SUMMER 2008

ELMS COLLEGE
MAGAZINE



Care for God's Creation:
Our Responsibility for Stewardship of the Earth

Addressing the Crisis in Healthcare:
New Programs Respond to Community Needs
…Page 30



All Leaders Great and Small

As I write this, I am preparing to leave for the Blue Mountains of Jamaica in the West Indies to work side-by-side with young Passionist Volunteers. It will be my sixth trip to this remote, poverty-stricken, yet stunningly beautiful place. For the past five years, Sr. Maureen Kervick, director of campus ministry, and I have led students there during spring break on service trips in partnership with Passionist Volunteers International. Sr. Maureen and other staff have also organized service trips to Honduras, rural West Virginia, and New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

This time I'm going with my 17-year-old daughter, Ella, who has participated in the Jamaica program with me since she was a first-year high school student. We go to read to, or play games with, children in rural mission schools, and to climb precipitous mountain trails to nearly inaccessible shacks to visit shut-ins who have few others to visit them. We go because we have fallen in love with the wonderful Jamaican people, who have opened their hearts and homes to us and Elms College students during these service trips. Ella's passion for the place and her belief in the program's mission is typical of the students who experience these trips; it drives them to return again and again.

You'll read about some of those students in this issue of the *Elms College Magazine*; students like Will Dziura '11, who was so moved by his first-year service trip to West Virginia that he is spending eight weeks there this summer.

You'll also learn about how some of our alumni are using the tools and confidence they gained here at the Elms to make a difference in the world. You will read about Sr. Maxyne D. Schneider '65, for example, executive director of House of Peace and Education in Gardner, who recently received an award for her contributions to the welfare of the community; and Leslie Clark-Yvon '72, who received an Outstanding Principal Award for her 15 years of service to some of the most economically challenged and educationally deprived students in Westfield.

We'll tell you about environmental concerns, and how we are called to take better care of God's creation; and you'll see how Elms College staff, faculty, and alumni like Steve Schwartz, Bill Tyler, Scott Cyr, and Karen Kurkoski '69 take seriously our role as stewards of this Earth.

A story about the innovative academic programs developed by the Divisions of Communication Sciences and Disorders and Nursing will show you how we are responding to community needs by leading initiatives to address two looming crises in healthcare.

And you'll listen in on a conversation about the future leadership of Elms College with interim president Walter Breau, and Linda Mansfield, the first alumna and only the second woman to serve as chair of the board of trustees.

In all these stories, you will see how at different times, and in different ways, we all can become leaders; all any of us needs is motivation and an opportunity to apply our values, ethics, knowledge, skills, and character. That's what Elms College does best: provides students with the proper motivation and a wealth of opportunities to be leaders, wherever they are and whatever they are doing.

As always, we welcome your feedback.

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Table of Contents

Care for God's Creation 4
Examining our responsibility for stewardship of the Earth.

14 PeaceJam 2008
Elms College hosted more than 300 high school students at the PeaceJam Northeast Youth Conference, providing them the opportunity to work with Nobel Peace Laureate Jody Williams.

Reflections on Reunion 16
Reunion co-chairs Antonietta (Toni) Scibelli DiMichele '68 and Maria (Mena) Filomena DeCarvalho'75 reflect on the May event.

Golden Blazers 17
Ann M. Gibbons '48, chair of the Golden Blazers, talks about this club for alumni who graduated more than 50 years ago.

Commencement 2008
Elms graduated 301 at the 77th commencement exercises in May. 18

20 Sacred Dancers
Five Elms College seniors enhance the experience of prayer with sacred dance.

Passing the Torch 22
Elms College welcomed both a new president and a new chair of the board of trustees on July 1.

Student News 24

25 Faculty and Staff News
Accomplishments and kudos .

26 Take Her Advice
Joyce Hampton on International Students and the Art of Advising

Step Forward Celebrates 15 Years 28

Athletics 29

30 Addressing the Crisis in Healthcare
Elms College is responding to the crisis in healthcare with new programs and partnerships in an innovative, broad-based approach to building healthier communities.

In Other News 40
Mary Kileen Bennett Award Winner; and news from the Irish Cultural Center.

41 Constituency Relations

Donors and Scholars Meet 42

Greetings
from Alumni Association President 44

45 Calendar

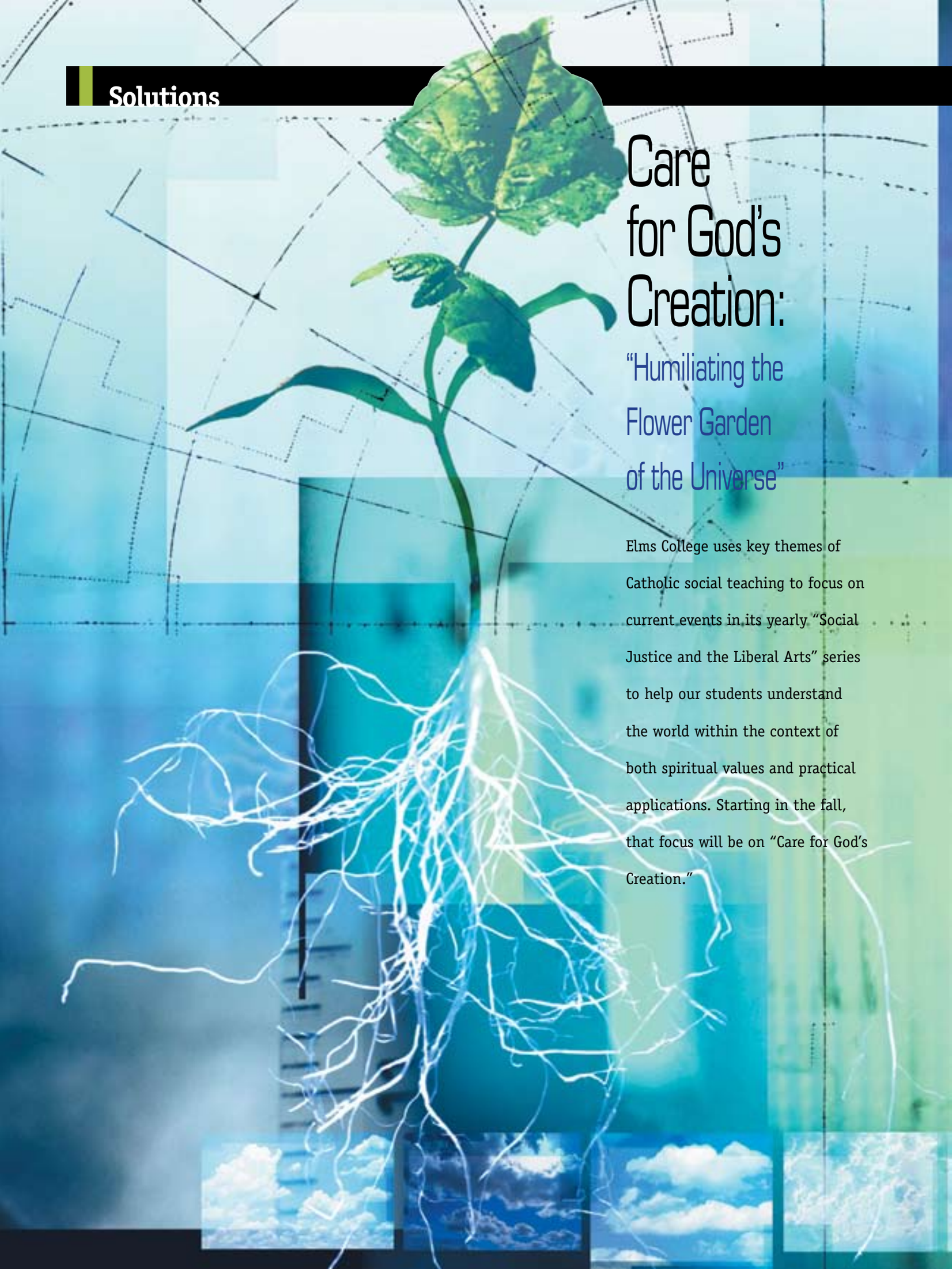
Class Notes 46

51 In Memoriam

All in the Family 54
Three generations of alumnae work as class agents to support their college.

The New Face of the Annual Fund 56
Five new funds of excellence support college and alumni priorities.

Telethon 58



Care for God's Creation:

"Humiliating the Flower Garden of the Universe"

Elms College uses key themes of Catholic social teaching to focus on current events in its yearly "Social Justice and the Liberal Arts" series to help our students understand the world within the context of both spiritual values and practical applications. Starting in the fall, that focus will be on "Care for God's Creation."

According to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, all people are called to show respect for the Creator by taking care of His beautiful creation, our Earth; this is a requirement of our faith. Branded with names like ecology theology, eco-justice, and environmental stewardship, the concept was approached with great urgency and alarm by Pope John Paul II in 2001:

"Humanity has disappointed God's expectations. Man, especially in our time, has without hesitation devastated wooded plains and valleys, polluted waters, disfigured the earth's habitat, made the air unbreathable, and turned luxuriant areas into deserts and undertaken forms of unrestrained industrialization, humiliating the flower-garden of the universe. Man is no longer the Creator's steward, but an autonomous despot, who is finally beginning to understand that he must stop at the edge of the abyss."

The urgency of the environmental crisis is being reflected on college campuses – Catholic or not – across the United States. Students are aware that protecting the Earth is a critical issue that will affect them for the rest of their lives.

"Climate change is our generation's civil rights movement," said Brianna Cayo Cotter of the Energy Action Coalition, an alliance of 48 organizations that support the youth climate justice and energy movement. "We get that the steps taken today will end up being the future for tomorrow."

Institutions of higher learning are in a great position to teach about energy use and model institutional behaviors that their students can emulate throughout their lives. Around the world, colleges are working to adopt more environmentally responsible practices, from outfitting buildings with energy-efficient systems to adopting intensive recycling programs.

"Care for the environment is a huge and complex social justice issue, and we have a responsibility to educate our students and our community about its many facets," said Cristina Canales, Ph.D., chair of the Humanities Division at Elms College, and a member of its Social Justice Committee. "We will look at it from many points of view over the next year: not only global warming, but the degradation of the ocean, the decimation of species, control over natural resources in Third World countries, health effects, and war. It all ties in."

Cristina said she thinks the environmental theme will strike a chord for students.

The issue will be included in new students' introduction to the college through the First Year Seminars they are required to take. Topics for the fall include "Tolerance: Caring for Ourselves, We Care for Our Planet," which will address how to make the earth more sustainable; and "Crossing Cultures: Our Planet… Everyone's Home," which will explore environmental issues from an international perspective.

Environmental issues ranging from endangered species to global warming will be examined in a seminar entitled "Give a Hoot: It's Not Just for the Birds," which will be taught by Bill Tyler of the Education and Physical Education Departments, who has a rich background in environmentalism.

"I want our students to know that they can make a difference in protecting the environment," said Bill, who has a degree in wildlife biology and has worked at the Bronx Zoo and the Audubon Society of Rhode Island.

"Ultimately, taking care of the earth is selfish – it is about taking care of ourselves; it affects our health, the aesthetics of our surroundings, our recreational opportunities," he said. "And if all of us do a lot of little things, it will add up and make a significant difference."

Bill tells his students that people's behaviors can change environmental issues relatively quickly. "When I started working in this field, global warming was not an issue; but when I was a kid, you couldn't swim in the Connecticut River because it was so polluted, and now it's a great recreational area."

Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle

Elms College is working not only to teach about environmental issues, but also to implement methods that will make our existence more earth friendly.

"We try to be conscious of all the ways the operation of the college affects the environment, and we try to minimize our impact," said Stephen Schwartz, director of operations and campus planning. "From

"Care for the environment is a huge and complex social justice issue."

— Dr. Cristina Canales, chair, Humanities Division



Making Peace With the Earth

Imagine serving 2,000 meals and only generating one bag of trash. That's exactly what happened at Elms College on PeaceJam weekend, April 4-6.

"We used all compostable products, and gave everything to a local farmer," said Scott Cyr, campus director for Aramark Services, the college's food service provider.

The paper plates and cups used were made of cornstarch*, and so were biodegradable, Scott said. All of that refuse was mixed in with the food waste, and the farmer used it to feed his pigs.

In addition, no tablecloths were used, saving the amount of energy that would have been required to launder them.

The extreme conservation measures were taken at the request of the national PeaceJam organization.

According to the PeaceJam "call to action" to address environmental degradation, "The earth is our mother, and it is wounded. It is out of balance and needs to be healed. Global warming is a reality, and only by a concentrated effort involving individual citizens, civil society, and our government leaders can we address the many causes for the precarious situation we have created for ourselves here on earth."

"We thought it was great, and we even went a bit farther than they asked us to," Scott said. "I wish we could do it everyday, but the cost of the paper products is prohibitive."

One thing that is done on a regular basis in the college cafeteria is the recycling of plastic water bottles, other plastic, and cans. Plates, trays, and silverware are all washed so as to avoid using disposable products.

The biggest trash problem in the Elms College cafeteria is plastic take-out containers and plastic eating utensils, Scott said. "We go through cases of them, and they are not recyclable. Some people really need them, but a lot of students just fill them up and eat right in the dining area. It's a waste, and I don't think people even realize it."

For more information on biodegradable plates, cups, bottles and other items made from polylactic acid (PLA), a biopolymer made of fermentable sugars derived from corn, visit:

http://www.bioplastics24.com/content/view/111/110/lang,en or

http://cornandsoybeandigest.com/mag/soybean_plant_set_plastic



Stephen Schwartz, director of operations and campus planning

recycling to lighting and heating and furniture purchases, we are aware that we can make a difference."

For example, the college is stepping up its efforts at recycling, having installed large dumpsters for recycling paper, cardboard, glass, and plastic, Steve said.

"We require the students in the dorms to recycle, and provide receptacles on every floor," he said. "And we are hiring a part-time person in the fall to coordinate new recycling efforts in all departments and offices."

The college compounded the positive effects of these efforts by choosing a recycling firm known for its environmentally conscious actions, Steve said: Waste Management, based in Westborough, which uses the slogan "Think Green."

