investment made in education? What resulted from all the teaching, learning and study that went on inside and outside the classroom? What did their education prepare students to do with their lives?

While it is not an exact science, there are a number of indicators that help to determine how well an educational institution is performing. A big one, of course, is employment, and the latest statistics we have indicate that our students have done very well. Employment for the Class of 2007 was more than 20 percentage points higher than the national average, and NU students went on to higher studies at more than twice the rate of graduates of other colleges and universities.

A recent report from the College of Arts and Sciences indicates that that trend is continuing. Nine of this year’s graduates of the college are going on to Ph.D. programs, including one chemistry major who has been offered a prestigious fellowship at the University of Michigan. All these students have received tuition, plus stipends, for teaching and research assistantships. Fifteen other students are going on to master’s programs, several with full tuition. Surely, these are wonderful outcomes for the students involved.

As I thought about handing out diplomas to the Class of 2009, I couldn’t help but wonder what the future holds for these graduates. They are entering the world of work at a very difficult time. With the nation’s economy still struggling and unemployment rising, jobs are expected to be much more difficult to find. Ideally, the academic preparation our graduates received during their time at Niagara and the practical experiences they received through internships and service-learning placements will serve them well.

In light of the current job picture, I am happy to point readers to a special feature in this edition of the Eagle. It is a point-by-point guide to assist those who have lost their jobs as a result of the economic downturn. It was prepared by our Office of Career Development, which assists our students in writing resumes, preparing for job interviews, and finding internships.

I also would like to recommend another story that says much about a Niagara education, about employment, and about the added dimension of a Niagara education, namely, the inspiration to assist those who are in need.

When Ed Kampf finished dental school, he could have joined an established practice. Instead, the 1965 NU grad went to Appalachia, where he established a dental practice for the underserved residents of that poor region in West Virginia. Since that initial experience, he has left his practice from time to time to help people in remote and impoverished areas in Central America and Mexico.

Ed Gardner of the Class of ’87 says the ideals he was exposed to at NU have had a marked influence on his life. While on assignment in Iraq, he freely distributed soccer equipment to children there. The items were collected back home by students in his children’s school. Ed’s work as a forensic artist for the Naval Criminal Investigative Service is the subject of a very interesting feature in this edition of the Eagle.

There’s another story I would like to tell about Tom Looney. He faced an employment picture similar to today’s when he left Niagara in 1974. Before he left school, however, he had more than eight on-campus interviews and multiple job offers. He started working at IBM a week after graduation. Tom credits his Niagara education and an internship he had at The Carborundum Co. during his senior year for his success in landing a job right out of school. His is a story of the great hope the future holds for those who apply themselves and take advantage of the opportunities presented to them.

In April, Tom said some very nice things about his NU education at our Business Appreciation Dinner, where he served as guest speaker. He also presented the university with an unexpected, and very unusual, gift. It was one of the torches his company, Lenovo, developed for the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. It will serve, he said, “as a symbol of Niagara’s commitment to excellence and preparing students to compete in the global economy.”

Ed Kampf and Tom Looney: Great outcomes and wonderful stories that provide comfort in the realization that there are many more like them in the making in the Class of 2009.

So I ask our alumni and friends to let us know of any jobs that might be available in your businesses or communities. Our graduates are bright, capable and eager to go to work to make a difference in the world. As always, please feel free to share your stories with me at jll@niagara.edu.

Joseph L. Levesque, C.M.
President
On the cover

Life After Layoffs 12
Tom Hodick, ’69, MA’71, Niagara’s director of career development, offers advice for those starting the job-search process.

Making Faces 10
Under the skilled hands of forensic artist Ed Gardner, ’87, the identities of unknown individuals are discovered.

Walking in Their Shoes 16
NU students experience poverty for a night.

Matiash Takes the Baton for a Twirl 18
Freshman Jeff Matiash realizes a lifelong dream.

Meaningful Dialogue 20
Barriers are broken when Niagara students converse with their Egyptian peers.

In every issue

From the President
Around the Ridge 2
Niagara Notables 6
Eagle’s Eye 7
Purple Eagle Pride 8
Advancing NU 9
In the Spotlight 21
Alumni Association Update 22
Alumni Notes 24
A NU View 29
Kudos

Work produced by Niagara University’s marketing and admissions offices received awards recently in national competitions. Television commercials produced in 2008 and themed “Education That Makes a Difference” received a bronze Telly Award, while a package of printed recruitment materials produced for the admissions office received a bronze medal in the 24th annual Admissions Advertising Awards.

This is the fourth time NU commercials have received the prestigious Telly Award, which honors outstanding local, regional and cable television commercials and programs.

The printed materials produced for Niagara’s Office of Admissions included the senior viewbook, application, junior viewbook, financial aid brochure, campus visit piece, student life brochure, sophomore brochure, search brochure, success brochure, and divisional brochures on each of Niagara’s colleges and the Academic Exploration Program.

Rev. Kenneth Slattery, C.M., NU’s 19th President, Dies at 87

The Rev. Kenneth F. Slattery, C.M., a Vincentian who led Niagara during one of the most turbulent decades in the nation’s history, died April 21 after an extended battle against cancer. He was 87.

A native of Brooklyn, Father Slattery served as the 19th president of Niagara University. Under his leadership, the university attained a new level of quality and achievement despite tensions created by the war in Vietnam and the cultural revolution that was underway in the United States. In the Slattery decade, O’Shea and Seton halls were built to accommodate a dramatic growth in Niagara’s student body, which increased from 1,900 in 1965 to 3,200 in 1975. During these years, the College of Nursing moved into the newly constructed Dunleavy Hall and the Institute of Transportation, Travel and Tourism, the predecessor of today’s College of Hospitality and Tourism Management, was established.

Father Slattery, who was ordained May 22, 1948, was first assigned to Niagara in 1952 after receiving his doctoral degree in philosophy from The Catholic University of America. He then served as dean of studies at Mary Immaculate Seminary from 1954 to 1956 before going to St. John’s University in New York, where he was a philosophy professor from 1956 to 1961. He returned to Niagara that year and served as dean of the Graduate School and the School of Education until his appointment as president in 1965.

After leaving the presidency in 1976, Father Slattery continued his career in Catholic education at St. John’s University. For more than two decades, he taught in the department of philosophy, including a term as chairman, and held the office of vice president and academic dean. He has served on numerous boards of trustees of colleges and educational agencies.

“Father Ken Slattery was a lifelong educator who served Niagara University very well,” said NU’s current president, the Rev. Joseph L. Levesque, C.M. “He loved philosophy, so after his presidency he devoted more than 20 years to teaching and administration at St. John’s. Our community had great regard for this philosopher-president, who devoted his entire priesthood to Catholic education.”

On May 17, 1998, Niagara University granted Father Slattery the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws in recognition of his long and distinguished service to Catholic higher education and to mark his 50th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood. He was honored again with other past presidents of Niagara in September 2006 as the university began its sesquicentennial celebration.

Among his other honors was an honorary degree from St. John’s University, bestowed in 1969. He was also adopted into the Tuscarora Indian Nation in Lewiston in 1966 and given the name Ro-Tê-Heh-Thet, which means “Dependable.”

Niagara’s Community Service Efforts Honored

For the third time in as many years, Niagara University has been named to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for exemplary service efforts and service to the community. Launched in 2006 by the Corporation for National and Community Service, the honor roll is the highest federal recognition a school can achieve for its commitment to service-learning and civic engagement.

Niagara was among nine colleges and universities in New York state named as Honor Roll With Distinction members. Honorees for the award were chosen based on a series of selection factors, including scope and innovation of service projects, percentage of student participation in service activities, incentives for service, and the extent to which the school offers academic service-learning courses.

Service projects at Niagara involve the volunteer efforts of an estimated 2,000 students, who provide approximately 60,000 hours of service annually as tutors in local school districts and as interns and volunteers in more than 40 social service agencies and organizations in Western New York and southern Ontario. Niagara also operates ReNU Niagara, a Community Outreach Partnership Center that coordinates programs in Niagara Falls. Niagara’s four colleges also operate centers that provide research, training, and professional and educational services for business and industry, school districts, and families.

For more information, visit www.niagara.edu/news/printnews.php?id=090220104827.
HONORING FATHER TROTTOA —
Two hundred persons turned out March 6 at Antonio’s Restaurant in Niagara Falls for the 90th anniversary celebration of Our Lady of Angels Association. Special guest for the evening was the Rev. Louis P. Trotta, C.M., a former Niagara University administrator and presidential assistant who received the association’s Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his faithful devotion to the Blessed Mother and his dedication to spreading that devotion. He currently serves as assistant director of the Central Association of the Miraculous Medal in Philadelphia. In addition to receiving the award from the Rev. William J. O’Brien, C.M., executive director of Our Lady of Angels Association, Father Trotta also received the key to the city of Niagara Falls from Mayor Paul Dyster (pictured here with Father Trotta). Brother Augustine Towey, C.M., and Father O’Brien added to the evening’s enjoyment with their humorous roasting of the guest of honor.

Does Hip-Hop Music Perpetuate Black Stereotypes?
Dr. Ralph Egans, assistant professor of teacher education, investigates the effect of hip-hop music on young people in his new book, “The 21st Century Hip-Hop Minstrel Show: Are We Continuing the Blackface Tradition?”
Egans notes that some elements of hip-hop music mislead listeners by encouraging them to engage and perform in ways that aren’t compatible with what is considered to be black history. He says that hip-hop’s glorification of the ghetto, gangs, guns, gold-plated teeth, etc., perpetuates the tradition of the black stereotype, which began in the minstrel show era when white performers in “blackface” portrayed characters that exemplified their perception of “blackness.”

The book, published by University Readers, is available at University Readers.com and Amazon.com.

To hear a podcast with Egans, visit niagara.edu/news.

Castellani Receives Andy Warhol Works
The Castellani Art Museum has received 158 original photographs taken by legendary artist Andy Warhol. The Polaroid photographs and gelatin silver prints, valued at $185,000, are a gift of the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts’ Andy Warhol Photographic Legacy Program.