According to Waste Management, they have recycled enough paper to save more than 41 million trees, used garbage in renewable energy projects that have created enough energy to power over one million homes, and worked with the Wildlife Habitat Council to create 17,000 acres of buffer space around their landfills as protected land for wildlife habitat and neighborhood green space.

Recycling efforts at the college go beyond paper and plastic, Steve said. Furniture is bought and disposed of in an environmentally conscious way at the Elms.

"We know that every product we buy uses up raw materials and energy to manufacture and ship, and that reusing and recycling furniture is one way to reduce the impact on the earth," he said. "More than 80 percent of the furniture we buy is used, and when we are done with a piece of furniture, we recycle it again."

Using our surplus for disaster relief

Elms College is a member of the Institution Recycling Network (IRN), a cooperative of 125 colleges, hospitals, private firms, and state agencies based in Concord, New Hampshire that manages surplus property for reuse in disaster relief and economic development in the U.S and in Second and Third World countries.

"We've been members of the IRN since 2006, and we send them all our surplus furniture," said Steve. "It doesn't end up in the landfill, and it is of use to people who need it. The benefits are not only environmental, but also social."

The IRN, established in 1999, matches the usable surplus property with U.S. and international charities, which in turn have links to disaster relief and economic development programs in the U.S. and around the world. They shipped more than three million pounds of surplus property for worldwide disaster relief in 2006 to a dozen different countries in Central and South America, Eastern Europe, Africa, and Asia. Several thousand items were sent to aid organizations in the southern U.S. as part of relief efforts for Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, according to the IRN.

"The demand for usable surplus property is permanent and overwhelming – for example, recovery from the 2005 South Asian tsunami will continue for many years," said Mark Berry, IRN's surplus program manager. "And surplus property is an issue for almost all institutions. Whatever our members have, we find a way to recycle it – that's our commitment."

Shipments from Elms College to the IRN are highest in the summer, Steve said. "When students move out at the end of spring semester, they leave behind a lot of perfectly good items, from furniture, rugs, and stereos to books and clothing. Instead of throwing it all away, we work with the IRN to donate this material to places where it is needed," he said.



Editor's note:

The Church's social teaching is a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society. The depth and richness of this tradition can be understood best through a direct reading of the complete text of documents such as "Sharing Catholic Social Teaching: Challenges and Directions" (No. 5-281). You can obtain a copy of this and other social teaching documents by calling the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops at 800-235-8722.

Energy and electronics



The college has taken other steps to save energy as well. "Our biggest use of electricity is in lighting, so we are replacing all incandescent bulbs with state-of-the-art compact fluorescents and high-efficiency bulbs," Steve said. "And we recycle all the used bulbs, so they don't get thrown away."

Used computer equipment and other electronics are also recycled, through RRD Technologies Electronic Asset Recovery & Recycling in Feeding Hills. In May, the company picked up 621 pounds of computers, printers, and monitors, and the company provides a guarantee that they will properly recycle any equipment that cannot be reused.

In addition, any new products purchased (such as air conditioners) are Energy Star rated high-efficiency units, Steve said.

A larger issue regarding energy use is the campus heating system, which is 48 years old and inefficient, Steve said. "We've been working with Siemens Building Technologies to create a plan for boiler replacement, which would include automated controls to regulate the system," he said. "We would be able to put individual boilers in each building, so we could, for example, shut down the heat in the dorms in the winter when no one is there. We can't do that now."

The price tag of the project – an estimated $3 million – has been an issue, Steve said. "We have done all the project review and development, and we are ready to go; but we need to work out the budget before we can implement the plan. We're hoping we can have a schedule in place by the fall."

Whether in big ways – by installing a new boiler system, for example – or in small ways, such as recycling light bulbs – the Elms College community is becoming more and more environmentally conscious and working to minimize its impact on the earth.

The lesson for us all is that we can - and must - act now with ingenuity, resolve, and a sense of urgency if we are to limit and eventually halt the impacts of pollution, waste of resources, and global warming on human communities and natural ecosystems. The actions we take in the next several years will determine the kind of world our children and grandchildren will inherit.

In the end, people in the Elms College community – and ultimately all people – are morally and spiritually bound to act to protect the earth, God's beautiful creation, and our one and only home.

"We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation. This environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions that cannot be ignored."

—The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops



Shop Green!

"Make Every Day Earth Day" Bamboo T-Shirt

Make your commitment to honor and care for the earth a 365-day affair with this ultra-comfortable, ultra-wearable, and most importantly, ultra-mindful t-shirt. Made of naturally hypoallergenic bamboo (one of nature's most renewable resources) and cotton to create a soft, smooth-as-silk fabric that's also powerfully insulating. Its natural antibacterial and absorbent qualities wick moisture from the skin, helping you stay dry and odor-free while providing natural protection against the UV rays of the sun.

And to make the earth an even better place, The Hunger Site will fund 50 cups of food for each bamboo earth day t-shirt purchased.

http://shop.thehungersite.com/store/item.do?itemId=33338

This shirt is available at The Hunger Site Store, which features hundreds of "Shop Green" products. And each item you buy also helps feed the world's hungry -- at no extra cost to you! The food funded by The Hunger Site is distributed to those in need by Mercy Corps and America's Second Harvest.

Shop green at The Hunger Site store:
https://shop.thehungersite.com

Reflecting our support of the highest social and environmental standards, this magazine was produced on paper certified by the Rainforest Alliance's SmartWood program for meeting the strict standards of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). The intent of FSC is to eliminate habitat destruction, water pollution, displacement of indigenous peoples, and violence against people and wildlife that often accompany logging.



Climate Change and Global Warming

Feeling the Heat

The following information is taken from the Nature Conservancy, whose mission it is to preserve the plants, animals, and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive.

www.nature.org

Scientific experts agree that the earth's climate is changing. Climate change, more commonly known as global warming, is caused by the emission of heat trapping gases produced by vehicles, power plants, industrial processes, and deforestation. As these gases build up, they act like a big blanket, over-heating the planet and threatening our health, our economy, and our environment.

Research shows that the world is now hotter than at any time during the past 1,000 years. Global warming is melting glaciers, raising the level of the oceans, increasing the intensity and frequency of storms, droughts, and fire, changing the distribution, population sizes, and growth rates of plants and animals, and altering the timing of plant flowering and animal migration.

The crisis affects all of us. Here in New England, lobster catches have plummeted because of parasites and heat stress. Maple syrup producers say they are tapping their trees one month earlier than in years past, and soon sap production will decline and leave trees vulnerable to disease and insects.

By working now to curb heat-trapping emissions, we can reduce both the pace and magnitude of global warming and climate change. Even small decreases in the emissions of carbon dioxide will bring benefits.



Why is it Important to Stop Global Warming?

Ours is a global system that is delicately balanced, and the rise in temperatures due to global warming poses serious threats:

- Increased drought
- Increased incidence of wildfires
- Increased intensity of hurricanes and flooding
- Increased coastal erosion
- Increased rate of species extinction
- Increased incidence of human disease caused by insects and rodents
- Increased destruction of forests, wetlands, and other natural ecosystems
- Increased disruption of agriculture

What's Your "Carbon Footprint?"

Carbon dioxide is the primary greenhouse gas in our atmosphere and is a key factor in climate change. In going about our daily lives, each of us contributes to greenhouse gas emissions, and leaves a "carbon footprint" on the earth.

Yet, there are many things each of us can do to reduce emissions. The choices we make in our homes, our travel, the food we eat, and what we buy and throw away can help ensure a stable climate for future generations.

One ton of carbon dioxide is released when you travel 5,000 miles in an airplane, drive 2,500 miles in a medium size car, or cut down and burn a tree that was about one foot in diameter and 40 feet tall.

You can use the Nature Conservancy's online carbon footprint calculator to estimate how many tons of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases your choices create each year and measure your climate impact.

http://www.nature.org/initiatives/climatechange/calculator

Minimizing Your Own Impact:

20 Little Teeny Things You Can Do To Make a Great Big Difference

Every one of us can make a difference every day to help protect the earth. Even if you can't afford to install solar panels or buy a hybrid car, you can reduce your own contribution to global warming by making small - almost unnoticeable - climate-friendly choices each day. Here are 20 simple things everyone can do:

1. One less napkin.

Americans use an average of six paper napkins each day. If everyone in the U.S. used one less napkin a day, more than 1,000,000,000 pounds of napkins could be saved from landfills each year.

2. Twelve seconds.

Every 12 seconds you save on your shower can conserve more than a gallon of water, plus the amount of energy it takes to heat that water.

3. No receipts.

Choose not to take a paper receipt when you use the ATM. If everyone in the United States refused their receipts, it would save a roll of paper more than 2,000,000,000 feet long, or enough to circle the equator 15 times!

4. One bag.

Each year the U.S. uses 84 billion plastic bags. They are not biodegradable, and are making their way into our oceans, and the food chain. Reusable bags are inexpensive and readily available. If every shopper used one less disposable bag each month, we would save hundreds of millions of bags every year.

5. One degree.

Adjust your thermostat one degree higher in the summer and one degree cooler in the winter. Each degree will save about 10 percent on your energy use in a month.

6. One bulb.

If every household in the United State replaced one regular light bulb with a new compact fluorescent bulb, the pollution reduction would be equal to removing 1,000,000 cars from the road. Over the life of the bulb, each compact fluorescent keeps a half-ton of carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere and will keep nine bulbs out of the waste stream.

7. One meal.

Many people believe that moving to a more plant-based diet is the single most important action you can take to protect the environment. Raising animals for our food supply has big impacts on global warming, deforestation, water pollution, and soil erosion. Try adding one meat-free meal a week.

8. One newspaper.

There are 63 million newspapers printed each day in the U.S., 69 percent of which are thrown away and not recycled. Recycling just the Sunday papers would save more than half a million trees every week.

9. Once a week.

Sharing a ride to work is one of the most efficient ways to cut down on drive-time emissions. If everyone carpooled even just once a week, millions of barrels of oil would be saved.

10. Cruise.

Using cruise control in your car can get you up to 15 percent better gas mileage. Considering today's gasoline prices, this is a boon not only for the environment but your budget as well.

11. Turn it off.

By turning off your computer at night instead of leaving it in sleep mode, you can save 40 watt-hours per day.

12. Buy bottles.

The energy required to produce one 12-ounce aluminum can is enough to produce two 12-ounce glass bottles. So the next time you buy a six-pack, opt for bottles over cans.

13. Buy local.

Whenever possible, buy from local farmers or farmers' markets, supporting your local economy and reducing the amount of greenhouse gas created when products are flown or trucked in.

14. Inflate.

Driving with under-inflated tires can hurt your vehicle's gas mileage by two to three percent, which is like wasting an entire tank of gas every year. Multiply that by the more than 210 million vehicles in the United States – it's a waste of millions of barrels of oil.

15. Q-tips!

If all U.S. households switched from cotton swabs with a plastic spindle to those with paper ones, we would save the petroleum energy equivalent of more than 1,500,000 gallons of gasoline.

16. Use cold water.

If you usually use hot water for your laundry, you can cut your energy consumption in half by choosing warm water, and up to 90 percent if you choose cold. If all the households in the U.S. switched from doing laundry in hot-hot cycles to warm-cold, we could save the energy comparable to 100,000 barrels of oil a day.

17. Stop paper bank statements.

If every household in America canceled monthly paper bank statements and took advantage of online bank statements, the money saved could send more than 17,000 students to a public university.

18. Use both sides of the paper.

Office workers in America throw away an average of 175 pounds of paper every year. If everyone set their printers' default option to double-sided (duplex printing), we'd save 11 million tons of paper a year.

19. Turn off the water.

If you turn off the water while you brush your teeth, you'll conserve up to five gallons per day. Daily savings in the U.S. alone could add up to 1.5 billion gallons--more water than is used in the Big Apple.

20. Don't use an answering machine.

Get voicemail service for your home phone. Answering machines use energy 24/7, and when they break, they're just one more thing that goes into the landfill. If all answering machines in U.S. homes were replaced by voicemail services, the annual energy savings would total 2,000,000,000 kilowatt-hours, and the resulting reduction in air pollution would be equivalent to removing 250,000 cars from the road for a year!





'This must be where the angels live.'

Bill Tyler remembers something a child said to him one day that showed him how important it is that children experience the natural environment. When he was director of education for the Audubon Society of Rhode Island, he had taken a group of first graders from urban Fall River out in the woods to look at the trees, flowers, and birds.

"One of the little boys looked all around in awe, and said, 'This must be where the angels live,'" he recalled.

"When children realize how beautiful and precious our environment is, they are naturally open to wanting to protect it," said Bill, who has a degree in fisheries and wildlife biology from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Bill recalled his own childhood fascination with nature, when he used to spend hours playing in the brook near his home. "I loved the place," he said. "It was like a storybook New England babbling brook. I was out there all the time. It certainly sparked my interest in the environment."

That interest continued, and he took a lot of environmental science electives in high school. When placement tests indicated that he would do well to work as park ranger, Bill was sure he had found the right path.

He earned a bachelor's degree in fisheries and wildlife biology, and started teaching middle school science in New York State while attending graduate school in education. He landed an internship in the education department of the Bronx Zoo, and loved it so much that he decided he needed to combine his interest in teaching with his love for nature.

He landed a "dream job" as an educational specialist at the Audubon Society of Rhode Island. When the organization received a donation of 600 woodland acres in Exeter, Rhode Island, Bill was asked to manage it as a wildlife refuge, which he did for four years. He said his work at the Fisherville Brook Wildlife Refuge was a lot of fun. "I did everything from designing a trail system and installing bird boxes to surveying wildlife and building bridges," he said. "It was a wonderful job – I was outside five days a week, eight hours a day."

Bill went on to become director of education at the Audubon headquarters in Smithfield, Rhode Island. He oversaw the building of an environmental education center, and focused on developing programs and expanding access to urban children. Within two years his staff was working with 10,000 school children a year.

"We did a lot of really interesting programs, like creating interactive story times with props for really little kids," he said. "We commissioned



As director of education in the environmental education center of the Audubon Society of Rhode Island, Bill Tyler ran education programs for young children, like this one called "The Right Whale for You."

a six-foot sculpture of a leatherback sea turtle that had a hinged shell and a zippered stomach, so we could open it and kids could see how the turtle may have swallowed a plastic bag thinking it was a jellyfish."

The innovative programming got a great response from the community, and as soon as a program was announced, it would be filled within days, Bill said.

Four years ago, Bill came to Elms College as the college's swimming coach and a teacher in the education and physical education departments. "This was a great opportunity for me to work with college students for the first time," he said.

When the college was developing its first-year seminars, Bill saw a chance to introduce his environmental focus, and last year offered "Give a Hoot" for the first time. "We did everything from watching Al Gore's film, *An Inconvenient Truth*, on global warming, to studying snakes," he said.

Bill also has his students watch the Dr. Seuss classic *The Lorax* and read the Jane Yolen children's book, *Owl Moon*. *The Lorax* features creatures such as wondrous Swomee-Swans, Brown Bar-ba-loots, and Humming-Fishes to present an ecological warning that still rings true today about the dangers of clear-cutting, pollution, and disregard for the earth's environment; and *Owl Moon*, which is the story of a young girl and her father who go owling on a moonlit winter night, urges an appreciation of nature and its wonders.

"Even though these materials are designed for children, college-age students are mesmerized by them; they understand the deeper meanings in the stories," Bill said.

The bottom line message Bill hopes to convey, whether to elementary school kids or college students, is that we all need to learn about – and work to preserve – our environment, which is our heaven on earth.

"When children realize how beautiful and precious our environment is, they are naturally open to wanting to protect it."
—Bill Tyler

Stewards of God's Creation:

Caring for Creatures Great and Small

Karen Miskinis Kurkoski '69 was worried about Bob. It was bad enough that he was getting older and becoming a complete couch potato; but in 2005, Bob started falling off a ledge every other day. The fact was, Bob's health was suffering; he was often bruised, he needed to get more exercise, and he needed a bigger house. It was Karen's job to make sure Bob got what he needed to be healthy and happy.

Karen is the animal curator at the South Shore Natural Science Center (SSNSC) in Norwell, and Bob is one of the center's star attractions – a 13 year-old, four-foot long green iguana. He came to live at the science center in 1998, when he was found abandoned on a rooftop in Hull. He had been living – and growing – in the same four-foot by two-foot by five-foot enclosure at the SSNSC for seven years.

"It got to the point that Bob couldn't fit on the platform in his cage, so he kept falling off," Karen said. "The older he got, the greater the chance he would be seriously injured if he didn't get a bigger place to live."

After a $7,000 fund-raising campaign that included collecting pennies from kids, redeeming cans and bottles, and selling tee shirts with Bob's picture on them, Karen oversaw the building of Bob's new home: a much bigger, state-of-the-art "Amazon water basin enclosure" with lots of climbing branches and vines, a large water pit, and ledges big enough for Bob to lounge on safely.

"Bob has been in his new home for two years now, and seems healthy and happy," Karen said. "He can climb fast if he wants to. The operative words there are 'if he wants to.'"

Karen said Bob is "an old man" for an iguana, having lived about 13 years out of an average lifespan of 18 to 20. "He's retired. He just likes to sit around now," she says.

Bob is only one of the 50 animals – most of which have been injured or rescued from possible harm – that Karen cares for on a daily basis at the SSNSC. Turtles, an owl, snakes, frogs, and salamanders rely on her for feeding, cleaning, monitoring their health, and socializing. While she describes it as her "dream job," Karen points out that it's not all glamour.



Karen and her favorite animal, Hedwig the barred owl.

"Let's face it, the reality is that animals eat and they poop," she said. "The smell of cleaning up after them can be off-putting. And preparing their food can be a challenge as well: I often have to cut up mice for feedings."

Karen, 60, received a bachelor's degree in biology at the Elms 39 years ago. She started working on a master's degree in teaching zoology, then got married and raised five children. When her youngest child was in elementary school, she started volunteering with the Girl Scouts in environmental programs, which she loved, and it led to paid work with the local Audubon Society.

Six years ago, she got a job as a naturalist and teacher at the SSNSC, where her daughter Melissa was working as a naturalist after earning a B.S. in environmental science. Then four years ago, when the job of animal curator opened, Karen jumped at the chance to indulge her life-long passion for animals.

"We live with animals, and we need to share our world with them," she said. "Here at the SSNSC, we provide natural science experiences that educate, excite, and commit every generation to preserve the environment, and we encourage responsible use, stewardship, and enjoyment of our natural resources."

The South Shore Natural Science Center

Located on 30 acres surrounded by 200 acres of town conservation/recreation land, the 46-year-old South Shore Natural Science Center specializes in hands-on learning experiences that encourage investigation of the natural world, such as the EcoZone, an interactive exhibit that focuses on the wetlands, woodlands, and meadow ecosystems of southeastern Massachusetts. It was opened in 2002 as the brainchild of Norwell native Jeff Corwin (of Animal Planet's *The Jeff Corwin Experience*), who helped raise the funds to build the EcoZone.

Karen, who says she works "a bazillion hours, six days a week," most enjoys teaching environmental education programs for children. She is always on the lookout for what she calls "the a-ha! factor" in the kids, which often come when she introduces them to her personal favorite animal, Hedwig the one-eyed barred owl.

"Hedwig is a raptor native to our region, and I use her in our educational programs to focus on the conservation and protection of local animal species," Karen said. "She is non-releasable back into the wild because she can't fly – her wing was badly broken in a vehicle accident before she came to us."



Karen Miskinis Kurkoski '69

Hedwig also lost her right eye two years ago to glaucoma, Karen says, but is currently happy and healthy at the center. In fact, she laid an egg this past spring for the first time since coming to the SSNSC seven years ago, a fact that testifies to her health and comfort.

In April, Karen made a presentation to a group of fourth grade students at a local elementary school in which she introduced them to Hedwig, who made the children laugh with her constant interruptive hoots. Many of the children referred to the behavior in their thank you notes to Karen. Nine-year-old Sean wrote: "I loved Hedwig! Hooting every five seconds! I could not wait for him to hoot again. You made me really interested in owls."

In addition, Karen let the students dissect owl "pellets," which are regurgitated lumps of bones and fur from the small animals the owl has eaten. "I enjoyed digging through the owl pellets, though it was a little disgusting," wrote Delaney. She added, "Say hi to Hedwig for me!"

If children are intrigued by an animal, they are much more likely to want to protect the environment, Karen said.

"Respect for animals and for the environment is the biggest thing I can teach the children and adults I work with here at the Natural Science Center," Karen said. "The earth is ours to take care of; there's too much to lose if we don't."

For more information on the South Shore Natural Science Center, visit their website at http://www.ssnsc.org.

For more information about iguanas, visit the website of the Wild Ones Animal Index at http://www.thewildones.org/Animals/iguana.html.

For information on owls, and an interactive "virtual owl pellet dissection" activity, check out the website of KidWings: http://www.kidwings.com/owlpellets/index.htm.



Karen introduces Bob the Iguana to young children visiting the EcoZone at the SSNSC.

PeaceJam 2008

Students Work with Nobel Laureate Jody Williams

Elms College hosted more than 300 high school students at the 2008 PeaceJam Northeast Youth Conference April 4-6, providing them the opportunity to work with Nobel Peace Prize winner Jody Williams. PeaceJam is an international education program based on the lives and work of 13 Nobel Peace Laureates who share their wisdom, skills, and spirit with youth worldwide.

"The most important thing to understand is that in order to create the world you want to live in, you must take action to bring about the changes you want to see in the world," Ms. Williams told the students.

Ms. Williams helped found the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), for which she won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1997, and currently leads a United Nations high-level mission to investigate human-rights abuses in the war-torn Sudanese region of Darfur.



"Too often we 'idealists' are told that the real world is a cold, hard, and unforgiving place and that to insure peace we must prepare for war," she said. "That is not a view that this idealist will accept. My view of realism is that you get what you prepare for. If we want to build a peaceful world, we must prepare for peace. If we want to live in a world with a meaningful agenda for disarmament in this century, civil society, like-minded governments, international agencies, and the United Nations must forge a partnership to ensure that our idealistic vision becomes the new reality."

"If we want to build a peaceful world, we must prepare for peace."

Students spent the rest of the weekend working on service projects, and presented reports about them to Ms. Williams on Sunday.

Service projects included working at the Chicopee Boys & Girls Club and Lorraine's Kitchen, the Food Bank of Western Massachusetts in Hatfield; Broderick House, Kate's Kitchen, Margaret's Pantry, New Visions Project, and St. Jude's Clothing Center in Holyoke; and Jefferson Shelter, Teen Living Program, Emergency Pantry, Puerto Rican Cultural Center, Rutledge House, Gray House, Habitat For Humanity, Rescue Mission, and Worthington Shelter in Springfield.

A native of Vermont, Ms. Williams has been an international organizer and activist, teacher and writer, and a voice for peace and a civil society in a number of ways. She worked on American foreign policy in Central America, and as associate director of Medical Aid to El Salvador.

She has written and lectured widely on the dangers of the tens of millions of unexploded land mines in more than 70 countries. She oversaw the growth of the ICBL campaign to more than 1,300 non-governmental organizations in more than 85 countries, and served as its chief strategist and spokesperson. In an unprecedented cooperative effort with governments, the ICBL achieved an international treaty banning landmines in 1997.

In conjunction with her weekend appearance at the Elms for PeaceJam, Ms. Williams delivered a public lecture at Springfield Symphony Hall on Friday as part of the Springfield Public Forum.

"The ICBL, and its partnership with governments, has resulted in a truly remarkable process," she said. "Landmines have been used since the U.S. Civil War and the Crimean War, yet through concerted political action, they will be taken out of the arsenals of the world. This process has clearly demonstrated that civil society and governments do not have to see each other as adversaries."

The PeaceJam Northeast Youth Conference was held at Elms College for the second year. Through learning about and with these master-peacemakers, youth become committed to positive change in themselves, and being a force for change in their communities and the world.

Since its launch in 1996, more than 500,000 youth have participated in the PeaceJam program. More than 300,000 service projects have been created and implemented by participating youth, and more than 120 PeaceJam youth events have taken place in 10 countries throughout the world.

In 2006, the 10 Nobel Peace Laureates involved in PeaceJam (The Dalai Lama, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Rigoberta Menchú Tum, President Oscar Arias, Máiread Corrigan Maguire, Jody Williams, Shirin Ebadi, Prime Minister José Ramos Horta, Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, and Betty Williams) issued a call to action to address 10 fundamental issues they felt needed immediate action to create true world peace.

The 10 issues are: equal access to water and other natural resources, ending racism and hate, halting the spread of global disease, eliminating extreme poverty, social justice and human rights for all, rights for women and children, restoring earth's environment, controlling the proliferation of weapons, investing in human security, and breaking the cycle of violence.

"We ask the young leaders of PeaceJam, and the youth of the entire world, to work side by side with us as we address these 10 core problems, which are at the root of much of the suffering in our world. We believe that young people can mobilize to make a difference in these key areas. It is our hope that we can inspire people of all ages, worldwide, to work for change. Over the next 10 years, we hope to inspire over a billion acts of service and peace."

Social Justice Series Wraps Up for 2007-2008

While the environment is the focus of the upcoming 2008-2009 Social Justice and the Liberal Arts series, this spring saw three events that completed the 2007-2008 series, which focused on our rights and responsibilities as one human family. The two lectures and a children's opera highlighted different aspects of the theme: that every person has a fundamental right to life, and a right to those things required for human decency.

Holocaust Survivor Recalls Childhood in Concentration Camp

After a performance at Elms College March 30 and 31 of the children's opera *Brundibar* by the Commonwealth Opera Company, audiences listened to holocaust survivor Ela Stein Weissberger speak about her experiences performing in the play as a child in a concentration camp.

Written in the late 1930s, *Brundibar* is an inspiring story of resistance to oppression and the human ability to rise above circumstance. It was performed 55 times by children detained in the Terezin camp in occupied Czechoslovakia. Of the 15,000 children who went through Terezín to Auschwitz, only 100 survived.

"It is by a miracle that I can talk about it. I was saved. I think I speak in the voices of those that couldn't make it," Mrs. Weissberger says.

Mrs. Weissberger, who was 11 years old when she arrived at Terezin in February 1942 with her mother, sister, and grandmother, originally played the role of the Cat for all 55 performances. She said that for her and the other children, who were hungry, scared, and had seen parents and loved ones carted off to death camps, the opera took their minds off daily horrors.



The Commonwealth Opera Company's presentation of the children's opera Brundibar at Elms College.



Ela Weissberger, a survivor from the original concentration camp performances in the 1940s, spoke after the presentation.

"When we sang, we forgot where we were. We forgot hunger, we forgot all the troubles that we had to go through. When we sang *Brundibar*, we didn't have to wear the Jewish star on our clothing."

The plot of the opera shares elements with fairytales such as Hansel and Gretel. Aninka and Pepíek are a fatherless sister and brother. Their mother is ill, and the doctor tells them she needs milk to recover, but they have no money to buy any. The children decide to sing in the marketplace for donations, but the evil organ grinder Brundibár (who represents Hitler) steals their money and chases them away. But with the help of a fearless sparrow, a keen cat, a wise dog, and the children of the town, they are able to chase Brundibár away, sing in the market square, and collect enough money to help their mother. The opera concludes with a victory song.

"The Nazis did not know that the Victory Song at the opera's end had a double meaning. In our eyes, *Brundibar* was Hitler. … We wanted a victory over a terrible man," she says.

Terezin, 60 miles from Prague, was a transit point for Czech Jews to the Nazi death camps. Of 141,000 people who lived there over four years, more than 33,000 died there; another 87,000 were transported to death camps.

"*Brundibar* meant, for many, many people, a lot," she says. "What I'm asking is, please remember those that couldn't make it, because they are in my heart until I die."

The performance of *Brundibar* and Mrs. Weissberger's appearance was co-sponsored by Hatikvah Holocaust Education Center and endorsed by the Institute for Theology and Pastoral Studies (ITPS) at Elms College.

The Geopolitics of Energy

Dr. Michael T. Klare, director of the Five Colleges Peace and World Security Studies Program based at Hampshire College, spoke at Elms College on April 23 about his new book, *Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet: The New Geopolitics of Energy*.