An exhibition featuring these works from this important yet relatively unknown body of Warhol’s work opens Aug. 16. A “Warhol inspired” gala fundraiser is planned for Oct. 17.

Tenpao Lee to Assist Malawian University
Dr. Tenpao Lee, professor of commerce in the College of Business Administration, will travel to Malawi, Africa, this summer, to assist Blantyre International University in building its supply-chain program. His work will focus on the area of entrepreneurship development.

This opportunity was provided through a Fulbright Senior Specialists grant, the third Fulbright scholarship Lee has received. Lee was awarded his first scholarship in 2000 to lecture and conduct research in Taiwan on its railroad system. He spent five months teaching at the National Chiao-Tung University, his alma mater. In 2003, he returned to the university to lead a faculty workshop about measuring and improving the quality of business education.

In Malawi, Lee will present lectures at the graduate and undergraduate levels, consult with administrators and instructors of post-secondary institutions on faculty development, and develop and/or assess academic curricula or educational materials.

For more information on the Fulbright Scholar Program, see http://www.cies.org/.
Jaclyn Rossi, a graduate assistant in the institutional advancement office, is charged with educating today’s students about tomorrow's needs. To that end, she is coordinating the university's SLAM program. We asked her a few questions to learn more.

**What is SLAM?**

SLAM (Students Leaving a Mark) is a new and exciting program to educate seniors about the importance of giving back to their university, no matter the amount. All of the gifts that are received through SLAM will go directly toward student scholarships.

The Senior Class of 2009 and the Office of Annual Giving teamed up to start SLAM, which we hope will become a tradition at Niagara.

**How did the idea come about?**

Christine O’Hara, Niagara’s director of annual giving, wanted to start a student philanthropy program at Niagara. She sent me to a conference that focused on student philanthropy, where I picked up ideas that I brought back to Niagara. I wanted Niagara’s program to catch students’ attention and offer versatility in terms of promoting, and I thought that the acronym SLAM would be something that would stick around Niagara for years to come.

**Why is the endeavor important?**

SLAM is important because students should understand and be educated about the importance of philanthropy. So many times students say that their tuition is already high, or that they will consider giving back once they have graduated and paid back their student loans. SLAM teaches students that their tuition could actually be higher if it weren’t for private donors, and shows them that even the smallest gift could go a long way. SLAM gives our students the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of current and future Niagara students.

**What steps are you taking to educate students about the importance of philanthropy?**

First, I worked with the senior class president, the Niagara University Student Government Association, and other members of the senior class to develop a plan. We decided to kick the program off with an event called “Philanthropy Week.” It took place in the Gallagher Center, where we had posters, banners, and candy with labels that were printed with our definition of philanthropy: the desire to promote success through gifts of time, talent and treasure. Brochures, flyers and advertisements that I created were also available for students.

To reach students on a social network, I made a Facebook account, because many students are a part of this.

**What is the goal of the program?**

The goal of SLAM is to instill in our students our definition of philanthropy, and to give them an opportunity to give back to Niagara before they graduate. The hope is that if they are educated as students, they will understand the importance of philanthropy and give back once they have graduated, as well.

**Why are you passionate about this effort?**

I am passionate about this effort because I know that with a little education, students can truly make a difference. The whole program is about students helping students. There are many students that deserve and need scholarships to support themselves through college. Giving students the opportunity to take part in that is a feeling they will never forget.

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**Grand SLAM**

More than 700* undergraduates joined the ranks of Niagara alumni at commencement ceremonies on May 17.

Breakdown by college:
- College of Business Administration: 151
- College of Hospitality and Tourism Management: 120
- College of Education: 120
- College of Arts and Sciences: 320

In addition, 480* graduate students received master's degrees or professional diplomas on May 16:
- Graduate Division of Arts and Sciences: 24
- Graduate Division of Business: 70
- Graduate Division of Education: 386

Niagara also awarded Bachelor of Professional Studies degrees in teacher education to 158 graduates at its second commencement in Ontario on Jan. 28.

*As of press time
Shriver and Mansbridge Speak at Commencement

Timothy Shriver, chairman of the Special Olympics Inc., and Peter Mansbridge, veteran news anchor of the Canadian Broadcasting Co.’s “The National,” were the featured speakers at Niagara University’s commencement exercises May 16 and 17.

Shriver delivered the undergraduate commencement address Sunday, May 17, in Alumni Arena on the State University at Buffalo campus, while Mansbridge spoke at the graduate school’s commencement Saturday, May 16, in the upper level of the Gallagher Center. Both received honorary degrees during the ceremonies.

Shriver is the son of Eunice Kennedy Shriver, founder of the Special Olympics. He has led the organization for the past 13 years. Last year, Special Olympics celebrated its 40th anniversary with almost 3 million athletes in more than 180 countries around the world. Before joining Special Olympics, Shriver created the New Haven (Conn.) Public Schools’ Social Development Project, now considered the leading school-based prevention effort in the United States.

Mansbridge, a native of London, has covered events such as the fall of the Berlin Wall, the deaths of Princess Diana and Pope John Paul II, and the war in Afghanistan. He has held the title of chief correspondent and evening news anchor of CBC television news for 20 years.

Research Roundup

A number of Niagara faculty members have been awarded summer research stipends from the university’s research council. Here are some of the things they will be working on:

Dr. Mary Ellen Bardsley, assistant professor of education, will be interviewing preschool teachers on their perceptions about the importance of mathematics and its relationship to other developmental domains, what they regard as key mathematics skills, and their role in supporting the development of early mathematics.

Dr. Michael Barnwell, assistant professor of philosophy, will examine how the freedom supposedly experienced by those in heaven can be the same sort of freedom experienced by those on earth given that humans presumably cannot sin in heaven but can on earth.

Dr. Thomas Chambers, associate professor of history, will focus his research on the fact that, although the 1781 battle at Guilford Courthouse, N.C., turned the Revolution’s Southern Campaign in the Americans’ favor, few Americans in the early 1800s commemorated the event, and no monument rose to its heroes until after 1865, because, unlike well-known sites such as Bunker Hill, it lacked the tourist infrastructure to bring visitors.

Dr. Philip Collington, associate professor of English, will shed new light on one of Shakespeare’s most beloved comic villains, Malvolio, and on one of his least understood romantic leads, Orsino, as he demonstrates that Shakespearean allusions and intertexts replicate the organization of experience using narrative as the basic semantic unit.

Dr. Kenneth Culton, assistant professor of sociology, will investigate the idea that research in the field of youth subcultural studies, such as analysis of the hip-hop music subculture, can be used to teach many basic concepts in sociology, including class, race and marginalization.

Dr. James Delaney, assistant professor of philosophy, will examine some of the ethical issues posed by potential advances in genetic engineering that may allow us to radically change many attributes of human beings.

Dr. Mark Gallo, associate professor of biology, will analyze the antibiotic resistance profiles of Staphylococci from various environmental sources and compare it to what is seen in human isolates to get a better handle on the epidemiology regarding this microorganism.

Dr. Mustafa Gokcek, assistant professor of history, is exploring the forceful arguments of the Russian Muslim intellectuals who contributed to the Turkish nationalist discourse in the Ottoman Empire to determine if they were critical in the foundation of the new Turkish Republic as a nation state.

Niagara to Study the Use of Non-invasive Imaging Technology to Evaluate Coronary Artery Disease

Undergraduate students and faculty will collaborate with the Heart Center of Niagara Falls in a pilot study that examines the use of positron emission tomography and computed tomography angiography for evaluating coronary artery disease. The study, titled “Iron Status, Oxidative Stress, and Coronary Artery Disease,” is funded by a $60,000 research grant from the Merck Institute for Science Education and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

The grant, one of only 14 awarded, will enable the university’s Academic Center for Integrated Sciences to continue researching the prevalence of coronary artery disease in Niagara County, the area’s leading cause of death. Students and faculty have already worked on projects related to the disease with the Heart Center, GE Healthcare, Roswell Park Cancer Institute, Hauptman Woodward Institute and the University at Buffalo.
Stephanie Cole
General Counsel

On most days, you can find Stephanie Cole practicing fancy footwork in the Kiernan Center. Niagara University’s general counsel since 2006, Cole is an accomplished fencer who placed second in Women’s Foil at the London Heroes Tournament in Ontario, Canada, this past January.

“The basic of fencing is the footwork,” she notes. “It’s almost like dancing.”

Cole’s introduction to the sport came during her undergraduate years at Hampshire College in Amherst, Mass. She was attracted to fencing because “it seemed like an exciting sport,” and selected the épée as her weapon of choice because “it was about fun and flamboyance,” she says. After a year and a half, during which she medaled at an international tournament held at the University of Massachusetts, she was sidelined due to a knee injury.

Cole returned to the sport about two years ago when a colleague invited her to go with him to his fencing club. “The minute I got back into it I couldn’t stop going,” she says.

Now, she’s vice president of the club and a passionate advocate of the sport, which she says can be enjoyed by people of all ages. She organizes tournaments, coordinates competition classes, and is in charge of demonstrations, which are sometimes done as fundraisers for local organizations, such as the Food Bank of Western New York. She also plans to start programs for both seniors and children.

“Many top Olympians credit community programs with getting them into fencing and changing their lives,” she says. “We hope to fulfill this role in Buffalo.”

Cole spends several hours a night three to four times a week at the club, which she says is as much social as it is recreational. Mindful of her past injury, she is learning as much about fencing as possible and works with an experienced coach, one of the certified instructors who volunteer for the club. “We pay a lot of attention to stretching, strengthening and conditioning so the body is ready for the demands of the sport,” she says.

Fencing is as much mental as it is physical, Cole notes, and that is the most challenging aspect of the sport for her. “Fencing requires patience,” she says. “If you’re up against an opponent you have to outthink, you can’t rush. You have to wait it out. And you can’t lie to yourself on the fencing strip — it really puts the focus, in a way you can’t avoid, on the things you have to work on.”