Dr. Michael T. Klare

"Military superiority does not constitute the decisive, or even necessarily the leading, determinant of global paramountcy in this troubled new era," Dr. Klare says. "Other factors have come to rival military power in importance, and one – energy – has acquired unexpectedly vast significance."

As a result, he said, the United States has found itself scrambling to come to terms with the nations that wield disproportionate power in the international system by virtue of their superior energy reserves.

The program was presented by the World Affairs Council of Western Massachusetts.

ROTC's Role On College Campuses



Margaret Pfeil, Ph.D., M.T.S.

Theologian Margaret Pfeil, Ph.D., M.T.S., discussed the role on college campuses of U.S. Army Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs at a lecture at Elms College on April 24 that wrapped up the "Social Justice and the Liberal Arts Spring 2008" series.

Dr. Pfeil is a professor of theology and social ethics at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana with a focus on Catholic social thought and the development of moral doctrine. Her lecture was based on a course called "War, Law, and Ethics," which she team-taught at Notre Dame with Lt. Col. Kelly Jordan, a professor of military science and director of the ROTC program there.

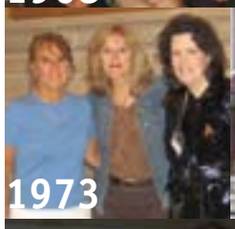
"I believe people need to listen to and reflect on what their conscience is telling them so that it can mature and provided a reliable guide for their actions," she says.

Dr. Pfeil, a pacifist, examines ethical, legal, and military considerations related to war and the use of force. "Patriotism is not about blind assent. Instead, we should ask 'What values are we defending as a nation? Do we run the risk of becoming like that which we are fighting? Have we sacrificed our own sense of moral values, our own moral compass? Is that too high a price to pay?'"



















Coming Home: Reflections on Reunion

More than 200 alumni from the classes ending in 3s and 8s reconnected at Reunion '08, held May 2 to 4. The following reflections were written by the co-chairs of the event, Antonietta (Toni) Scibelli DiMichele '68 and Maria (Mena) Filomena DeCarvalho '75.

We met, we planned, we brainstormed, and when May 2 came, we rolled out the red carpet for one of Elms College's very best reunions. Yes, there was inclement weather, but the last-minute decisions that were made to accommodate it actually brought people into closer proximity, and that translated into more laughter, more hugs, and more good conversations.

Reconnections began Friday night at the wine and cheese reception in the Great Hall of O'Leary. Tony Kuralowicz graciously filled our glasses with choice wines, and we enjoyed cheeses, fruits, vegetables, crackers, and sweets that were presented in an artistic and elegant way by Patty Kuralowicz and her team. Jessica Scott Allen '03 showed great talent as she played soothing music on the piano.

The reception was followed by a beer and pizza social, and one event flowed into the next. Steven Dubuque '09 provided melodic background guitar music that gave the hall a bistro atmosphere. This event was new this year, and the class of 2003 has made it known that it was definitely a keeper!

The next morning, the schedule proceeded fluidly, with just enough time to get to each next event. Throughout the day, it was heartwarming to see undergraduates and alumni assisting more "seasoned" alumni. The induction of the Golden Blazers showed all of us – and especially the graduating class of 2008 – the bond we have with our college, and the values we hold.

(Note from Toni: In the afternoon when the honor class met with their classmates, I met with members of my class of 1968. I looked at the group of lovely ladies, and sat back and reflected on the multitude of changes that have taken place since we graduated 40 years ago. We looked at pictures taken by Penny (Evelyn Jez) of our 35th reunion, and remarked on how quickly five years have gone by. We spoke of our grandchildren, work, retirement, those who couldn't make the reunion, those who had passed away, the professors we had, and how glad we were to be back here together. We shared sadness, joy, happiness, and laughter.)

In the afternoon, there was a wine-tasting event hosted by Dave Boyle in the Alumnae Room. Patrick Carpenter '03 and helpers had transformed the room into a café atmosphere with colorful tablecloths, and green and gold balloons as centerpieces. Our sense of smell and all of our taste buds participated as we sampled merlot, chardonnay, and pinot grigio wines, and learned to distinguish nutty flavors from fruity ones, dry from sweet, and the importance of studying the cork. Dave left us with some wise counseling and advice: "Drink what you like."

The tea with author Suzanne Strempek Shea in the Rotunda was very well attended. Ms. Strempek Shea was intelligent, engaging, and warm, and the many questions that followed her presentation were clear indications of the success of the event.

After liturgy, bagpiper Terri Adams '85 led the parade of honor classes from the Rotunda to the Mary Dooley College Center for the president's reception and reunion dinner. Emcee Judy E. Riordan '60, president of the Alumni Association, asked for reunion giving reports from honor class representatives.

Here we also got to speak with our classmates' spouses. Bunny Riley Whitman's husband Jim told the audience about the day on the golf course, and awarded a trophy to Joanne Cyr Pasquini's husband Jim. It was an evening of great food and great company.

The weekend wrapped up at Sunday morning's farewell brunch with great food and commitments to "stay in touch" and "get together soon."

We wish to express our appreciation and thank all of the wonderful people who shared their spirit and willingness to do whatever was needed. It was such a success because each one of you gave your all, from staffing the registration desk, to putting together theme baskets, buying and transporting the hanging plants, recruiting live entertainment, and arranging details from the liturgy to the silver tea set.

A most deserved thank you goes to Peggy Clark, director of the Alumni Office. Peggy has the gift of listening to each and every person and making that individual feel that his/her contribution is very important. Her experience, personality, warmth, and refined demeanor bring and hold people together. She was, as she always is, the strength behind all of our events.

Coming back to the Elms is coming home. It is the home we love, where we matured into professional individuals and where we set our paths to our particular goals.

It was a wonderful reunion. Thank you from our hearts!

Golden Blazers:

Celebrating Our Graduates On Their 50th Anniversary

By Ann M. Gibbons '48, chair

There is a new kid on the block! Young in spirit if not in years; and rich in experience and wisdom, but perhaps poor in strength and stamina! It is the Golden Blazers – the members of which graduated from the College of Our Lady of the Elms at least 50 years ago.

During Reunion 2008 in May, the class of 1958 celebrated the 50th anniversary of their graduation, and were inducted into the Golden Blazers. This was the second induction ceremony for the Golden Blazers; last year members of the Class of 1957 were inducted.

As chair of the Golden Blazers, I want to introduce you to this association, the vision that led to its formation, and our plans for its future. It is my sincere hope all alumni who read this will be members one day.

In 2006, the college reached out to that group of alumni who had reached the 50th or longer anniversary of their graduation, and created the Golden Blazers to honor them. The college's hope was that the association would be a strong source of vitality for the college and for its members, and beneficial for both. To mark our commitment and hopes, we drafted a prayer asking God's blessing on our efforts: our members will support the mission of the college, and its students, while continuing their own intellectual and spiritual growth by sharing their experience and wisdom.

We chose the name Golden Blazers because it signifies a light, a glow, or a fire, burning or shining brightly and fiercely. Like the college's athletic teams, who are called the Blazers, our symbol is a bolt of lightning. We even have a specially designed Golden Blazers scarf, in green and gold, decorated with bolts of lightning and the college seal.

During our years of active participation in our work and family, we were besieged with responsibilities and a serious lack of time to fulfill them. Now many of us have completed our professional obligations, and have the time to reach back to the friends of our younger days, only to find their numbers diminished. We hope the Golden Blazers will provide a way to network with those who were in our own class or were students at the same time.

We have formed a committee to periodically update information, work to determine and meet the needs of our members, and plan for the future. We are reviewing a number of suggested activities and projects, including:

- Conducting surveys of members at reasonable intervals to ascertain their wishes.
- Giving members ID cards allowing them to attend campus activities.
- Seeking a reduced fee for members to attend mini courses, concerts, and other events offered by the college.
- Providing a special seating section at athletic events so members can be seated with their peers.
- Arranging special Golden Blazer social events (such as luncheons) at times and places appropriate for the physical limitations of the members.
- Having speakers to address topics of interest to the Golden Blazers.
- Developing a program to visit members who are housebound or in nursing facilities.
- Having a Golden Blazers Honor Guard at funerals of deceased alumni.

The committee is open to any Golden Blazer, and welcomes input from any member. Get in touch with us through the Alumni Office, at 413-265-2227. If anyone knows about nurturing and supporting, we do.

The Class of 1958 - the newest Golden Blazers.



The Elms College Class of 2008:
"The Quality of People This Broken World Needs"

Above: Jennifer Lingenberg gets flowers and a hug from her son Justin.

Right: Dr. John Lambdin, faculty marshal, led the procession of graduates.



Melanie Joy was the student speaker at commencement.



During the 77th Elms College commencement exercises in May, 301 proud graduates, their families, and friends listened to a Sister of St. Joseph and lobbyist who has devoted her life to Catholic social teaching tell them to use the values and spirit they learned at Elms College to work to better the world.

"From what Dr. Mullen tells me, you are that quality of people this broken world needs," said Sister Catherine Pinkerton, a member of the Congregation of St. Joseph, Cleveland. "Never doubt your own capacity for making a profound difference. Try with all your might to help shape the future so that all people will have access to that which not only sustains them, but empowers them toward their full human potential. And enter into avenues of action directed to enhancing the health of the globe on which we are privileged to share life with each other."

Sister Pinkerton has been a lobbyist with NETWORK, a National Catholic social justice lobby, for 23 years. She is also vice-president of the Churches Center on Theology and



Left to right: Judith Riordan; Margaret Scanlon; Russell J. Omer; Sister Mary Quinn; Bishop Timothy McDonnell; James H. Mullen Jr.; Helen A. D'Amour; Mayor Michael D. Bissonnette; Michele D'Amour; John H. Davis; and Sr. Catherine Pinkerton.

Public Policy, and secretary of the executive committee of the newly formed Resource Center for Faith and Public Policy.

Also addressing the Class of 2008 was graduating senior Melanie Joy, who spoke of the students' passion and vision.

"Regardless of our future direction, we will all move on to do great things for our community and the greater good of humanity," Melanie said. "It is our individual and collective passion and vision that will assist us in living out the mission of Elms College; for we are reflective, principled, and creative learners whose contributions to society will change the world for better."

Members of the class of 2008 received 251 bachelor's degrees, nine associate's degrees, and 47 graduate degrees. Two-thirds of the undergraduates received degrees in the three most popular majors: nursing, business, and social work.

Sister Pinkerton received an honorary degree, as did John H. Davis, senior trustee to the Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation, and Russell J. Omer, senior vice president, Chicopee Savings Bank and chairman of the Elms College board of trustees.

Additionally, the *Via Veritatis* medals, presented to outstanding Catholic women who exemplify Catholic womanhood and culture at their best and who have made significant contributions to society, were presented to longtime Elms College volunteer Helen A. D'Amour, and Michele D'Amour, the educational partnership administrator for Big Y Foods Inc. *Via Veritatis*, which means "way of truth," comes from the college's motto, *Viam Veritatis Elegi* – "I have chosen the way of truth."

The Distinguished Alumna Award was presented to Margaret R. Scanlon, Elms College classes of '52 and '66G, who was a kindergarten teacher in the Springfield public schools for 40 years and an adjunct professor at Springfield College for 10 years.

"In recognizing these honorees, we are affirming values close to the heart of Elms College," said James H. Mullen, Jr., president.



Let them praise His name with dancing. —Psalm 149



Left to right: Cate Avery, Lori Kobos, Nicole Clairmont, Jeanna Borwn, and Justine LeBlanc.

Sacred Dance: Stillness in Motion

Holy Name Church was filled with prayers of joy and gratitude at baccalaureate Mass commencement weekend – some prayed silently, some spoken, some sung; and thanks to five graduating seniors – some danced.

The Elms College Sacred Dancers – Cate Avery, Jeanna Brown, Nicole Clairmont, Lori Kobos, and Justine LeBlanc – shared their prayers with the community through beautiful and graceful movement set to religious music.

Sacred dance is the physical expression of prayer through the language of the body. Since biblical times, it has been a medium of worship and praise, an integration of body and spirit, an expression of joy and reverence, and a connection between God and humanity. It may be done as part of a worship service or a private spiritual practice.

"The purpose of this sacred dance group is to incorporate prayer and meditation during special events and liturgies," said Jeanna Brown '08, a psychology major.

"It is meant to enhance the experience of prayer," added Cate Avery '08, a religious studies major with a minor in English.

As freshmen in the fall of 2004, the five young women who are the Elms College Sacred Dancers were introduced to college life through a First-Year Seminar called "Dancing for God," created and taught by Carla Oleska, Ph.D., former associate academic dean.

"I used to have a large group of sacred dancers here, many years ago, but interest waned," Carla said. "So when we began designing the first year seminars, I thought, I'm going to see if anyone is interested. The seminar ran twice, and I had 15 or 20 students in each group."

"During the initial class, we learned various dances, warmups, and exercises, which included meditation and liturgical songs," said Jeanna. After first learning choreographed routines, they worked up to choreographing



Sacred dance 1971: *In the past, there have been many sacred dancers at Elms College. Here is the Sacred Dance Group performing at a Christmas Mass in 1971: (from top left:) Martha Ryan '71, Diana Wilson '74, Marie Sherfield '74, Doreen Rodrigues '73, Francine Gerlip '72, and Mary E. Sector '72.*



"I pray that everyone, sitting cramped inside a pew, body lifeless, spine sagging and suffering, weary with weight and deadness, will be given space in which to breathe and move, will be wooed to worship with beauty and stillness, song and dance--dance charged with life, dance that lifts up both body and spirit, as we will be a holy, dancing, loving, praying, and praising people."

— Carla DeSola, from
The Spirit Moves:
A Handbook of Dance & Prayer

their own pieces, which they performed as the final project in the class.

Cate, Jeanna, Nicole, Lori, and Justine were so taken with the sacred dance they learned that first semester that they asked Carla to continue teaching them. When Carla left the college in 2006 to work as executive director of the Women's Fund of Western Massachusetts, the five continued practicing on their own.

"We took the class for the semester, and after it was over, we just continued dancing together," said Lori Kobos '08, a mathematical science major, who had danced for nine years before joining this group.

"We have performed for all the religious holiday events in the chapel, and at area church services," said Lori. "We also performed at President Mullen's installation, and during the Chalice of Salvation Mass on channel 22 that was sponsored by the Elms."

Carla emphasized that the practice is more prayer than dance.

"You just know when it becomes prayer, when everyone in the group has allowed themselves to go way down inside themselves," she said. "Something becomes very quiet; you are surrounded by quiet. And when they finish, there won't be any talking. It is sacred."

"It's a different form of prayer; one that we rarely see in church in the United States," said Cate. "But it is a special prayer, created by a dancer who wishes to share it with the community."

"Sacred dance has existed as a form of prayer since people started expressing their belief in something greater than us," said Carla. "It is a way to express feelings that we have no more words for – pain or joy or praise. It makes bigger how we express our connection with that which is bigger than who we are as humans."

Carla was introduced to sacred dance in high school, "when one of the nuns handed me a prayer and told me to interpret it as a dance."

She went on to study sacred dance with Carla DeSola, founder of Omega West Sacred Dance Company in Berkeley, California. Ms. DeSola, a graduate of Juilliard and the Pacific School of Religion, has been a pioneer in the recent resurgence of liturgical dance.

"All sacred traditions have dance as part of them," Carla said. "When people watch sacred dance, they should walk away with an experience of prayer, not of a dance performance. There's a real difference."

Passing the Torch: Welcoming Two New Leaders

July 1 was a momentous day in the history of leadership at Elms College. On that day, the college welcomed both a new president and a new chair of the board of trustees. We invite you to read what they have to say about their goals, qualifications, and motivation for accepting these important roles.



Walter C. Breau, Ph.D., has served as vice president of academic affairs for the past two years, and for 12 years before that was a professor of biology and chair of the Division of Natural Sciences, Mathematics, and Technology.

My motivation is fundamental: the long-term success of the College of Our Lady of the Elms. If my serving in this role promotes that long-term success, then my goal will be accomplished.

In some ways, I am well positioned to take this on. First, because I come from an academic background, I have insight into the core of Elms College: its academic programs, faculty, and students. I understand that academic programming of the highest quality, together with faculty of impeccable credentials, is the essential foundation of any college.

In addition, I understand on a deep personal level that the mission and Catholic identity of the Elms are central. I grew up in Westfield, was a member of St. Mary's Church, and attended St. Mary's elementary and high schools, so I have been taught and guided and nurtured by the Sisters of Saint Joseph since first grade. I have seen their dedication to educating the whole person: the body, the mind, and one's faith. The charism of the Sisters of Saint Joseph is the foundation for our mission, our focus on social justice and key moral issues, and our commitment to serve the under-served.

I think an effective college president is a person who can balance the process and the detail with the mission and the vision; that is, the small picture and the big picture. College presidents need to facilitate long-range strategic planning, yet also navigate through many subtle details, when developing new programs, negotiating with new community partners, or simply meeting friends of the college one-on-one and engaging them on topics of interest and importance. I'm confident I can do that.

Having been a biology professor for 12 years, I am particularly interested in the sciences and our science facilities. I will spend some time as interim president speaking with alumni, parents, and friends of the college on the importance of science education and our need to update the science laboratories at the Elms.

I also think it's important for me as an academic president to maintain ties to my discipline, so I will continue to teach when I can. This

Linda K. C. Mansfield, who received a bachelor's degree in art from the Elms in 1977, is the first alumna and only the second woman to serve as chair of the board of trustees. (Dr. Christine Murphy was the first, serving as chair of the board from 1995 to 1997.) Linda is president of Mansfield & Associates, Inc. of Alexandria, Virginia, a direct mail fund raising firm.

When I decided, as a high school senior back in 1973, to leave my Chicago home to attend a small college in western Massachusetts, I did so for two main reasons: I was attracted by the strong religious identity of Our Lady of the Elms, and I sensed that the Elms was not a typical school. During my years here, both those impressions were confirmed. To this day, I consider the education I received to be outstanding, with personal attention from principled and academically exceptional adults who truly cared about me.

It was for this reason that I was pleased to join the Elms College board of trustees in 2001. It has been extremely satisfying to work with the leadership of the college over the past seven years as the Elms has entered into a period of rapid growth and change. I am honored to have won the confidence of the Elms College community as I become the new board chair.

This is an exciting time for Elms College. In recent years, enrollment has nearly doubled, to levels not seen in Elms' history. We are developing new academic programs, such as master's degrees in autism and nursing, and have extended our renowned RN-to-BS nursing program to Pittsfield, offering classes taught by Elms faculty to nurses at Berkshire Health Systems. Our student-athletes are enjoying our new state-of-the-art athletic fields. We are strengthening our use of new technologies for teaching and research.

At the same time, we have maintained our outstanding reputation in our core academic programs. Our nursing, social work, paralegal, and teaching programs are among the best in the region; our graduates are sought out by employers every year. Our growing business and accounting program is gaining an excellent regional reputation. In these programs, and increasingly in others as well, we are often the first choice of young college-bound students graduating from high school in western Massachusetts.



August, I taught a class on the genetics of speech and language disorders to students in our post-master's Communications Sciences and Disorders program. As a hobby, I continue to stay current on the genetics of chili peppers, an area of interest I acquired when I was in my doctoral program in Colorado.

When I was contemplating accepting the position of interim president back in March, I spoke with faculty emerita Sr. Eleanor Dooley about leadership. She told me that an effective leader needs to be a kind and gentle individual, and that these essential qualities indicate their true nature. I assured Sr. Eleanor that during my time as interim president, I will strive to meet her definition of a true leader.

I will also make it my top priority to connect with our alumni, who are our greatest gift to the community, and our greatest asset. Whether they graduated five years ago or 50, and whether they are nurses, teachers, social workers, or accountants, I want to listen to what they have to say, and talk to them about all that is impressive and exciting about the Elms today as well as the challenges we continue to face.

This is the message I will give to our alumni, particularly those who may have not had contact with us lately: there is much good to report. The College of Our Lady of the Elms continues to be blessed with trustees, staff, and faculty who are truly dedicated to this college. We have record-breaking enrollment, new academic programs, new faculty, and new facilities, and our students are excelling academically, athletically, socially, and spiritually.

I look forward to working with Linda Mansfield, the new chair of the board of trustees. I am confident that Linda, an alumna of the college, will be a strong and effective leader during her tenure as chair. There is no one more devoted or dedicated to the Elms or to the ideals of the college than she.

And I have to say that I would not have been able to take on this task without the full support of my wife of 21 years, Elizabeth, and my four children.

I invite you to stop by; my door is always open.



Notably, the College of Our Lady of the Elms remains the only Catholic college in western Massachusetts. Not all our students are Catholic, of course, but even those who are not are often attracted to the Elms by the strong connection between the spiritual values and academic challenges that sets us apart.

As alumni, we care about these things because we are part of the Elms family — a family that stretches over 80 years and several generations. It is our duty and our great joy to be supportive of the Elms and the young men and women who are following in our footsteps.

This period of rapid growth and change at the Elms is a time when alumni can play a crucial role in its future. I am committed to improving the Elms' ability to explain to my fellow alumni why our support is important, and to increasing the opportunities for alumni to express support for Elms in ways that mean something to them. Increased financial support will improve the college's ability to adapt while sustaining its core values in a time of rapid change.

When I graduated from the Elms 30 years ago, the Sisters of St. Joseph and my lay professors and counselors had prepared me remarkably well for a lifetime of achievement and commitment to service. Elms College is still doing that for its students today, in a way that I believe is very unusual for a college of any size. The one-to-one attention from spiritually motivated teachers is something today's young adults need and crave. The Elms continues to be positioned to provide that kind of education to bright students looking to find their special place in the world.

That's why I'm excited to accept my new role as board chair. I thank the Elms College community for its faith in me, and I encourage you to join me in fostering the unique philosophy and culture of this small, but beautiful jewel of higher education.

Honors for Outgoing Board Chair Russell J. Omer



Elms College bestowed its highest honor, an honorary degree, on chairman of the board of trustees Russell J. Omer on May 18 for his extraordinary leadership over the past six years. His citation reads, in part, "Your leadership on behalf of Elms College has made a profound impact on this institution. From the time you joined the Elms College board in 1999, you have brought to every discussion and decision an understanding that the world has a critical need for education that provides not only academic credentials, but also a spiritual foundation."

Russ stepped down as chair effective June 30, and is succeeded by Linda K. C. Mansfield '77.

Attorney Thomas D. Murphy, Jr., a long-time member of the board of trustees and chairman from 1989 to 1991, says, "I believe Russ Omer has done more for Elms College than any trustee in its history. Russ not only navigated the college through the difficult transition created by the death of our beloved president Joachim W. Froehlich, along with the search process that brought Dr. Mullen to our campus, but led the financial team that dealt with the many challenges associated with those changes. He gave unselfishly of his time and talents throughout his tenure. We on the board are happy to have had the opportunity to work with Russ, but most proud to call him our friend."

On the eve of commencement during the Honorands Dinner, the entire board of trustees, in a show of solidarity with their chairman, stood behind Russ as he was honored by the college.

Outgoing Elms College president James H. Mullen Jr., said, with deep gratitude, "As chair, Russ guided the college at times of great challenge and remarkable opportunity. In these times of change, he was consistent, fair, and always focused on what was best for the Elms. It is those values of consistency, fairness, courage, grace, and focus on what is right that we recognize with an honorary degree. History will remember him as the right chair at one of the most significant moments in the history of our college — and history will remember that he led with courage and grace."

During Chairman Omer's tenure, Elms College invested $3.75 million in construction projects and improvements to the college facility, including the new state-of-the-art athletic field and Cheryl R. Condon softball complex. During his chairmanship, the college launched a series of new academic programs at both the undergraduate and graduate level, attained re-accreditation at both institutional and programmatic levels, and developed local and regional partnerships to serve Elms students and the community.

Russ will remain on the board of trustees for one more year, and is serving as a member of the presidential search committee.

Student News







Biology Majors Present Research at Science Conference

Four biology majors attended the 2008 Eastern Colleges Science Conference held at Niagara University, New York April 12, and presented research results there. The Eastern Colleges Science Conference attracts students from 20 to 25 colleges and universities, who present their research results in biology, chemistry, mathematics, and related fields.

Melanie Joy '08 gave a platform presentation entitled, "The effect of gut removal on plasma melatonin levels in Rana catesbeiana;" Lisa Zajaczkowski '08 and Elizabeth Nelligan '09 presented a poster entitled, "Determining the secretion of melatonin from the intestine in vitro;" and Jill Bigos '09 spoke on "The effect of exogenous T4 on Rana catesbeiana fat bodies in vivo."

"This is a significant forum for undergraduates to present research in the sciences," said biology professor Sr. Mary L. Wright, Ph.D., who oversees the student research.

Recent alumni who have participated in this research have gone on to graduate study and careers in physical therapy, nursing, teaching, laboratory research, and working as a physician assistant.

Pictured above:

Left to right: Melanie Joy '08, Lisa Zajaczkowski '08, Jill Bigos '09, and Elizabeth Nelligan '09 at the Eastern Colleges Science Conference.

Students Recognized for Entrepreneurial Spirit

Four Elms students were recognized as "Spirit Award" recipients at the annual Grinspoon Entrepreneurial Initiative Banquet April 15 at the Log Cabin, and won monetary awards ranging from $500 to $1,000 in support of their business ideas.

Amber Deshaies '08 and Karisa Rogers '08 received an award for "Rogers and Amberstein," a partnership which combines their musical and literary talents to create original pieces, with which they will produce a demonstration CD.

Guillermo Robles '08 received an award for his import business concept, "Alpaca Gold," bringing hand-woven alpaca clothing and accessories to the New England market, which he plans to launch after graduation. In addition, he received an award for his compelling 90-second "elevator pitch" on selling macca, a Peruvian vegetable-based food supplement.

Nicole Denette '10 won a Spirit Award for launching "Third Floor," an eBay vintage clothing business that has already gained customer loyalty. After college, she plans to open a vintage boutique in Northampton.

Pictured above:

Guillermo Robles '08 pitches his business concept, "Alpaca Gold," at the Grinspoon Entrepreneurial Initiative Banquet.

Law Day: An Insider's View of the Legal System

About 50 students from Belchertown and Chicopee Comprehensive high schools listened to Justice John Greaney of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court and a panel of legal experts debate an actual recent case at Law Day at Elms College April 18.

The students were treated to a spirited, 90-minute discussion as the panelists explored "the complex issues involved in finding the proper balance between giving police sufficient leeway to act in cases of suspected criminal activity, and protecting individuals' constitutional right to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures," says Katherine A. Currier, J.D., director of Elms College's paralegal and legal studies programs, which hosted the event.

The purpose of the Law Day event at Elms College was to educate students about the legal system and how it works in "real life," says organizer Caroline Murray, assistant professor of paralegal and legal studies. Caroline developed the idea, working with Judge Greaney to select a case that would be of interest to the high school students, who were invited because of their interest in the issues and participation in related courses.

Pictured above:

Judge Greaney talks to students at Law Day.

Professor and Students Present Research

Assistant professor of social work Efrosini Kokaliari, Ph.D., LICSW, and two of her former students presented research at the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) 10th Biennial Social Work Symposium April 11. Alumni Joseph Pietras '07 and Heather Gladu '07 participated in the research, titled "Self-Injury Among High School and College Students: An Exploratory Study."



Pictured left:

Heather Gladu '07, Dr. Efrosini Kokaliari, and Joseph Pietras '07 at their NASW symposium presentation.



Deborah K. Baker joined Elms College as senior director of development on July 8. Most recently, Debbie was senior development officer and regional director of philanthropy at World Learning in Brattleboro, Vermont. Her previous development experience includes 10 years at the University of Hartford in West Hartford, and more than six years at the Ethel Walker School, a private secondary girls' school in Simsbury, Connecticut. Debbie earned a bachelor's in organizational communication from the University of Hartford School of Communication.



Elizabeth Drummond, M.S., assistant clinical professor in nursing, presented her paper entitled, "Continuity of Mental Health Care for Released Prisoners," at the International Centre for Nursing Ethics conference being held at Yale University School of Nursing, July 17-19. Elizabeth's abstract was one of over 100 submitted from around the world, with at least one from every continent except Antarctica.