While Cole regularly competes in foil, she recently became interested in learning the third weapon used by fencers, the sabre. “I picked up the sabre for the first time and 18 hours later I was in a competition,” she says. “I got beaten to the ground, which I don’t usually enjoy, but I had a great time!” Ultimately, Cole would like to become a United States Fencing Coaches Association-certified instructor in the sabre, and has already been certified as a referee, the first step toward that goal. She notes that becoming a coach can take a decade or longer, but she doesn’t plan to quit fencing anytime soon.

“Once you get started, it’s hard to stop,” she says. “Fencing has an adrenaline rush to it that’s very addictive. And it’s a lot of fun!”

— Lisa McMahon
The True Ties that Bind

“Above all, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.”

Proverbs 4:23

By Rev. John T. Maher, C.M.
University Chaplain
Director of Campus Ministry

Spring is an annual awakening to renew the wellsprings of life and a time for remembrance. I sit quietly in the common room of our new Vincentian Residence with my frayed prayer book and coffee as the Niagara River Gorge changes from solemn grey to verdant green, and I reflect not only on the present hustle and bustle, but of times past.

Remembrances of times past span the gamut: fleeting years as a student; a steady stream of alumni who return to marry and baptize their children; year-end celebrations for long-serving professors and staff; joyful silver and gold Vincentian jubilees; graduation; and inevitable retirement parties. All these events remind me of the deep and abiding ties that bind us here on Mont Eagle Ridge, the wellspring of our community.

Our students also seek these “ties that bind,” not just in the camaraderie of classmates, or approbation of administrators and professors, but in human, “for real” relationships that transcend the breakneck pace of e-mail, texting and Blackberry (yep, they’re here in abundance!) modes of communication. A recent event which received a surprisingly strong response from our students showed me that the “ties that bind” go deeper than the electronic or the immediate. Let me explain.

Campus ministry initiated a “Grandparents Blessing” at Sunday Masses this year. Although the day seemed destined to be a haven for Hallmark, we created a prayer card for Mass and a postcard to be sent to grandparents.

The latter held a simple message:
For love lavished beyond measure,
For happy hours always to treasure,
For bounteous meals at holidays season,
For wealth of memories beyond all reason,
For quality of life that examples impart,
I love you, my grandparents, with all my heart.

Students were invited to take both prayer and postcards. Two printings later, they still ask for them. More importantly, this event opened a dialogue between campus ministers and students. A week rarely goes by without a call or a visit to the office to ask for prayers for a sick grandparent, to share excited news of a recent note or visit, or to simply tell stories of how these elders have impacted their lives.

Recently, after a long and exhausting meeting with a student group, a junior proudly told me how he talks to his grandfather (who happens to be Thomas Blanchfield, Class of 1951) almost every day. “I can’t tell you enough what an important part of my life he is to me,” he said. His sentiments are often echoed in other comments by students.

The connection we seek to remember — whether with family, friends or NU — is related to the deeper dimension of the lifeline we seek within ourselves and our God. St. Vincent de Paul reminded his followers of this age-old truth: “If God is the center of your life, no words will be necessary. Your mere presence will touch hearts.” May this spring season touch our hearts so we may remember the grace and goodness of a God whose ties bind us to each other and to his eternal and everlasting love, a wellspring that knows no end.
The city of Reading, Pa., has turned into a landing spot for former Purple Eagle hockey players. So far this season, three alumni from the men’s team have taken to the ice for the Reading Royals of the East Coast Hockey League. Defenseman Scott Langdon, ’08, became the first to join the team when he was signed to a two-way American Hockey League-ECHL contract last year. The Royals are an affiliate of the Toronto Maple Leafs of the National Hockey League.

Langdon struggled early on, but finished up the season strong and was considered one of the Royals’ most improved players.

As the Royals season wound down, two other members of the Purple Eagles arrived in Reading: forward Vince Rocco and defense Dan Sullivan. Both players were signed to professional try-out contracts in late March after the Purple Eagles were eliminated from the College Hockey America tournament. Rocco had nine points in nine games, including a goal and assist in his first professional game versus the Trenton Devils.

Sullivan, a solid, stay-at-home type blueliner, played in five games.

“To be able to play with Langdon and Rocco again makes the transition sweeter and a lot easier,” said Sullivan.

To read more, log on to www.royalshockey.com.
Ensuring the Development of Math and Science Education

Sometimes a walk down memory lane can lead to the future. That was the case for Judy Quigley Ruse, a 1969 graduate of Niagara’s College of Nursing. “About 10 years ago, I went to a class reunion and visited DePaul Hall for old time’s sake,” she says. “It was wonderfully nostalgic.”

DePaul Hall was a relatively new building when Judy was a student. However, her memories of time spent in classes such as anatomy and physiology, biochemistry and zoology made her realize that nothing much had changed in the facility during the three decades since she graduated. “How can you prepare people for today’s needs when you’re back in the mid-’60s?” she wondered.

A passionate supporter of math and science education, Judy knew she had to do something to assist Niagara in preparing students for the competitive workplace they would be entering. The university already had an accomplished faculty in the sciences, but the professors lacked the tools “they absolutely need to have,” she says. “To compete in today’s environment on a professional level, you need the latest training.”

So when Niagara announced the plans to build a new science building and renovate DePaul Hall, Judy was one of the first to offer her support. Her $100,000 gift was made in memory of the Rev. Francis X. Prior, C.M., a longtime Niagara administrator who was a dear friend of Judy’s. Father Prior, who passed away in August of 2006, “symbolizes the reasons why Niagara is so special,” Judy says.

The donation will go toward the construction of a state-of-the-art, integrated science center for learning and research in biology, chemistry, physics, bioinformatics and computational chemistry. Partial funding for the facility is included in the university’s “Promise of Niagara” capital campaign. The science center will feature exactly the kinds of things Judy advocates: teaching laboratories with the necessary equipment to support student-faculty research collaborations and make the classroom experience hands-on and participatory. These enhancements will enable students to “hit the ground running” when they start out in their own careers.

Judy, herself, was the beneficiary of an education that gave her a strong foundation for her future in the health care industry. “Coming out of Niagara’s nursing program, we all knew we had a solid background in nursing,” she notes.

She began her career as an intensive care nurse, then went on to earn a master’s degree at Arizona State University before taking on a position as a cardiovascular nurse specialist at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. She also taught graduate-level courses and was promoted to clinical director of surgical nursing during her tenure at the hospital.

Although she enjoyed the challenge her work provided, Judy left the workforce for a decade while she raised her three children. When she went back to work, it was in pharmaceutical research at Johnson & Johnson. “It was very surprising to me to find myself in a research role,” she admits, “but when you have a strong preparation, you can make career changes.”

Now, Judy applies her nursing background and her graduate research experience to her role as a manager of global clinical trials for Johnson & Johnson, helping to develop innovative, effective medicines that treat many of the world’s most serious and widespread diseases. “It’s very exciting from a nursing point of view to see what can be done for patients,” she says. “You get very excited when you find out there’s a breakthrough that can really help patients’ lives.”

Since graduating from Niagara, Judy has seen, firsthand, the value of substantial career preparation, especially in the math and science disciplines, and has made it a priority to help future Niagara students receive the proper training as well. “My quest is to do what I can do to ensure the development of math and science education,” she says.

— Lisa McMahon

From Don’s Desk

By Don Bielecki
Vice President for Institutional Advancement

Stewardship of budgeted resources, including those in the Office of Institutional Advancement, has been and always will be a top priority for Niagara University. The current economic climate has created challenges for us, and we are meeting those challenges by taking several creative steps that will enable us to continue to advance the position of the university and communicate more effectively with you, our alumni and friends. For example, we will expand and enhance our use of technology, including the Eagle’s Nest, Niagara’s online alumni community; blast e-mails; and the Niagara Web site. In addition, we will launch an online version of the Eagle alumni magazine this fall. This publication will complement the printed version with “Web exclusive” content such as expanded stories, additional photos, podcasts, audio clips, and slide shows. Readers will also be able to comment on articles and read what others are saying.

Through these exciting new initiatives, it will be even easier for you to catch up with real-time Niagara news, register for events, make gifts, and interact with classmates and friends. We’ve opened up a whole new window to Niagara!
Making Faces

Under the skilled hands of forensic artist Ed Gardner, ’87, the identities of unknown individuals are discovered

By Lisa McMahon

The man was African American, in his early to mid-20s, about 6 feet tall, slender. He wore a Nike windbreaker and a Nautica sweatshirt, and carried a rap music tape and a plastic bag from the Navy Exchange in his pocket. Since May 1997, when his body had first been discovered in the water at Norfolk Naval Station, his identity, and cause of death, remained a mystery. He was buried a John Doe.

Nearly a decade later, the case was resurrected. A forensic artist was brought in, and under his skillful hands, a face began to take shape in the clay he applied to the exhumed skull. One prominent feature stood out — the man had a Type 3 malocclusion: his lower jaw protruded forward, his lower teeth extended over the upper. Ultimately, that unique feature helped to identify the man whose nickname was “Gator.”

An episode of CSI? No, just a day in the life of Special Agent Ed Gardner, ’87, of the Naval Criminal Investigative Service.

A career as a police officer was the furthest thing from Gardner’s mind when he enrolled at Niagara University as a legacy student. (His dad, Roy, is a member of the Class of 1960.) A political science major, Gardner expected to go on to law school after graduation. However, fate stepped in when he accompanied a friend to the Monmouth County, N.J., Police Academy to take the chief’s exam. On a whim, Gardner took the test himself, and passed.

Realizing that he was interested in a career in law enforcement after all, Gardner completed the academy’s training program. He spent 14 years as a police officer, first in New Jersey, then in the Charleston, S.C., police department, receiving numerous commendations for his investigative work.

In 1997, he earned his master’s degree in criminal justice from the University of South Carolina, and added teaching to his workload. He developed and taught forensics courses at his alma mater, the Citadel, and Trident Technical College. “It was right on the wave of ‘CSI,’” he says, referring to the television show.

After the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, Gardner began focusing on a “more global” career. “I was lucky to have a wife who was willing to travel,” he notes. At the recommendation of a colleague, he applied to the Naval Criminal Investigative Service and completed training at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynco, Ga. As a special agent, Gardner has had multiple deployments to Iraq and posts in Southeast Asia. One of his assignments was to interview several of the most-wanted members of Saddam Hussein’s regime, as identified by the U.S. military’s “Deck of Cards,” an experience, he says, that gave him a new perspective on the war and the relentlessness with which these individuals will attempt to achieve their objectives. His service in Iraq was recognized with two Meritorious Civilian Service Awards.

In Iraq, Gardner was also afforded the unique opportunity to offer a more positive perception of America for the Iraqi people when he helped to distribute soccer uniforms and equipment to children in that country. The items were collected by students in the school his children attended, and his nephew. “It’s nice to be able to do some service while you’re doing your job,” he notes.

Ed Gardner flies the Niagara University flag on a patrol boat in Iraq.
Over the years, Gardner developed a specialty as a forensic artist, something that had piqued his interest while working in Charleston. Like many forensic artists, Gardner’s interest developed out of necessity — he was frustrated by the backlog of his cases. Although his drawing ability was admittedly limited, he took a few courses in forensic art. His first sketch, which helped to positively identify a robbery suspect, convinced him that he had a knack for the job.

“If it works the first time, I’ll do it forever,” he says.

Now a board-certified forensic artist, Gardner has completed more than 100 composite drawings and facial reconstructions for law enforcement agencies in cases involving homicides, armed robberies and sexual assaults, and has served as a court-certified expert for South Carolina’s circuit court.

Forensic art is not an exact science, and Gardner notes that “a picture is only going to be as good and precise as the witness is.” He adds that timing is important because memories fade. He draws upon his investigative skills when interviewing eye witnesses, helping them get their “strength of recall back.” Sometimes this involves looking through a book of facial features to help witnesses select those that most closely resemble the suspect’s. Other times, Gardner will start with seemingly unimportant information to evoke the memories needed to create the sketch. One such case involved a witness to an armed robbery who could remember only the gun used in the holdup. By letting her “free flow” the interview with the details she could remember, Gardner was able to help her recall the suspect’s features. She remembered enough to direct Gardner in sketching a composite drawing that helped to identify the suspect, who was also wanted in North Carolina for a bank robbery.

The process takes between two and four hours. Gardner starts by drawing the shape of a head, then developing a rudimentary drawing. Over the course of the interview, he enhances the features, creating a final composite, something that might trigger a memory and an identification. He notes that perfection is not the goal. In fact, he says that if a witness rates his drawing as a “10” on a scale of one to 10, “I’ve got a problem.”

“You’re looking for quick, not perfect,” he says. “That’s where you have to be able to cut your ego off — it’s not art.”

Gardner also is skilled in two- and three-dimensional facial reconstruction, a process that often takes several days to complete and incorporates the disciplines of forensic science, anthropology, osteology, and anatomy. Based on the skull’s genetic makeup, tissue depth markers are applied and a drawing or clay sculpture of the unidentified individual is completed.

Here, again, Gardner notes that the artist must resist the urge to make the victim look better than he or she did in life. “I let the skull dictate to me what the (individual) looked like. You have to do what the skull tells you to do,” he says.

Despite the darkness of the field, Gardner notes that there is a bright side to his work: Sometimes, it will result in a positive outcome for a wrongly accused suspect. That, he says, is his favorite part of the job.

Out of the office, Gardner participates in a sport he’s enjoyed since his days on Monteagle Ridge: rugby. Although he no longer plays the game due to a leg injury, he was named a National Panel Referee in both the United States and in Japan, and has officiated games in a number of countries, including South Africa, Spain, New Zealand, Canada, Ireland, and the Bahamas. His next NCIS assignment will take him to London, where he’ll referee a Rugby World Cup tournament.

His love of travel and his demonstrated ability as an investigator have led Gardner to where he is today, but he notes that it was his experience at Niagara that underlies all his accomplishments.

“When I look back, I think the education I was offered here and the ideals I was exposed to help me in my work today,” he says. “Niagara instilled in me the desire to make a positive difference.”
You awake and prepare yourself for your day. Upon completion of your habitual chores, you journey to your place of employment. After an uneventful trip to work, you arrive at your point of destination with no reason to think that the day ahead will be significantly different from any other. However, at some point during this particular day, you are summoned to your supervisor’s office or human resources department and informed that you have been terminated from your employer’s work force. You, through no fault of your own, are suddenly unemployed.
This scenario is not a promo for a new episode of “The Twilight Zone”; it is reality, and it is happening to millions of Americans.

The all-too-common first reaction is one of disbelief, anxiety, confusion, and frequently, anger. Thoughts like “I have a mortgage, car payments, my children’s tuition…” “How can I afford health insurance?” and “Why me?” race through your mind. Try to remember that you’ve done nothing wrong. The decision behind this downsizing was probably not directly related to your performance. After all, you were not “fired,” a connotation that often suggests wrongdoing or incompetence. You are not being punished. You are the victim of economic forces that are beyond your control. Nevertheless, you still must deal with your situation and have no choice other than to move forward. Here are some things to keep in mind as you do:

- **You may receive a severance package.** This varies from employer to employer, so seek legal counsel to assist in the interpretation of your specific severance package. If you are afforded severance pay, be sure to know if you can simultaneously collect unemployment insurance. If you are enrolled in your employer’s health care plan, be certain that you will receive the option for continued coverage under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act, commonly referred to as COBRA, and be well aware of your rights with respect to continued health insurance coverage. Get it in writing.

- **You may be eligible for unemployment benefits.** File for unemployment and follow the requirements and regulations to the letter. Eligibility laws differ from state to state. Know precisely what they are and how they apply to you.

- **This is a good time to revisit your finances.** Seek out a qualified financial adviser and brainstorm ideas that are best suited to your particular needs at this time. You may wish to consider less risky approaches to your financial future. Also, this may not be the best time for capital expenditures or luxuries. You can always reconsider after you have secured employment.

- **A layoff might lead to opportunity.** In many cases you can receive state or locally funded training in subjects that can enhance your qualifications. This is particularly important if your job was in an industry that was severely impacted by the recession. There are multiple sources offering a wide variety of training programs available. Consider four year institutions, community colleges, trade schools, nonprofits and AARP, if you’re eligible. Think about consulting, if only for a short time. Continue to research and keep an open mind.

- **It is important to take the time to realistically assess and evaluate your strengths, accomplishments, weaknesses, and career objectives.** Employers are not only seeking candidates that qualify, they also require employees who fit the nature of the position and the organization. Communication skills, analytical ability, being able to work as part of a team, and a host of other characteristics will enable you to succeed in a given work environment. Be certain that you are pursuing employment that is compatible with your objectives, skills, abilities and knowledge.
• For some, relocation is a realistic option. If you don’t have the flexibility to relocate, you may wish to consider a position that, in your eyes, may be less challenging and rewarding, but could be a way to get your foot in the door. In any event, it can help you to weather the recession until better economic times arrive. However, don’t stop searching for the “right” job.

• Your résumé is more than a history of your employment and education. You must consider it a sales tool. It is imperative that your résumé reflect your strengths and accomplishments as well as your past responsibilities. Employers are more concerned about how you can contribute to their organization than with your past duties and responsibilities. Of course, it’s important that you tell the prospective employer what you have done in the past. Just be sure to tell him or her how well you have done it or how it contributed to the success of the organization. By the way, your résumé must be error free. Many employers read a résumé with a red pen in one hand. Neatness, accuracy and sound grammar are a reflection of your work habits. After you have read your résumé several times, have someone with sound reading and writing skills proofread it.

• A well-written cover letter (only one page, please) that directly communicates how your attributes can be an asset to the employer is essential to the job-search process. Use bullet points to showcase your qualifications and accomplishments. Here’s an idea: send one letter and résumé to the appropriate human resources contact and another to the department manager. Be sure to research and use their names when writing your cover letter. On average, the person reading your cover letter will devote only a few seconds to it. Bullet points help the reader to focus in on your message. Call in two weeks to find out if your employment information was received and, while you’re on the phone, ask if you may be granted an interview. What do you have to lose? Your cover letter must also be flawless — no typos. Both résumé and cover letter should be printed on white, light gray or beige paper. Use a high-quality résumé-grade paper. Of course, you may find yourself e-mailing your résumé and cover letter. Maintain a file of all cover letters sent, whether by e-mail or other means.

• A successfully conducted job search requires hours of research and more research. Use all means available to seek out possible job opportunities, including cold calls to employers that are not advertising. The Internet, professional journals, career fairs and search firms are viable sources that should be utilized. Your local employment and training site and state department of labor should be able to provide you with additional job-search expertise.

• The most successful method of locating meaningful employment is networking. Approximately 70 percent of all jobs are landed through networking. Far too many people withdraw when confronted by unemployment when, in fact, they should take the exact opposite approach. Contact your friends and acquaintances. Although they may not be in a position to help you directly, they might be able to provide referrals that, in turn, can offer additional knowledge or connect you with someone who is hiring. Generally, people like to give advice and to feel they are being helpful; it’s what networking is all about. Talk to everyone, not just those in positions of power and influence. Frequently, the third or fourth link in the networking chain can be the charm. As noted, use all sources at your disposal, but focus heavily on the networking process. It has been proven to be the most effective means of locating the “right” job.

• Prior to interviewing, you should prepare a well-thought-out commercial that doesn’t exceed three minutes. A frequently asked interview question is, “Tell me about yourself.” You must be prepared to respond without repeating everything on your résumé. Include why you chose the field you’re in, how you have contributed to the success of past employers, what you enjoy about your profession or trade, what you desire in a job, what you can bring to the prospective employer, your future professional plans, etc. Just be sure that what you say is compatible with the nature of the job for which you are being interviewed. Pick up a well-written book about interviewing. I’ve always enjoyed “Knock ’em Dead” by Martin Yate. He’s very comprehensive and offers excellent tips about answering the tough questions.