Terri M. Griffin, an adjunct professor in the Division of Communication Sciences and Disorders, won a Dina Feitelson Research Award from the International Reading Association (IRA). The $1,000 award recognizes exemplary published work in a scholarly journal on studies investigating literacy acquisition by beginning readers. The IRA presented the award at their 53rd Annual Convention held May 4 to 8 in Atlanta, which was attended by 20,000 reading educators.



Orlando Isaza, M.S.W., an adjunct instructor of Spanish and social work and a member of the social work advisory board, was named to the new state Board of Early Education and Care. The 13-member group will be charged with the coordination and consolidation of a range of education and human services focused on youth. Orlando is the senior program officer and manager for grant making initiatives at the Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts in Springfield. He received an honorary degree from Elms College in 2003.



Maureen Kervick, S.S.J. has been named interim vice president of student affairs. Sr. Maureen is a 1968 graduate of the Elms, and has been serving as director of campus ministry since 2002. She previously served the college as dean of students from 1975 to 1984.



Efrosini Kokaliari, Ph.D., LICSW, assistant professor of social work, presented an all-day workshop at the Monson Developmental Center May 7 entitled "Self-injury, Suicide, and Their Paradoxical Relationship: Treatment Approaches, Somatic Interventions, and Policy Implications." The seminar was designed to help professionals understand the complex relationship of self-injury and suicide, identify early signs and risk factors associated with self-injurious and suicidal behaviors, and learn new assessment and treatment methods.

Efi also had an article that she co-authored accepted for publication in *Affilia: Journal of Women in Social Work*. The piece is entitled "Non-Suicidal Self-Injury Among Healthier College Women: Lessons from Foucault." It was coauthored with Joan Berzoff, Ph.D., co-director of the doctoral program in social work at Smith College.



James H. Mullen Jr., Ed.D., former president, received a 2007 Annual Achievement Award from the Berkshire Area Health Education Center at its 28th Annual Meeting May 23, along with Paul E. Raverta, president of Berkshire Community College, and David E. Phelps, president and CEO of Berkshire Health Systems. The three presidents were honored for creative institutional partnering to add more nursing professors, produce more LPNs and associate degree RNs, provide access to a bachelor's degree RN program in Pittsfield, and develop Simulated Instructional Manikin (SIMS) laboratories to enhance the nursing clinical experience.



Kathleen Scoble, Ed.D., R.N., director and chair, Division of Nursing, was elected president of the Massachusetts Association of Colleges of Nursing in May 2008. The Massachusetts Association of Colleges of Nursing comprises deans, directors or chairs from the 22 baccalaureate and graduate programs of nursing in Massachusetts. She was also appointed to the Cooley Dickinson Hospital Board of Trustees last fall. Cooley Dickinson offers a wide range of services at its main campus in Northampton, as well as a variety of outpatient services throughout Hampshire and Franklin counties.



Joyce Thielen, Ph.D., assistant professor and assistant director of undergraduate nursing studies in the Division of Nursing, completed her doctoral education at the University of Connecticut this spring. Joyce's research, entitled "The Experience of Neurocognitive Changes in Women on Chemotherapy for Breast Cancer," received the first place award for outstanding doctoral student paper presentations at the 20th Annual Scientific Sessions of the Eastern Nursing Research Society held in Philadelphia in March.

Take Her Advice

Joyce Hampton on International Students and the Art of Advising

Perhaps this story is familiar: you are halfway through your junior year and decide you want to change majors. Does it make sense, and how can you do it? Maybe you can't decide which science course to take in your second semester, especially since you already plan to sign up for five other courses.

Maybe you just need to talk. You can't seem to get organized, and are falling behind in a couple of subjects. You're working two jobs, and can't find time to study. Should you drop a course? What will you do if you don't make the dean's list?

These are just a few of the problems and questions students are apt to experience at some point during their Elms College careers. Their academic advisor is there to help—if only the student knows when and where to look, and the advisor and student can find each other.

Start asking Elms students about the best academic advisors on campus, and often the name Joyce Hampton surfaces. It's no accident. Joyce, an assistant professor and director of the college's English as a Second Language program, takes the role of advisor seriously.

In part it is because the challenges faced by international students, with whom she works most closely, are typically greater than those experienced by English-speaking students from the United States. "The international student at Elms College experiences an initial period of culture shock," she says. "They are away from their family for the first time. There's a loss of connection to their culture, and frustration with the language. An assignment that takes a classmate 30 minutes might take an international student three or four hours."

Domestic or international, Joyce says, "Students often don't know where to turn when they have academic troubles or questions."

Joyce also knows first-hand that good academic advising is one of the qualities that can make an Elms education truly distinctive. "I don't remember much about my advisor at the University of Texas at Dallas," where she earned her bachelor's degree, she says. "It was such a large institution—more than 9,000 undergraduates. You were on your own a lot, and you had to figure things out or you would pay a price for it.

"The amount of support we offer at the Elms is phenomenal, and it is especially good for international students and students who are academically vulnerable."

Elms College is continually evaluating ways to improve academic advising with a standing committee headed by interim president Walter Breau, Ph.D.

The First-Year Seminar program is looking for ways to connect new students with their advisors more quickly, with a goal of having students and advisors meet in the first six weeks of the semester. They are also using the First-Year Seminars to communicate the importance of advising to new students, to teach the basics of the BlazerNet registration system, and how to get the most out of advising sessions. Unlike at many colleges, the First-Year Seminar instructor is not the assigned advisor; instead, students are assigned a faculty member by academic discipline.



Faculty Focus



Joyce Hampton

A student has to meet with his or her academic advisor to register for classes, or at least get approval online through BlazerNet. But faculty say that it is sometimes difficult to make contact with all of their students during the registration period, says Joyce. Most faculty advisors really do want to help, she says, but feel constrained time-wise (as the typical advising load is close to 30, and limited to full-time faculty).

"The smaller the number of advisees, the more time we can spend with students," says Joyce, "and at the beginning of the semester, there's not a lot of time for preparation. We also don't have a single way of saying, 'here's how we do it at Elms.'"

Each academic division has a different culture about how they approach advising. Nursing, for example, is more structured than some disciplines—students have clearer choices about course selection. In disciplines like the humanities, student paths and options are less well defined, and they may need more guidance.

"There are a lot of different models out there for advising," says Joyce. "Since the Elms is currently a faculty-advisor institution, it means a higher advisee load—we don't have a separate academic advising center. At most other colleges, faculty activities are valued in order of importance, as research, teaching, advising, and service. Here at the Elms, it's teaching first, advising second, and service third. Research demands depend on the discipline. In theory, this allows us more time to focus on students through our teaching and advising."

What makes a good academic advisor? Advising is mentoring, says Joyce; learning about the student from day one, understanding their interests, talents, and goals, and making



The Elms College International Club

them aware of opportunities both on and off campus.

"I take a lot of time with my advisees," she says. "I know them well. I know their families, their academic progress. I seek them out, they seek me out, on an almost every-other-week basis.

"If they are having trouble, we meet to develop a game plan to resolve that issue."

Joyce also communicates directly with the student's primary advisor. "Something as seemingly mundane as which science course to take requires good colleagues working together. As I teach ESL courses, my knowledge of what happens in the psychology or math programs helps me better prepare and advise my students."

The vitality of international students

When Joyce arrived at Elms 18 years ago, Elms had about 30 international students, most of them on full scholarship. "We want a diverse campus," she says, "and we want international students to have a positive experience here. But we needed to have a balance between students from economically disadvantaged areas and those from wealthier locations." The college retrenched for a period, but has been steadily rebuilding its international student program in recent years, in large part thanks to Joyce.

From the time an application from a prospective international student comes in, Joyce steps in, reviewing the file and doing a formal language assessment, if needed. Director of admission Joe Wagner is the point person for international student applications, and Joyce is part of the committee that makes decisions on their admission. Once an international student is accepted to Elms, Joyce helps them with immigration requirements and paperwork associated with entry into the United States and the Elms.

Determining the number of international students at the Elms today is not black-and-white. There are 12 current students here on F-1 visas, for example, meaning that they are here just to attend college. But a second, larger group comprises either recent immigrants or students for whom English is a second language.

Last year, the Elms enrolled seven students from Puerto Rico; another contingent of 15 is expected this September. The reason? Elms College is known to them. Joyce visited the region last spring, and with the help of current students and their families, met with students interested in studying at the Elms, and conducted English language assessment testing.

The father of a current student, Ivan Andujar '10, helped Joyce meet with a number of students and families, and the family of another student, Alberto Bravo '11, hosted a barbecue at which Joyce spoke. A slide show of photographs of the Elms campus was shown, and Alberto's family presented information about what students need to succeed at college.

Having a critical mass of potential students drives the recruiting decisions to some degree, she says. It could be a high school guidance counselor or teacher in another country who learns something about Elms College, perhaps on the Internet. It could be the result of an alumna/us native to or living in a particular region. A faculty member's visit to a country could spark interest in the Elms. In the past, for example, faculty members with interests in Poland and Ireland raised awareness of Elms College in those countries, leading to periodic spikes in applications from those areas.

Why would an international student choose the Elms? "Elms College provides a good, solid education in a supportive atmosphere; we are a place that will mentor," says Joyce. "We're gaining momentum and visibility with international students."

Resources available to an international student at the Elms include the International Club, which has more than 25 members and convenes at least bimonthly. The club gives students a chance to share their experience of being in another place. They need a place to talk about and validate their culture, says Joyce. The club is unique in that it is made up of about half international students and half those who simply have an interest in cultures or global issues.

The club does outreach to the broader campus as well. Among its activities last spring, for example, were language tables in the cafeteria, where members of the Elms community could be introduced to Swahili, Japanese, or Spanish language and culture by students for whom those are their first language.

"We want to educate our students globally, supporting all students to have international opportunities, as roommates or classmates, through study abroad or our exchange with Japan," says Joyce. (The latter refers to a 10-year-old program through which Elms students host students from Japan's Kochi Women's University during an annual exchange in March. Students are able to learn about Japanese culture while sharing aspects of American culture with their Japanese guests. Every other year, Elms students spend two weeks traveling and studying in Japan.)

The most important thing members of the Elms community can do to enhance the experience of international students, she says, is to take the time to get to know them and their cultures, "and see the humanity that connects us—our social, political, environmental ties.

"Read as much as you can," she says. "Learn, travel as much as you can. When you see an international student on campus, introduce yourself."

15 Years of Preparing Girls for College

The Step Forward program, which prepares adolescent girls for higher education, celebrated its 15th anniversary with a party May 29 in the Mary Dooley College Center. The evening included performances by Step Forward and Quest scholars, and a keynote speech by Carla Oleska, Ph.D., the program's founder. Step Forward has a 100 percent success rate, in that every one of its graduates has gone on to higher education: 30 have already graduated from college and are working in their chosen fields, and 50 more are currently in college or graduate school.

The following speech was delivered at the event by program founder Carla Oleska:

"What does it take to achieve 100 percent?

It takes a woman named Sr. Mary Frances Honnen and her invitation to bring a dream: not a problem, not a need, but a dream.

It takes a woman named Sr. Mary Dooley and her unwavering conviction in the power of education.

It takes a woman named Sr. Kathleen Keating and her passionate commitment to mission.

It takes the Sisters of St. Joseph and their associates and friends, and their willingness to link arms, roll up sleeves, and make a dream happen.

It always takes mothers, fathers, and guardians and their never-ending, deep-seated awareness of the absolutely holy relationship between a parent and a child.

It takes teachers in school and their constant desire to offer more, and to find opportunities for their students.

It takes the Step Forward/Step Ahead teachers, resident staff, and teacher aides and their boundless fascination with the miracle that takes place as doors open and horizons broaden in children's lives through the power of intellectual pursuit, scientific exploration, artistic expression and performance, research, dialogue, discover, play, and delight!

It takes mentors for internships and their thorough enjoyment in guiding young women as they explore the demands of the professional world.

It takes funders and their passionate desire to help communities thrive and prosper through equity, justice, and peace.

It takes a Ms. Eileen Kirk and a Ms. Dee Ward and their unbelievable dedication to the children they hold in their hearts.

And finally, it takes scholars, scholars with courage -

The courage to have a dream;

The courage to set goals;

The courage to work hard;

The courage to explore;

And the courage to believe in their intelligence, their beauty, their talents, and their uniqueness in this world."



Dr. Carla Oleska, program founder.



Eileen Kirk, co-director of the program, enjoys the performances.



Program graduates Kelly Smith, who is now a senior at Williams College; Vonetta Smith, who graduated from Hampton University and is now working at STCC; Tenielle Hill-Langevin, who graduated from Elms College and is now working as a nurse at Baystate Medical Center; and Patricia Hay, who graduated from the Elms and now works for Big Y, Inc.



Julissa Rodriguez performs with the Step Forward and Quest Drummers.

Athletic Hall of Fame Class of 2008 Inductees Announced

Tanya St. Germain '92, Damien Bradley '02, and Tenielle Hill '04

Three Elms College alumni have been named as Elms College's Athletic Hall of Fame Class of 2008 inductees: Tanya St. Germain '92, Damien Bradley '02, and Tenielle Hill '04. The three will be formally inducted as the college's sixth Hall of Fame class during Homecoming on October 24.

"These three former student athletes are most deserving of this honor," noted director of athletics Louise McCleary. "As a three-sport athlete, Tanya set a strong foundation for future Blazer teams, Damien is our first male student athlete inductee, and Tenielle still holds the majority of our women's basketball records."

Tanya St. Germain '92 was a four-year member of the field hockey program, a three-year player on the softball team, and a two-year member of the basketball team. In field hockey, she ranks second all-time in both goals (36) and points (88), and was a member of Elms' first-ever Massachusetts Association of Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (MAIAW) championship team. In softball, she posted a career batting average of .370 - good for 13th all-time. And in basketball, she averaged 4.6 points per game.

Damien Bradley '02, a four-year member of the men's basketball program, will become the first male in school-history inducted into the Athletic Hall of Fame. He finished his career with 1,158 points and is still one of only four players in the men's program 10-year history to score more than 1,000 points. He also ranks among the top five all-time in several statistical categories, including points in a season (460) and career steals (149). Damien was an accounting major.