• A thank you letter is required following each interview. It is recommended that you mail and e-mail every individual who interviewed you, so request a business card from each. If this isn’t possible, call the office and ask the receptionist, secretary or person with whom you interviewed for his or her name (request the correct spelling), title and address. Once again, save a hard copy of each letter.

• Don’t be shy — ask the interviewer about the next step in the selection process and when the organization intends to fill the position. And don’t hesitate to call the interviewer for the status of the position if you haven’t been notified before the due date arrives.

Millions of hardworking Americans have lost their jobs within the past year. We all have been affected in some way by losing our own position, seeing a co-worker exit, or knowing someone who has been downsized. Whatever your personal status may be, please remember to reach out to those less fortunate and offer your support. Please do not let the unemployed feel left out. Also, it’s a good idea to keep your own résumé updated at all times, if only to maintain a file with your new responsibilities and accomplishments. The vicissitudes of today’s workplace demand it.
USE THE INTERNET AS A JOB-SEARCH RESOURCE
The following sites can provide leads and information as you look for your next job.

THE EAGLE’S NEST
Niagara’s online alumni community
www.niagaraalumni.com
(See page 28 for more information on our online career services center)

GENERAL SITES
America’s Career InfoNet
www.acinet.org
Career Builder Network
www.careerbuilder.com
Career City/True Careers
www.careercity.com or www.truecareers.com
Career Magazine
www.careermag.com
Craigslist
www.craigslist.com
Help Wanted.com
www.helpwanted.com
HotJobs.com
www.hotjobs.com or www.hotjobs.yahoo.com
JobBankUSA
www.jobbankusa.com
JobSniper
www.jobsniper.com
JobTrak
www.jobtrak.com or www.monstertrak.com
JobWeb
www.jobweb.com
Monster.com
www.monster.com
NationJob Network
www.nationjob.com

New York State Department of Labor
www.labor.state.ny.us
The Riley Guide
www.rileyguide.com
Vault
www.vault.com

RECRUITMENT INFORMATION SITES
Interbiznet.com
www.interbiznet.com
Advanced Internet Recruitment Strategies
www.airsdirectory.com
Fast Company
www.fastcompany.com
Harvard Business Review
www.hbsp.harvard.edu/products/hbr
WetFeet
www.wetfeet.com

RELOCATION
DataMasters
www.datamasters.com
Yahoo Relocation
www.realestate.yahoo.com
Home Fair
www.homefair.com
Wall Street Journal
www.homes.wsj.com

SELF EMPLOYMENT
Be the Boss
www.franchiseexpo.com
BizTalk.com
www.biztalk.com
Business Plans
www.bplans.com

SCORE
Counselors to America’s Small Business
www.score.org
The Small Business Advisor
www.isquare.com
Idea Café
www.businessownersideacafe.com
Small Business Survival Center
www.business-survival.com
Start Up Journal
www.startupjournal.com
The Online Women’s Business Center
www.onlinewbc.org
Business Owner’s Toolkit
www.toolkit.cch.com
Entrepreneur.com
www.entrepreneur.com
Axxess Business Centers
www.abcbizhelp.net
International Franchise Association
www.franchise.org
Money Hunter
www.moneyhunter.com

OLDER WORKERS
AARP
www.aarp.org
Experience Works
www.experienceworks.org
50 and Overboard
www.50andoverboard.com
Employment of Seniors
www.go60.com
It’s Monday morning in Realville, USA. The town’s residents are slowly moving into their days — some are going to work, some are looking for jobs; some are taking their children to school or day care, while others are staying at home to care for young, elderly or disabled family members. Their situations are different, but their challenge is the same — successfully get through the days, weeks and month ahead.

For some 75 Niagara University students, Realville was located in the central exhibition hall of the Castellani Art Museum, and the month they negotiated was completed in an hour and a half on a Tuesday night in March.

It was the second night of a two-night poverty simulation coordinated by Dr. Kevin Blair, associate professor of social work. Blair, who teaches a course on poverty, had participated in a similar exercise conducted by the United Way of Buffalo and Erie County and thought it would be a valuable experience for students.

The event is “a virtual simulation of life on the edge,” Blair said. “Participants take on roles and responsibilities of families with low incomes and face the challenges of those with little money and a lot of stress.”

Following the Missouri Community Action Program’s simulation experience, Blair worked with a group that included faculty members, administrators and community agency representatives to develop the event. The location was secured, volunteers to staff resource tables were recruited, and several classes were invited to participate. The event was held on two consecutive evenings to accommodate the number of participants and their schedules.

For those two nights, the Castellani was transformed into a small community, complete with a bank, a grocery store, a school, a child care center, a pawn shop, a police department, a mortgage company, a Quick Cash store, and human service agencies. Students portrayed the residents of the community and their circumstances varied widely. For four 15-minute intervals (“weeks”), they were tasked with providing the basic necessities and shelter for themselves and their families using whatever means of income they had. To make the experience even more realistic, “Luck of the Draw” cards representing real-life situations like a purse being stolen, a car needing repairs, or a loan being paid back, were distributed throughout the evening. Other factors, including a weeklong school vacation, job layoffs, and the limited availability of transportation passes, provided additional challenges for the participants. By the end of the
“month,” several families had been evicted from their homes, others hadn’t fed their families for weeks, and almost everyone felt that their “lives” were worse off than they were when they had started.

“I started out optimistic because I had all this aid,” said Amanda Geary, a junior political science/international studies major from Syracuse, N.Y., who portrayed a 19-year-old single mother of two. However, she said that few community resources and services would accept the aid, and she became frustrated. “I was legitimately mad! I couldn’t pawn anything, I couldn’t cash any checks. At the end, it was easier to stay home.”

Students were surprised at how much time it took to be poor. “If I had one or two more minutes, I could have accomplished so much more,” one observed. They also began to realize how much it costs to raise a family, and how the stress of coping with poverty could affect them.

“When we first started, we were a happy family,” said one student. “But the longer we went, the less our family stayed together.” He and his “wife” had even considered divorce, he added.

One of the biggest perceptions people have of those living in poverty is that they are lazy, noted Dr. Abigail Levin, an assistant professor of philosophy whose class participated in the simulation on the second night. “One of the best things that’s come out of this simulation is that people realize that’s not so,” she said.

Blair noted that the feedback he has gotten from the students has been positive. “Many of the students have asked how the poor ever survive,” he said. “How can they possibly exist for any length of time under such financial and time pressures?”

It is expected that the experience has changed the students’ views on poverty, and Blair and his colleagues are conducting research to determine if this is the case. They are currently analyzing pre- and post-event surveys that were completed by the simulation participants to see if there is an increased level of empathy toward the poor. Blair hopes to publish the results of this research and promote the survey as an instrument in and of itself. If all goes as planned, the simulation will become an annual event, and Blair will track students’ attitudes toward the poor over several years. He is also considering replicating the survey and simulation at other local colleges.

While the direct influence of the poverty simulation was limited to the 140 students who participated, its indirect effect may be far-reaching, if students accept the challenge issued to them by Karen Edmond, field practicum coordinator in the social work department, who directed the event on the second night. “This poverty simulation does not have to end here,” she said. “My charge for you all is to educate other people. Don’t let it end here.”

Filling out forms took a lot of the students’ time. Meeting with social services representatives was often the first step for the students, and they often had to bring their “children” with them.
Matiash Takes the Baton for a Twirl

By Jason Mollica

It is a sport that requires agility, stamina and incredible concentration. This may sound like golf or gymnastics, but Jeff Matiash doesn’t swing a 5 iron or work the pommel horse. What he does is twirl a baton.

The 18-year-old academic exploration major has been working at his craft for more than 15 years, the pinnacle of which came in April when he appeared at the National Baton Twirling Association World Baton Championships in Ghent, Belgium, and garnered a bronze medal. It was a whirlwind trip, but one that was embraced by the hard-working Matiash.

“It was a wonderful experience and the outcome was kind of unexpected,” he says.

Matiash got his start in twirling by watching his sister, Brittany, practice at the Niagara Roylettes and Majorettes studio in Niagara Falls. “While I was there, I would steal her baton,” he recalls.

Brittany was a great role model for a then 3-year-old Jeff. “I thought it was really cool that she was learning new things,” he says. “When she would toss the baton in the air, I would get excited and want to do that, too.”

It wasn’t until he was 7 years old that Matiash began to take twirling seriously. In 1997, he was an alternate for his sister’s group at the U.S. Nationals. “I got to do my own thing on the side and I was just enjoying every moment of it,” he says. Seeing all the best twirlers in the country cemented his future ambitions for success. 

“My dream from then on was to make the world championships,” Matiash says.

Since that first appearance at nationals, Matiash has honed his skills. He spends 10 hours a week practicing his routine at the Niagara Royallettes studio with studio owner and coach Judy Evans. “I’m not a person who likes to practice for long,” Matiash says jokingly. He notes that “practicing a routine over and over again helps me gain the stamina” needed to perform competition routines, which typically last two and a half minutes.

During training, Matiash perfects moves he may use in events. “One move I like to do is to bounce the baton off my leg,” he says. He frequently includes this move in his routines.

An integral part of any twirling routine is the choreography and the first step is picking out music. Matiash and Evans review a long playlist of possible songs to find just the right one. “We try to find something that signifies me and is easy to interpret,” Matiash says. “It usually takes me a few months to choose one.” Matiash and Evans slowly narrow the list until they agree on a song that works best with the routine.

For a long time, Matiash performed to instrumental pieces. Recently, he shook things up a bit and chose Vanessa Carlton’s version of “Paint it Black.” “It was a different direction for me,” he says of the song, which was originally recorded by The Rolling Stones. “I liked it because it’s more upbeat.”

Matiash also works on his routine by performing during Niagara basketball games at the Gallagher Center. He has received kudos from Niagara and NBA Hall-of-Famer Calvin Murphy, an accomplished twirler himself. Matiash has crossed paths with Murphy on more than one occasion; the most recent was prior to the men’s game versus Illinois State in February. “He told me to stick to it and continue to work hard,” Matiash recalls.

Last year, Matiash took part in his fifth nationals, which were held at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind. Nearly 1,500 competitors from around the United States were on hand. Matiash notes that the nationals are very much like a gymnastics competition during the Olympic Games. There are 30 lanes in the arena with different events going on simultaneously. He describes the atmosphere at nationals as “incredible”
because everyone involved — participants, coaches and parents — is very supportive and positive.

As in gymnastics, Matiash says, a baton routine should catch the eyes of the judges. “You like to start off with a hard trick,” he explains. “Then you go into things that look simple, but are actually really difficult.” Routines don’t center only on tosses, but rather include a lot of rolls, which require the twirler to relax, despite how tense he or she might be due to the excitement of the event. Matiash notes that these intervals provide a “breather” before the final part of the routine, which also must be an eye-catcher. “You want a big finale so the judges are impressed,” he says.

Matiash placed third in the nationals, which earned him a spot at the world championships in Belgium. “I cried because I didn’t expect to make it,” Matiash says.

Accompanied by his parents, Mary, the longtime secretary in Niagara’s department of athletics, and Keith; older brother Nick, a junior at Niagara; Brittany; and Evans, Matiash traveled 4,000 miles to get to Ghent to realize his dream.

More than 1,000 women and nearly 30 men competed in Belgium. Matiash performed in one category, rhythmic twirl, and placed in the top six during the first day of competition, which earned him a spot in the finals on April 12.

Up against the best twirlers in the world, Matiash remained relatively calm during the finals and kept the moment in perspective. “I thought that this is the last time I will get to do this and I should enjoy it,” he says, adding that he also thought about his mother’s encouragement that no matter what, his presence in Ghent was a big step.

After Matiash performed his final routine, he left the floor discouraged. “I was thinking about the mistakes I made,” he says. “I thought I did better in the preliminary round.”

However, later that day he heard the news he had waited a lifetime to hear — he had placed in the top three in the world. “I was overwhelmed and very shocked,” Matiash says. Watching the United States flag being raised in honor of his accomplishment was a special moment for Matiash. “It’s a pretty good feeling when you see the flags rising and one of them is yours,” he says.

Proud family and friends began to call and share their excitement about Matiash’s success. “My cell phone was ringing off the hook,” he says. His Facebook page was also filled with congratulatory messages. “They were very happy that someone from our area had done something like this,” Matiash notes.

Matiash knows that his days of competing are winding down. “My body will not be able to take it when I’m 28,” he admits. He has a plan for the future, though: He wants to teach the next generation of twirlers at Niagara Royalettes and continue performing at Niagara basketball games.

Jeff Matiash has been on a pretty unique ride around the country and the world. “It has been a dream,” he says. All he had to do was pick up the baton.
The chance to visually interact with someone from another country in real time is something that most of us, with the exception of some national media members, will never get to experience. Such an opportunity, however, was recently granted to a select group of Niagara University students. This once-in-a-lifetime opportunity came to fruition on March 30, when students in Dr. Stefanie Wichhart’s Modern Middle East class participated in a live video conference with students from American University Cairo in Egypt.

When thinking about the Middle East, people often conjure up images of violence, war and terrorism. In the aftermath of the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001, such perceptions are more common than ever. What many fail to realize when thinking about the Middle East, however, is that there are real people living in the region.

“I find that one of the challenges of studying this region is trying to put a human face on it,” Wichhart says. “For this class, one of my goals was to develop assignments that help students see how developments in the region affect the everyday lives of people. I want my students to look beyond what they see in the news. This project is a perfect opportunity for them to do that, because it literally puts a human face on the region.”

Wichhart first learned of the project through an e-mail that was sent out to American faculty who study the Middle East. As a former AUC student, Wichhart admits she was excited about the prospect of doing this project because she knew the university well. “I knew this project would be something that would be a good experience for our students,” she said.

The dialogue project was adopted by AUC after the Sept. 11 attacks to promote conversation among students at AUC and students at various American universities. According to Mourad Sinot, project coordinator at AUC, it has had great success to date. Videoconferences have been held with Georgetown University, New York University and the United States Naval Academy, among many others.

“Communication is a human need,” Sinot says. “This program is done in the hope that dialogue bridges the gap between, and removes the hidden barriers between, different people.”

Topics discussed during the two-hour videoconference included technology and its impact on American and Middle Eastern culture, media objectivity in the United States and the Middle East, and dating practices of American and Middle Eastern youth. Even controversial subjects like politics and religion were discussed, and, while the students were respectful of one another, there were some tense moments during the conversation.

Overall, however, the tone of the dialogue was healthy, and it quickly turned into a lively, insightful discourse, with both sides expressing their desire to speak with each other again.

Connections were made between the American students and their Egyptian counterparts on a number of levels, and many Niagara students were surprised to discover just how similar the Egyptian students are to them. For example, both groups of students wear similar clothes, share many of the same concerns, and use many of the same technologies, such as cell phones, iPods and Facebook.

The conversation also changed some of the student’s expectations. “It surprised me how open they were on some of the dialogue, especially on discussions about sexuality,” notes history major Jill Lonie, a junior at Niagara. “Also, they were very informed about our country’s history and politics, more so than some American students.”

Dan Bondy, a senior history major at Niagara, found the experience valuable because it allowed him to actually see and speak with real people from the region, as opposed to a group that claims to represent the region. “Firsthand experience is critical in any field, so to know exactly what these people are feeling is vital,” Bondy says, adding that it may be a first step to change the “us versus them” dichotomy.

T.J. Colangelo is a senior communication studies major at Niagara University
Edward J. Kampf, ’65, DMD

It takes only the first few moments in conversation with Niagara alumnus Ed Kampf, ’65, to realize he experiences his life as a mission to be most fully and vitally lived. But he doesn’t think that he is special in any way. Rather, Kampf will be the first to offer that his life has been one of gifts received and returned; gifts that have inspired a personal philanthropy whose currency is vested in his hands as a dental surgeon.

Kampf is a graduate of NU’s College of Arts and Sciences. His tenure at Niagara was during a time when much of the American way of life was just beginning to come under cultural and political scrutiny. He credits his parents, and later, his NU classmates, for helping to reinforce his sense of wanting to give back. Kampf maintains that his experiences helped him recognize that “community” extends to any and all people who present themselves in need.

After graduating from Niagara, Kampf entered the School of Dental Medicine at Tufts University. He performed his residency at Albany Medical Center and was approached after completion with offers to join already well-established dental practices in the Albany area.

However, Kampf, who was now married and had adopted a child, wanted to serve as a dentist and dental surgeon in either VISTA or the Peace Corps. Unfortunately, neither program offered service opportunities to persons with dependents under 18 years of age. Nevertheless, Kampf knew that he had to follow his mission and find a way to care for people in some of the most poverty-stricken areas of Belize, Guatemala and the Sierra Madre region of Central Mexico.

To understand the conditions Kampf worked in during these mission trips, it is important to know that in Guatemala alone, the infant mortality rate is 28 deaths per one thousand births; diseases that are no longer known in advanced, industrial countries ravage the population; and it was only as late as 1996 that Guatemala was able to end a 36-year, guerilla-led war in which well over 100,000 Guatemalans were killed and one million refugees displaced. In Belize, as well as in Central Mexico where Kampf has also served, the health status of the people for whom these missions care is equally dire.

“I always felt that I had a lot relative to the rest of the world and that I should share it or give back,” Kampf says.

At this writing, Kampf is preparing to join another mission in the fall, most likely to Guatemala again with the team from Glens Falls Hospital.

In response to a question of how he feels his time at Niagara influenced his future, Kampf says, “I was impressed by the dedication of the Vincentians, most especially Father Thomas McGourty. But I was equally influenced by their faith in me and what that faith demanded of my personal responsibility in what they, as faculty and mentors, expected of me. That, along with the lifelong partnership with my wife, Anne, has made all the difference.”

— Patrick Hulsman
Alumni Association
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Lavisse Smith, ’75
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Jason Stein, ’93
Iasha Stone, ’08
Michelle Van de Loo, ’01

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tonylista@aol.com

Fellow alumni,
As we highlighted in the last issue of the Eagle magazine, our online alumni community, the Eagle’s Nest, recently celebrated its fifth birthday. In recognition of this special occasion, the alumni association and the alumni relations office sent out mouse pads to all Niagarans. As a result, we have seen a 28 percent increase in the number of users at the Eagle’s Nest. Thank you to all for taking the time to check out this great alumni tool. And, if you haven’t yet been to the Eagle’s Nest, what are you waiting for? Visit www.niagaraalumni.com today and start connecting online with your fellow alumni.

Also, be sure to check out the articles in this issue on the latest enhancements to the Eagle’s Nest, including our new Groups Feature and our career center.

This summer, we have lots of great opportunities for you to get involved in alumni activities. The athletics and alumni Kist Golf Classic kicks off our summer schedule on Monday, June 8. Held at the Niagara Falls Country Club, the event brings alumni together with Niagara University coaches to raise monies to benefit student-athlete programs. For our Rochester alumni, the seventh annual Alumni Golf Classic will be held on Thursday, June 11. This popular alumni outing supports the Gibbons Scholarship Fund. West Coast alumni will have the opportunity to attend alumni gatherings in San Francisco, the Los Angeles area, and San Diego June 12-14, when the Rev. Joseph L. Levesque, C.M., Niagara’s president, and alumni office staff head to California.

As per tradition, our summer schedule draws to a close with our annual Day at the Races in Saratoga Springs, N.Y. We will gather July 31-Aug. 1 for this must-attend alumni event. If you have not attended this event in the past, put it on your things-to-do list this year. And, if you’ve joined us before, please consider joining us again this year!