Tenielle Hill-Langevin '04 was a four-year member of the women's basketball team, and ranks as the program's all-time leading scorer with 1,612 points. She is one of only six players in women's program history to score 1,000 points. As a junior, she helped lead the Blazers to a 15-win season and North Atlantic Conference (NAC) championship. Tenielle is now working as a nurse at Baystate Medical Center.

The 2008 class will join previous inductees Susan Langlois (2000), Patricia McGrath '74 (2001), Guerdline Curran '57 (2001), Elms College's 1989 field hockey team (2002), Nancy Gleason '89 (2006), Kristin Hughes '91 (2006), Linda Kieras '96 (2006), Bishop Emeritus Joseph Maguire (2006), Angel Esposito Chaffee '95 (2007) and Emily Halkett Bourgeois '90 (2007).



Tanya St. Germain '92



Damien Bradley '02



Tenielle Hill '04

New Field Named for Long-Time Softball Coach Cheryl Condon

The newly refurbished softball field at Elms College was renamed the Cheryl R. Condon Field April 18 in honor of the school's longtime softball coach.

Coach Condon, who received her master's in education degree from Elms College in 2003, is in her 22nd season as head coach of the softball program, and is the winningest coach in the history of the Elms College Athletic Department. She has been at the Blazers' helm for all but the first season of the program's 22-year existence, and came into the 2008 season just 27 wins shy of 300 career victories. She celebrated a milestone in 2006 by coaching her 500th collegiate career game, and has earned Coach of the Year honors from the North Atlantic Conference (NAC) a conference-record five times.

"When I talk about Elms athletics, Cheryl Condon is Elms athletics," said Louise McCleary, director of athletics.

Under Coach Condon, the softball program won 26 or more games for four consecutive years from 2003-2006, including a school-record 28-7 mark in 2003. The Blazers' berth in the 2003 NCAA Division III Championship was the first for an Elms College team in any sport. In 2006, she led the Blazers to a 27-12 record that included their fifth straight regular season crown, second NAC tournament title, and second National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division III championship berth in the last four years.





"I still can't believe it – I am awed," said the coach. "It's an amazing honor."

Work on the field was done last summer, at a cost of $700,000. It is one of the best for Division III softball in New England, said Louise.

Addressing the Crisis in Healthcare:

New Programs Respond to Community Needs

The challenge of providing adequate and affordable healthcare for its citizens has become more and more urgent for America's political leaders in the past decade, and has been a central issue in the current presidential campaign. Universal healthcare and cost containment are policy issues that have framed the national debate, against a backdrop of rapid technological change and an aging population.

At the personal level, where medical services are delivered and received, there is another, less well-publicized challenge facing America's healthcare system: a shortage of medical personnel in key professions. One is nursing, where the shortage is compounded by a lack of nursing faculty and increased educational demands for all registered nurses.

Another shortage is within the specialized field of autism spectrum disorders, which has experienced a dramatic increase in diagnoses in the past decade. Autism can be successfully treated in many cases, but there are too few professionals available to meet the growing need.

Elms College has responded to these critical shortages by developing new master's degree programs in nursing and autism spectrum disorders. The new programs are just two examples of the college's innovative, broad-based approach to building healthier communities that places patient care at its center.

In both its nursing and autism programs, the Elms takes its faculty expertise and a rigorous academic program into the community, where healthcare providers work and people seek medical services. This flexible and humane program design enables the college to maximize its resources and realize its greatest impact.



Understanding Autism

Families and Healthcare Workers Struggle With 'Epidemic'

Beginning this fall, Elms College will enroll students in a master of science degree program in autism spectrum disorders (ASD), one of the first of its kind in the nation. The new master's program and a new certificate of advanced graduate study (CAGS) in autism spectrum disorders respond to an unprecedented increase in the diagnosis and treatment of ASD.

The innovative program is the result of a partnership between the Elms College Division of Communication Sciences and Disorders and the River Street Autism Program of the Capitol Region Education Council in Hartford, Connecticut, and the two women who lead them, Kathryn James, Ph.D., and Kathleen Dyer, Ph.D., respectively. Dr. James, trained as an audiologist and teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing, and Dr. Dyer, who specializes in autism, view communication science disorders from different directions, but they share a passion for the field.

"Some communication disorders lend themselves to hard, objective data," says Dr. James. "With today's technology, for example, we are able to measure the response of the ear and the brain to sound—even if the individual we are testing cannot respond. We know the parts of the body that cause hearing loss and we have tests to assess these structures.

"We have yet to learn the specific part or parts of the brain that contribute to the behaviors we see in children with autism. With autism, we can't make the diagnosis that simply. It's based on behavior and symptoms, and there is a certain amount of subjectivity in the process of making the diagnosis."

The reported incidence of autism has increased dramatically in recent decades, from one in 5,000 in the 1970s to one in less than 150 in 2008. "When I started in the mid-1970s," says Dr. Dyer, clinical director of the River Street Autism Program, "autism was a really rare disorder, and was often not included in speech and language or special education curricula. Now the prevalence is estimated to be one in 150 births—more than all childhood cancers combined. It's an epidemic."



Kathryn James, Ph.D

"Our new degree and certificate programs in ASD will help address this need."

Yet speech-language pathologists, special educators, and general educators typically are not well-versed in the speech, language, and educational needs of individuals with autism, says Dr. James. Social workers, psychologists, nurses, administrators, and others who may encounter children with autism and their parents in professional settings are equally unfamiliar with the disorder.

"As the incidence of individuals with autism disorders has risen," she says, "there has been a concomitant increase in the need for educational opportunities in a wide variety of related fields. Our new degree and certificate programs in ASD will help address this need."

'Restricted focus'

Autism spectrum disorders are characterized by varying degrees of impairment in communication skills, social interactions, and restricted repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior. Individuals with ASD typically have difficulty relating to others, according to the National Institute of Mental Health.

"Children with autism often respond to a very narrow range of their environment, frequently missing the big picture," Dr. Dyer says. "They typically have islets of intelligence. You might find a child who has severe difficulty communicating, for example, who has superior mechanical skills and might be able to take apart a camera and put it back together again."

Yet, as the name implies, autism spectrum disorders refers to a wide range of behaviors, "a reflection of how much more we need to learn about this poorly understood disorder. There are a variety of behaviors that fall on the autism spectrum," says Dr. Dyer.

On one end of the spectrum is Kanner's Syndrome, a severe form characterized by such symptoms as severe social and communication impairment as well as severe problem behaviors. Many of these children also have mental retardation. At the other end is Asperger's Syndrome, a relatively mild form of autism. People with Asperger's are often highly intelligent and



Students at the River Street Autism Program learn social skills with Melissa Dei (left), a certified special education teacher, and Dr. Christina Foreman (right), a certified speech pathologist.



Kathleen Dyer, Ph.D.

functional, but they lack the ability to read other people and social situations.

Dr. Dyer considers "Rain Man," starring Dustin Hoffman as an adult with autism, "a good movie," but Hoffman's character, she says, "exemplifies just one point along the spectrum of symptoms and behaviors."

The reasons for the spike in autism cases are not clearly understood. Theories range from better diagnosis, to a broadening of the definition of autism, to environmental factors such as vaccines (or the mercury-based preservative, thimerosal, used previously in routine childhood vaccines). The primary evidence for this controversial claim, wrote Steven Novella on www.sciencebasedmedicine.org this April, is that the number of diagnoses of autism increased dramatically at the same time that the number of vaccines routinely given to children was increasing in the 1990s. Controlled research has not demonstrated a link between vaccines and the increase in the incidence of autism, however.

But Dr. Dyer theorizes that environmental toxins are a factor in why we are seeing such an increase in cases of autism. "I don't think we can poison our planet and get away with it," she says. "These children with autism are like the canary in the coal mine."

The River Street connection

The master's in ASD and the certificate of advanced graduate study in ASD, each with a required practicum, are designed for educators and healthcare professionals who work directly with children with autism and/or who intend to become board-certified behavior analysts.

The master's in ASD and the certificate of advanced graduate study in ASD, each without a required practicum, are intended for educators, social workers, nurses, agency administrators, and other professionals interested in understanding autism, but who do not provide direct service to children or intend to become board-certified behavior analysts.

Students who intend to become board-certified behavior analysts and would like their practicum hours to count toward certification will be required to complete three practica at either the River Street Autism Program at Coltsville in Hartford or the River Street School in Windsor, Connecticut. River Street's Dr. Dyer, clinical team leader Michael Rice, Ph.D., and speech-language pathologist Arleen Kaye will teach courses in the Elms ASD program.

The River Street School Autism Program at Coltsville opened in 2003. The program provides intensive year-round services for children with autism between the ages of three and 10. It has slots for 50 children but, despite the demand, the school has filled only 45 vacancies. The reason? "We don't have enough trained teachers," says Dr. Dyer. "There are very few training programs—we often have had to train in-house.

"I am excited about the tremendous potential of the Elms program to respond to the severe shortage in trained personnel," says Dr. Dyer. "The partnership between Elms College and the River Street Autism Program will offer a true research-to-practice experience, allowing master's degree students to practice the science-based strategies learned in the Elms classroom with children with ASD in a real school setting."

Elms College has demonstrated a deepening commitment to autism education and research programs in a number of ways.

A spiritual calling

For Dr. Dyer, the study and treatment of autism is "her life's work. By training I'm a scientist," she says, but this work is also about providing service. As a committed Quaker, her work has been prompted by her belief that all individuals deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. "At the end of a long day people often ask me if I am tired. I'm not—I'm continually energized by working with the children, and by my teaching at Elms."

Dr. Dyer earned her Ph.D. from the joint doctoral program in Speech and Hearing Sciences, University of California, Santa Barbara and University of California, San Francisco. Her primary mentor at UC Santa Barbara was Dr. Robert Koegel, an internationally renowned researcher in autism. She received additional training for her certificate of clinical competence in speech-language pathology from Temple University.

One of her early influences was Dr. O. Ivar Lovaas, developer of applied behavior analysis. By the 1960s, Dr. Lovaas, a researcher at UCLA with whom Dr. Dyer collaborated, produced dramatic evidence that autism could be treated. "Lovaas applied a behavioral model with these children. He and his colleagues at UCLA did this by breaking down skills into small manageable pieces and teaching these skills to the children. Then the teacher builds upon those skills so that the children learn how to learn in the natural environment.

"Original research on this method in peer-reviewed journals indicated that 90 percent of children substantially improved when utilizing the Lovaas Model of Applied Behavior Analysis, compared to the control group. Close to half attained a normal IQ and tested within the normal range on adaptive and social skills.

"While other studies have not reported such high success rates, the majority of children receiving treatment have significant decreases in problem behaviors, acquisition of basic communication skills, and an increased ability to participate in the community," says Dr. Dyer.

The treatment method must begin early, be intensive, be based on learning theory, "and everyone must be involved," says Dr. Dyer: parents, teachers, family members.

She began teaching as an adjunct at Elms College in 2004, and Dr. James audited one of her classes. Soon after, Dr. James approached Dr. Dyer about developing a concentration in autism spectrum disorders.

The concentration began in the fall of 2007 and classes were full "immediately. The need is enormous," the two say.

Some of Dr. Dyer's students were speech pathologists or special education teachers who had children in their classes with autism, and no knowledge of how to treat them—they needed to know what to do. "These are the most motivated students I have ever had," she says.

The mystery of autism

Diagnosing autism can occur as early as 18 months, says Dr. Dyer, and the critical period of treatment is ages three to five. Early indicators are when an infant displays antisocial behavior, such as never developing speech or, "the most devastating," says Dr. Dyer: when they start to talk, but then stop. "One day they are developing normally, interacting with their parents, playing peek-a-boo. Then suddenly eye contact stops, and play becomes increasing restricted."

After a while, why autism occurs "stopped being my question," says Dr. Dyer. "There are so many mysteries about the illness. We don't yet have the medical sophistication to fully understand autism, and there are so many ideologies brought to bear on it. I finally came to a place where I said, 'let's roll up our sleeves and begin to treat it.'"

The principles of treating autism, she says, are "not complicated at all. It's about rewarding success."



An associate instructor provides specialized one-on-one instruction to a student at the River Street Autism Program.

Some critics have argued that behavioral intervention is simplistic, and are concerned that the methods teach children to respond as robots. Dr. Dyer says that this is a misconception, and that "we all learn by having successes reinforced. We're helping kids become more independent, creative, contributing members of society. It's exciting to help them reach their potential.

"People with autism are people first," says Dr. Dyer. "Proper treatment can change their lives. Our task is to help them realize their gifts."

Attitudes toward the disorder have improved significantly since the 1950s, says Dr. Dyer, when emotionally distant "refrigerator moms" were seen as the cause of autism. "Rather than treat the child afflicted with the disorder, the mother was blamed," says Dr. Dyer. "Mothers of children with autism were told that they needed psychoanalysis, that they gave mixed messages to their children, causing them to withdraw," says Dr. Dyer.

There is now a solid body of evidence-based science of successful treatment of children with autism. But children with severe tendencies toward self-injury, aggression, and other isolating behaviors, for example, are generally not seen in public. Consequently, the most serious forms of the disorder remain relatively hidden, says Dr. Dyer.

"Families of children who are untreated have limited community involvement due to the problem behaviors," says Dr. Dyer. Misconceptions about autism and how best to treat it persist, she adds. "There are instances of families being given false hope when treatments are not based in science," she says. "In addition, valuable learning time is lost. This is not a place for experimentation or trial and error. Colleges have a huge responsibility to equip practitioners with evidence-based practices," an approach which is fundamental to the new Elms ASD programs.

A commitment to autism studies

"Elms College is pleased to offer this new master's degree program, which responds to a critical community need," says interim president Walter C. Breau, Ph.D. "In partnership with the River Street Autism Program—one of the preeminent autism programs in the Northeast—we can now provide educational opportunities for a wide range of service providers and educators interested in working with or learning more about individuals with autism."



Left to right: John Elder Robison, Doug Flutie, Dr. Kathryn James, and Dr. Betty Hukowicz, interim vice president of academic affairs, at the "Flutie Bowl to Strike Out Autism."