For the latest information on alumni events, visit the Eagle’s Nest at www.niagaraalumni.com. I encourage you to keep active with your alumni association; you will be surprised to find all that we have to offer. And, if you have suggestions about what you’d like to see from your association, please e-mail us at alumni@niagara.edu.

Sincerely,
Dr. Gregory Hudecki, ’68
President, Niagara University Alumni Association

PS: Be sure to check out our tentative event listing for the 2009-2010 season on the next page.

Ellen Brosnan Durstin, ’68; Brian Mylod, ’68; Kathy Cichy Mylod, ’69; Jeff Sullivan, ’69; and Donna Sullivan at the MAAC event in Albany.

Marianne Hyndman Sullivan, ’81; Jim Sullivan, ’80; and Kathleen Hillman Simmons, ’82, at the tri-state Manhattan game and reception.

alumniassociation update
www.niagaraalumni.com

Alumni association president Greg Hudecki, ’68, enjoys a fall afternoon fishing in the Niagara gorge just below the NU campus.
And They’re Off!

Mark your calendars now for Niagara’s annual Day at the Races event in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., held this year Friday, July 31, and Saturday, Aug. 1. The racing event is Saturday, with our traditional night-before event on Friday. Due to the limited ticket availability, this event typically sells out quickly, so be sure to register as soon as possible. And, as always, the quickest and easiest way to register is by going online at the Eagle’s Nest at www.niagaraalumni.com. The Eagle’s Nest will have the latest information about the event, as well as details on how to be a part of our hotel room block and save up to 50 percent on your hotel room!

Join in on the Fun!

Alumni events are a great way to stay connected to Niagara, no matter your location. Mark your calendar for these upcoming alumni activities so you won’t miss out.*

**Summer 2009**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 8</td>
<td>Buffalo-Niagara, Kist Golf Classic</td>
<td>Buffalo-Niagara</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 11</td>
<td>Rochester, Alumni Golf Outing</td>
<td>Rochester</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 12</td>
<td>San Francisco, Gallery Reception</td>
<td>San Francisco</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 13</td>
<td>Southern California, Alumni Outdoor BBQ</td>
<td>Southern California</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 14</td>
<td>San Diego, Alumni Brunch</td>
<td>San Diego</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 31-Aug. 1</td>
<td>Albany, Saratoga Races</td>
<td>Albany, Saratoga</td>
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**Fall 2009**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 12</td>
<td>Chicago, Arlington Races</td>
<td>Chicago</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 23</td>
<td>Washington, D.C., Buffalo Nite</td>
<td>Washington, D.C.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 27</td>
<td>Central Maryland, Crab Feast</td>
<td>Central Maryland</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 9-11</td>
<td>Niagara University, Alumni Weekend</td>
<td>Niagara University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 15</td>
<td>Central New York, Networking Event</td>
<td>Central New York</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 21</td>
<td>Boston, Networking Event</td>
<td>Boston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 22</td>
<td>Tri-State, Networking Event</td>
<td>Tri-State</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 7</td>
<td>Buffalo-Niagara, Dinner Theater</td>
<td>Buffalo-Niagara</td>
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**Winter 2009-2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Albany, Siena Basketball Game and Reception</td>
<td>Albany</td>
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<tr>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Buffalo-Niagara, N-Zone Event</td>
<td>Buffalo-Niagara</td>
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<tr>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Central Maryland, Loyola Basketball Game and Reception</td>
<td>Central Maryland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Delaware Valley, Rider Basketball Game and Reception</td>
<td>Delaware Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>Tri-State, Hockey or Basketball Game and Reception</td>
<td>Tri-State</td>
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**Spring 2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 12</td>
<td>Tri-State, St. Patrick's Day Party</td>
<td>Tri-State</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 28</td>
<td>Charlotte, Chapter Planning Meeting</td>
<td>Charlotte</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 6</td>
<td>Delaware Valley, Networking Event</td>
<td>Delaware Valley</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 8</td>
<td>Buffalo-Niagara, Dinner Theater</td>
<td>Buffalo-Niagara</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 13</td>
<td>Rochester, Networking Event</td>
<td>Rochester</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 20</td>
<td>Buffalo-Niagara, Networking Event</td>
<td>Buffalo-Niagara</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 26</td>
<td>SOLA Reunion</td>
<td>SOLA</td>
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*Tentative event schedule, subject to change. Please refer to the Eagle’s Nest at www.niagaraalumni.com for the latest event information.

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maureen@ipmba.org

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jstein@carolina.rr.com

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Members of the Class of 1981 celebrated their 50th birthdays at an informal gathering in Philadelphia, where they reconnected with the Rev. Bernard Tracey, C.M. (front row, left), and the Rev. Louis Trotta, C.M. (front row, right), former Niagara priests. In the front row (l-r) are Mary (Crawford) Kerstetter and Kathy (Sullivan) Doerner. In the back (l-r) are Kathy (Renzo) Traugott and Trish Flood Nolan. Kathy Traugott notes that Philadelphia is “a convenient meeting place for those of us coming from Rochester, N.Y., all the way to North Carolina” to share fond memories of Niagara.

1960s

Stephen D. Gerling, ’64 (CA&S/History), Whitesboro, N.Y., has retired from the bench after 23 years as bankruptcy court judge in the northern district of New York, Utica Division.

John C. Ford, ’65 (CA&S/History), Ulster Park, N.Y., has taken a new position as a sales representative with Daktronics, out of Brookings, S.D.

Edward J. Kampf, ’65 (CA&S/Biology), Albany, N.Y., has retired from private dental practice and is planning for his sixth dental missionary trip to Guatemala, Central America, with the intent to teach at a dental school part time (see story on page 21).

1970s

Rosemary (Conlon) McCarthy, ’70 (CN), Houston, is serving as president of the American Association of Nurse Attorneys through 2009. TAANA provides resources, education and leadership to its members and the health care and legal communities regarding health laws and policies.

Robert P. O’Neill, ’70 (TTT), Manhattan Beach, Calif., served his last day as Los Angeles Superior Court judge on March 6 after 21 years on the bench.

Gary W. Zay, ’72 (CE/Social Studies), East Hampton, N.Y., has retired from teaching in East Hampton after 35 years. He was named outstanding middle school social studies teacher for Long Island in 2000 and New York state in 2004. He is currently chief of the East Hampton Fire Department.

P. Joseph Sorg, ’73 (CA&S/Biology), Morgantown, W.V., has been named to lead the rehabilitation services team for Kane Community Hospital in Kane, Pa. The team will offer the full spectrum of rehabilitative services — physical, occupational and speech therapy.

Ann M. Sumner, ’73 (CA&S/English), Santa Rosa, Calif., has been awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities to study “Paradise Lost” at Duquesne University for the summer of 2009.

1980s

Michael J. Wayne, ’82 (CBA/Accounting), Elmira, N.Y., was promoted to senior vice president and director of marketing and public relations with Chemung Canal Trust Company. Wayne joined the company in December 2006.

Paul A. Teresi, ’88 (CA&S/Political Science), Boca Raton, Fla., received his Master of Science degree in criminal justice from Lynn University, Boca Raton, in October 2008.

Michael Lisa, ’89 (CBA), Brewster, N.Y., was named senior vice president with Corporate Synergies Group, Inc. He will assume executive responsibility for sales and growth in Manhattan, Long Island and Paramus, N.J.

1990s

Maureen (Forrester) Finney, ’91 (CA&S/Biochemistry), Amherst, N.Y., earned her doctoral degree in health policy and health education from D’Youville College in July 2008.
Robert J. Lozina, '01 (CN), Buffalo, N.Y., graduated in May 2008 from D’Youville College with a Master of Science degree in family nurse practitioner. Lozina has accepted the position of nurse practitioner with The Pulmonary Group of WNY, in Williamsville, N.Y. The group specializes in pulmonary and critical care, hyperbaric medicine and sleep medicine patients.

Jennifer (Erickson) Cozzo, '03 (CE/English), Farmington, N.Y., graduated in 2007 from Nazareth College with a master’s degree in literacy education as a literacy specialist B-12.

George Clark Jr., '06 (CBA/Accounting), Hamburg, N.Y., has been promoted to senior accountant with Lumsden & McCormick, LLP. Clark joined the firm in 2007 and specializes in New York state tax compliance for commercial businesses and individuals.

Holly N. Gioia, '07 (CBA/Marketing), Jamestown, N.Y., was named the coordinating consultant for Jamestown Community College’s sustainability committee in February 2009.

Rachel E. Holz, '07 (CA&S/Sociology), Angola, Ind., accepted the position of head women’s lacrosse coach at Trine University in Angola.

Paul A. Kloosterman, '07 (CBA/Accounting), Youngstown, N.Y., has been promoted to assurance senior with Lougen, Valenti, Bookbinder & Weintraub, LLP. Kloosterman will provide accounting and auditing services to clients in a variety of industries.

Peter C. Schmitt IV, '08 (CBA/Accounting), Buffalo, N.Y., joined the firm of Lougen, Valenti, Bookbinder & Weintraub, LLP, as a staff accountant.

marriages

Patricia Bulley, '02, Garnerville, N.Y., to Christopher Doebler, Stony Point, N.Y., Nov. 29, 2008.


birthsadoptions
To Mr. and Mrs. Gregg Finch (Laura Beachman, '86), Allen, Texas, a son, Alexander Terry, Feb. 16, 2009.

To Mr. and Mrs. James Mackey (Veronica McEvoy, '86), Brigantine, N.J., a son, Kieran McEvoy, Jan. 23, 2009.

To Mr. and Mrs. Paul Teresi, '88, Boca Raton, Fla., a daughter, Lilliana Candice, Nov. 24, 2008.

To Mr. and Mrs. David Imiola (Kimberly Rodgers, '91), West Seneca, N.Y., a daughter, Paxton Lee Ann, July 9, 2008.

To Mr. and Mrs. Eric Schindler (Sylvia Benz, '93), Christiansted, V.I., a daughter, Peyton Victoria, March 4, 2009.

Everyone Is Waiting for You
It’s never been easier to join the fun! Check out the new way to connect and communicate with your friends on the Eagle’s Nest, Niagara’s online alumni community, at www.niagaraalumni.com. Groups have arrived at the Eagle’s Nest. They are very similar to what you find on Facebook groups, so you’ll be able to:

• Join an existing group or start your own
• Invite your friends to join your group
• Share your video, photos, links, comments, and event invitations with your group
• Post your thoughts via the White Board
• Chat instantly with other group members
• RSVP to group events
• Subscribe to updates about other group members.

So visit the Eagle’s Nest and get started today … everyone is waiting for you.
To Mr. and Mrs. Michael Puma (Suzanne Lalor, ’93), Ossining, N.Y., a daughter, Bridget Grace, Nov. 29, 2008.

To Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Pole, ’95 (Colleen Dec, ’95), Natick, Mass., twin daughters, Meghan Claire and Bridget Sarah, Sept. 16, 2008.

To Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Pannozzo, ’95, Lewiston, N.Y., a daughter, Ava Catherine, Aug. 8, 2008.

To Mr. and Mrs. Christopher Cottrell (Kelly Penafeather, ’95), Auburn, N.Y., a daughter, Maggie Grace, Jan. 20, 2009.

To Mr. and Mrs. James Murray (Mary Jo Tonnies, ’95), Farmington, N.Y., a son, Brady Joseph, Nov. 28, 2008.

To Mr. and Mrs. John Mazur (Sarah Wimsatt, ’95), Dearborn, Mich., a son, Patrick Timothy, Nov. 26, 2008.

To Mr. and Mrs. Caleb Semsel, ’96 (Jenny Allen, ’96), Reading, Pa., a son, Gabriel Stephen, Sept. 16, 2008.

To Mr. and Mrs. Robert Garven (Kristine Adamczyk, ’97), North Tonawanda, N.Y., a son, Matthew Robert, Feb. 11, 2009.

To Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Pinoargote (Cara Corkran, ’97), Syracuse, N.Y., a daughter, Elianna Mercedes, Sept. 2, 2008.

To Mr. and Mrs. Henry Hughes (Melissa Cristelli, ’97), North Tonawanda, N.Y., a son, Brennan Edmund, Nov. 1, 2008.

To Mr. and Mrs. Rob Worden (Leah Zureck, ’97), West Seneca, N.Y., a son, Jace Aaron, Sept. 23, 2008.

To Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Croom (Joelle Fortunate, ’98), Fort Belvoir, Va., a son, Elias Canaan, Feb. 6, 2009.

To Mr. and Mrs. John Carney (Teresa Delisanti, ’99), Worth, Ill., a son, Connor Riley, Oct. 11, 2008.

To Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Keil (Meaghan Coleman, ’00), Walworth, N.Y., a daughter, Kinsley Ann, Dec. 4, 2008.

To Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Scott (Rebecca Dudek, ’00), Rochester, N.Y., a daughter, Brenna Catherine, Oct. 6, 2008.

To Mr. and Mrs. Olivier Cosialls (Marianne Head, ’00), Montreal, a daughter, Marguerite Kathleen, Jan. 25, 2009.

To Mr. and Mrs. John O’Brien (Kate Walsh, ’00), Webster, N.Y., a son, Patrick James, Dec. 13, 2008.

To Mr. and Mrs. Owen Hondorf, ’01 (Megan Opera, ’01), Virginia Beach, Va., a son, Nolan Charles, Feb. 22, 2009.
deaths

To have a Mass celebrated at Alumni Chapel, call NU’s campus ministry office at 716-286-8400.


with sympathy

To Marilyn (Lewis) Kraft, ’51, Lewiston, N.Y., on the death of her husband, Charles W. Kraft, ’51, March 10, 2009.
To Kathleen (Greene) Florence, ’56, Niagara Falls, N.Y., on the death of her mother, Beatrice Greene, March 7, 2009.
To Brian Mylod, ’68, Canton, Conn., on the death of his mother; and to Kathleen (Cichy) Mylod, ’69, Canton, on the death of her mother-in-law, Katherine N. Mylod, Jan. 17, 2009.
To Patrick Moran, ’75, Mechanicsville, N.Y., on the death of his brother; and to Kathryn (Newman) Moran, ’75, Mechanicsville, on the death of her brother-in-law, Kevin Moran, Nov. 8, 2008.
New Career Services Center at the Eagle’s Nest

Look for the latest enhancement to the Eagle’s Nest in early summer: a complete overhaul of the Eagle’s Nest Career Services Center online. This feature will offer you personalized job opportunities from a nationwide network of employers, as well as CareerBuilder, Dice and Yahoo! HotJobs. Additionally, you’ll have access to job postings from fellow Purple Eagles and the ability to join in on alumni-to-alumni networking online. With this latest enhancement, made available through our partnership with iModules and Experience.com, you’ll be able to access personalized career guidance content that will assist you in your job-search efforts. Job opportunities and career guidance materials will be suggested to you based on your current job or on those career fields that interest you. The possibilities are endless!

For more than a decade, several members of Niagara’s Class of 1951 and their spouses have gotten together to reminisce about their days at NU. Pictured at this year’s gathering, which was held on April 2, are (front row, l-r): Sally Waterbury, Marilyn Mitchell, Ann Starrs, Kay McDonnell, and Don McDonnell. (Back row, l-r): Charlie Starrs, and John Fischer. Not pictured, Jack Mitchell.
Religious Diversity in Health Care

The globalization of society is reflected in the multicultural nature of contemporary communities. While diversity is part of the fabric of the United States, the rapid shift of cultures and subcultures has resulted in increased personal interactions among people with varied traditions, both cultural and spiritual. People have differing, distinct faith traditions, which can be formal, such as a religious affiliation, or informal. There are rich differences in faith traditions, but a universal characteristic is that they help to define one’s purpose for being and offer a source of hope, ethics and comfort, especially when in vulnerable situations.

The diversity in religions or faith beliefs is becoming more and more apparent in health care facilities. As the importance of patient-centered care is increasingly recognized, health care providers have been required to understand cultural dimensions so they can develop cultural “competency” or “sensitivity.” However, the notion of “spiritual sensitivity” as a part of health care needs greater attention.

Nurses define their patients as persons whose essence is “mind/body/spirit” and seek to provide comprehensive health care to the whole person. When spiritual needs become apparent, an astute nurse will call a priest, minister, rabbi or the appropriate religious representative. This is good-quality care. Yet we are challenged to consider how spirituality can be integrated into routine health care. Religious beliefs, faith traditions and one’s spirituality are viewed as personal in our society, yet attention to patients’ spiritual needs has a role in health. Spiritual-care competence needs to be examined within the context of the personal interactions that occur in health care delivery.

Recently, NU’s department of nursing partnered with the Network of Religious Communities of Western New York to offer a program entitled “An Interfaith Dialogue for Nurses.” Representatives from area congregations discussed their varied religious beliefs with the nurses, sharing the basic tenants of their faith and their implications for health care. For example, a representative of the Sikh religion noted that, while both Islam and Christianity share a common belief in a single higher being, specific traditions of prayer, dietary practices and afterlife preparation differ between the two religions. He noted that the Sikh religion prohibits women from cutting their hair, so personal hygiene for a Sikh woman in a hospital would need to be planned with respect to this tradition.

A Muslim representative discussed the importance of personal prayer, said five times a day, and explained that prayers are acceptable only if the person’s body, clothing and environment are clean. In a hospital setting, it would be important to plan care to accommodate for the prayer needs of the Muslim patient. Likewise, the prayer traditions of African American fundamentalist Christians, who believe in “laying on of hands” in prayer and in recovery as God’s will, must be accommodated by providing time, place and privacy. Catholic patients also have prayer traditions and may seek to receive sacraments, which nurses can assist in facilitating.

A rabbi noted that members of the Jewish faith have specific dietary practices, and meeting these needs requires a team approach, with dietary personnel, nutritionists, physicians and nurses working together to provide appropriate meals. An atheist representing “humanistic” spirituality discussed the sources of hope and comfort in this tradition, which include the idea of living in the moment, with quality of life as a predominant value and without the belief in an afterlife or a greater spiritual entity.

These examples, as well as the conference itself, heightened nurses’ awareness of the need to recognize diversity and respect differences in this very personal dimension so that they can effectively provide comprehensive patient-centered care.

Because of the rapid change in the make-up of our communities and the diversity of faith beliefs, “spiritual competence” is a challenge. The goal in health care may not be to acquire in-depth knowledge of all of the unique cultural, religious and spiritual traditions in a community. Rather, it may be to convey genuine interest, openness and respect for the diverse beliefs among people. This can entail engaging patients and their families in discussion of what is important to them with reference to their religious practices. The nurse who initiates a sharing dialogue will enable health care to be individualized to meet the multidimensional needs of patients and their families, inclusive of their spiritual health, in the “mind/body/spirit” paradigm.

Have something to say? We’re looking for topical personal essays for “A NUView.” Articles should be approximately 700 words on the topic of your choice. Send them to: Lisa McMahon, Editor, Office of Communications and Public Relations, Niagara University, N.Y. 14109 or e-mail to lmcmahon@niagara.edu.
Niagara’s annual Alumni Weekend is scheduled for Oct. 9, 10, and 11, 2009. We hope you will join us for a weekend on Monteagle Ridge that will be filled with fun and memories. It’s the perfect time to rediscover your alma mater, reconnect with NU friends, and recommit to Niagara University. And, as always, although we are celebrating classes ending in 4s and 9s, all alumni are welcome to join us for the weekend.

Rooms have been blocked at the Crowne Plaza in Niagara Falls (300 Third Street), our headquarters hotel for Alumni Weekend ’09. Call 1-800-95FALLS to make reservations. A special rate of $129/night has been arranged. Please reference group code NUA when making your reservation. Space in the block is not guaranteed after Sept. 10.

If you are interested in assisting with the planning of your class reunion, please contact the alumni relations office at 716-286-8787 or alumni@niagara.edu.