In addition to its partnership with River Street, Elms College has demonstrated a deepening commitment to autism education and research programs in a number of ways. During the 2007-2008 academic year, for example, the college hosted an Autism Spectrum Disorders Forum Series, which included a book reading and signing by John Elder Robison, author of *Look Me In the Eye*, in October; a panel discussion for parents, "Hope and Acceptance: Inspiration for Families of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders," in December, a screening of the award-winning film, *Billy the Kid*, in February, and a panel discussion for professionals, "Strategies for Success with Schools" in April. In January, the Elms was a sponsor of the Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism's "Flutie Bowl to Strike Out Autism."

Applicants to the new ASD programs do not have to hold a degree in the field of communication sciences and disorders—all undergraduate majors will be considered. Admission is on a rolling basis. For more information and an application for the new ASD programs, contact the Graduate Studies Office at 413-265-2445, or harveyd@elms.edu.



Not Enough Nurses

Elms College Takes A Multifaceted Approach to the Nursing Shortage

One small college in New England cannot single-handedly solve the nation's nursing shortage, true. But Elms College is trying—with a new master's degree program, a special focus on gerontology, productive partnerships with healthcare providers, an innovative "RN-to-BS" program, and success breaking down gender stereotypes around the nursing profession. Among other things, this multifaceted approach brings the academy into the community, where the most pressing healthcare needs are—as well as the caregivers working to meet them.

"Unless we increase the supply of nurses working in long-term care," says Kathleen B. Scoble, Ed.D., RN, chair of the Elms College Division of Nursing, "people will not receive the quality of care they need and desire, and the general health of the older population will be impacted."

Elms College is surrounded by hospitals and healthcare organizations, notes Kathleen, and nearly all of them have plans for expansion that will add significantly to the demand for qualified nurses in the near future.

Student recruitment is an ongoing challenge. Nursing is a demanding career, and not for the faint-hearted. It requires a combination of compassion and commitment, and is not recommended for people who are only interested in finding a good job (among other things, "you have to love working with people," says Kathleen). In addition, the nursing profession still struggles to shed its century-old identity as exclusively for women.

But the growing shortage has been exacerbated by inadequate numbers of qualified nursing programs and faculty. A 2006 Board of Registration in Nursing Faculty survey found a 35 percent increase in the faculty vacancy rate between academic years 2003-2004 and 2005-2006, and projected a vacancy rate of 11 percent for academic year 2007-2008. More than 2,100 qualified students were turned away from Massachusetts nursing programs in 2007, according to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing.

Improving the education and training of nurses is almost as important as increasing their numbers. Kathleen was lead writer and project coordinator for "Ensuring Educated Nursing Workforce for the Commonwealth," a 2005 white paper prepared by the Massachusetts Association of Colleges of Nursing (MACN, to which Kathleen was elected president this spring). The paper asserts that "nurses prepared with the baccalaureate and higher degrees provide better patient outcomes, have lower levels of medication errors and procedural and practice violations, stronger critical thinking and leadership skills, and stronger communication and problem solving skills."

Others agree. A recent report by Dr. Linda Aiken and colleagues at the University of Pennsylvania, for example, identified a clear link between higher levels of nursing

The Nursing Shortage: Facts and Figures

The United States healthcare system is staring down a potential crisis of immense proportions: a shortage of nurses across the spectrum. The statistics tell some of the story, nationally and in the region:

- The healthcare industry has the highest number of vacancies of any industry in Massachusetts. There currently are more than 4,500 nurse vacancies in the state, a vacancy rate of about 6 percent, according to the Massachusetts Healthcare Chartbook. This shortage is expected to grow to 12 percent by 2010, and reach 20 percent by 2020.
- This shortage is different from past nursing shortages, industry experts say, because of the aging of the nursing workforce. The most recent National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses reports that the average age of the working registered nurse population was 43.3 in March 2000; in Massachusetts, the average was 45.7 years. More than one-quarter of RNs (28 percent) and LPNs (31 percent) in the state are 50 years or older, compared to 24 percent of all workers. The RN population under the age of 30 dropped from 25.1 percent of the nursing population in 1980 to 9.1 percent in 2000.
- Data from 2007 from the Massachusetts Extended Care Federation show that in western Massachusetts (Hampden, Hampshire, and Franklin counties), there are 220 unfilled positions for RNs, 142 in long-term care; 67 unfilled positions for licensed practical nurses; and 383 unfilled positions for certified nursing assistants. The number of unfilled positions for RNs in the region is predicted to increase to 294 by 2015, and 674 by 2020, and the proportion of these positions in long-term care will grow significantly as the patient population ages.

"If we at Elms College expect to respond to the healthcare needs of the community we serve, we cannot go the journey alone."


Kathleen B. Scoble, Ed.D., RN

education and better patient outcomes. Aiken's study found that surgical patients have a "substantial survival advantage" if treated in hospitals with higher proportions of nurses educated at the baccalaureate or higher degree level. Other findings showed that in hospitals where there is a 10 percent increase in the proportion of nurses holding baccalaureate degrees, the risk of patient death and failure to rescue was decreased by 5 percent.

The MACN white paper goes on to note that the National Advisory Council on Nursing Education and Practice, policy advisors on nursing issues to Congress and the U.S. Secretary for Health and Human Services, has recommended that at least two-thirds of the nursing workforce hold baccalaureate and higher degrees by 2010. Currently, fewer than half of nurses in Massachusetts are prepared at the baccalaureate or higher degree level.

Despite the obvious need, providing more and better educational opportunities to nurses often requires a creative approach. In some cases, such as Elms College's new RN-to-BS program at the Berkshire Health Center, it means going to the nurses' workplace to make education affordable and accessible. The Elms joined with Berkshire Health Systems (BHS) this year to offer nurses employed by BHS affiliates a degree completion program that provides a liberal arts education while enhancing their nursing knowledge and experience.

The new program this spring accommodated 15 registered nurses from Berkshire Medical Center, Fairview Hospital, and BHS' long-term care facilities. The RNs took classes at the Berkshire Medical Center Hillcrest campus in Pittsfield, working toward their bachelor of science degrees in nursing. A second cohort of 15 students will be admitted in September.

"The program is working very smoothly," says Suzanne L. Barenski, M.S., RN, assistant director of nursing for RN studies. "The students are delighted to be able to take classes at their workplace with the support of their employer, and eager to work together. Berkshire's state-of-the-art classroom is a real asset."

Another strategy to address the potentially prohibitive cost of a high-quality nursing education program is through shared faculty and resources. "It has become increasingly apparent that if we at Elms College expect to respond to the healthcare needs of the community we serve, we cannot go the journey alone," says Kathleen. "It is through unique and innovative partnerships that we will build the programs needed to address the long-term challenges of educating a nursing workforce adequate in number, competency, and educational preparation."

One example is the "unparalleled opportunity," says Kathleen, "for Mercy Medical Center and Elms College to challenge past norms with a collaborative and nontraditional partnership designed to meet both institutions' future needs."

Elms College and Mercy Medical Center, a 254-bed, nonprofit, community hospital in Springfield, have collaborated on a successful academic/practice partnership since 2004. Mercy Medical Center is a member of the Sisters of Providence Heath System, and a founding member of Catholic Health East, one of the nation's largest healthcare systems.

To date, the partnership has expanded faculty capacity and professional development through a joint-appointment position funded by Mercy Medical Center with responsibilities for both teaching and professional development; increased clinical learning experiences in Mercy for Elms nursing students; increased enrollment of Mercy RNs in the RN-to-BS program; and increased recruitment of Elms nursing graduates to Mercy Medical Center.

Learning by simulation

Another result of the partnership is a new patient simulator. Elms College this spring was awarded a grant valued at $45,000 to receive a Laerdal SimMan Patient Simulator to teach, reinforce, and test student skills in its nursing skills lab. The grant is funded through the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education's Nursing and Allied Health Education Initiative.

The SimMan is a portable, anatomically realistic manikin used to teach clinical and decision-making skills to nursing students through realistic patient care scenarios. It provides a dynamic hands-on learning experience for students, without risk to patients.


The SimMan Patient Simulator

The manikins simulate human patients, with functioning airways, cardiac and circulation systems, physiological responses, and voice capabilities. Students can practice a variety of nursing procedures, including difficult airway management scenarios, chest tube management, IV placement, catheterization, defibrillation, and CPR. The manikin has preprogrammed physiological responses to more than 100 drugs.

The SimMan will provide immediate feedback to actions performed by students, allowing them to correct their techniques. In addition to nursing procedures, students learn communication skills, teamwork, and patient safety. Instructors can design their own patient cases to teach specific skills, or run pre-programmed scenarios.

The Elms nursing program will use the SimMan throughout its curriculum to help teach nursing skills with a specific focus on the unique care requirements of adults in acute care settings. The SimMan Patient Simulator will be utilized in several courses that will integrate geriatric nursing competencies, and with Mercy Medical Center staff nurses to develop and improve geriatric nursing competencies.

Simulation will be incorporated in the Elms nursing curriculum beginning in the sophomore year, with a course in which students assess the older adult in the context of normal age-related changes. Junior nursing students in acute care will not only assess the older adult, but practice technical skills as they apply to that population.

Senior nursing students will be exposed to the complexity of caring for older adults with atypical presentations of illness and conditions seen in the older adult. Safety and communication skills will be integrated across all levels through the use of simulation education.

The patient simulator, Kathleen says, "provides Elms College a unique opportunity to introduce simulation education with a gerontology focus and develop specific nurse competencies using simulation education.

"Mercy Medical Center provides outstanding learning opportunities for students through its vast array of services and expert nursing staff. Mercy Medical cares for a significant older adult population, and currently does not have simulation equipment or educational programs using simulation for their nursing staff.

"Together, we can achieve our goals for student and nurse education, and become a model for academic partnerships and simulation technology in education and practice. This is truly a remarkable opportunity."

Geriatric nursing in demand

Nursing, says Kathleen, is shaped by the population it serves, and it has become a national priority to strengthen geriatric competencies of practicing nurses. Elderly persons in the U.S. and throughout the world constitute an increasing proportion of the population. The Administration on Aging reported in 2004 that 12.3 percent of the U.S. population is 65 years or older; this will increase to 20 percent by the year 2030. Older adults experience approximately four times the number of hospitalization days as those less than 65 years. Older adults are the "core business" of healthcare institutions, average more contacts with healthcare providers, and utilize a large portion of healthcare services.



"It has become a national priority to strengthen geriatric competencies of practicing nurses."

Yet studies consistently show that geriatric content is absent from the curricula of most nursing programs. Barriers to offering gerontology studies include a lack of interest among faculty, and insufficient number of faculty qualified to teach gerontology courses.

Elms College, though, has two gerontology clinical nurse specialists on faculty, Joyce Z. Thielen, Ph.D., RN, and Janet Moore, M.S., RN, who will serve as consultants to the nursing students, foster positive attitudes about aging, and serve as staff development consults for Mercy Medical Center, offering continuing education in the care of the older adult to hospital nurses.

Elms nursing programs

Founded in 1978, the Elms College Division of Nursing offers a traditional four-year bachelor of science in nursing program, with an estimated full-time undergraduate enrollment for fall 2008 of 220 students. The RN-to-BS program, founded in 1982 and redesigned into a cohort model in 2003, currently serves 73 students in three cohorts: two on the Elms campus and one at the Berkshire Health Center in Pittsfield.

This year, Elms College launched its first master of science in nursing degree program, with specialty tracks in nursing and health services management and nursing education. In its first semester, the program had a total enrollment of 28 students in opening classes, 16 accepted as fulltime graduate students.

"The students entering the Elms M.S.N. program vary in age from 30 to over 50," says associate professor Cynthia L. Dakin, Ph.D., RN, assistant program director of graduate nursing studies, "but they all have one thing in common: they have for years or even decades wanted to broaden their knowledge related to teaching or management.

"Some see that completing their master's degree will allow them new employment opportunities, particularly teaching at the college level, while others have plans to broaden their current professional role to include the new skills they are acquiring in the program."

Nursing is a dynamic profession, says Kathleen, "with a rigorous curriculum of liberal arts, science, and nursing. I believe Elms College nursing graduates are distinguished in their practice because the nursing curriculum builds on such an outstanding liberal arts and science education."

People get interested in nursing for many reasons, but nearly everyone at some point has a healthcare experience connected to a nurse, she adds, and nursing affords its graduates career opportunities in many fields. It is one of the few professions where you begin your practice as soon as you graduate; and abundant opportunities for specialized nursing education follow.

In its own small but innovative fashion, Elms College will continue to work to meet that educational demand.



Strength in Partnerships

"It is through unique and innovative partnerships that we will build the programs needed to address the long-term challenges of educating a nursing workforce adequate in number, competency, and educational preparation," says Kathleen B. Scoble, Ed.D., RN, chair of the Elms College Division of Nursing. She takes this imperative seriously.

Elms' new partnership with Berkshire Health Systems brings the college's RN-to-BS program into the community and nurses' workplace, meeting a critical need for accessible education for nurses. Elms College's partnership with Mercy Medical Center in Springfield includes both faculty support and, going forward, a new simulation education program with a focus on geriatric studies.

The Elms nursing program has many other valued partners in the region. These include:

- **Cooley Dickinson Hospital (CDH) in Northampton**. Similar to the partnership with Mercy Medical Center, CDH provides the Elms with one faculty member per semester. There are many other shared benefits to the partnership, says Kathleen. "Prior to the partnership in 2004, for example, we did not place nursing students at Cooley Dickinson for clinical learning; and our employment trends showed us that our graduates were not pursuing positions there. In the class of 2008, three graduates accepted positions at CDH." Kathleen was appointed to the Cooley Dickinson Hospital board of trustees last fall.
- **Baystate Medical Center in Springfield**. Elms College nursing faculty have been consulting with Baystate nurses on their program to prevent patient falls. The partnership is another example of nursing in the community being enhanced through the use of Elms' highly qualified nursing faculty as an expert resource.
- The newest partnership is with the **Northampton Veterans Administration Medical Center (VAMC).** Elms and the Northampton VA have joined forces to implement an innovative program designed to increase the academic affiliation between the two institutions. The primary goal of the pilot project is to enhance the use of clinical learning experiences and education opportunities throughout the Northampton VAMC campus. A key element of the academic partnership is the appointment of a clinical nurse educator who will serve as both nurse educator for the medical center and adjunct faculty member at Elms College. "This is a tremendous opportunity for Elms College nursing," says Kathleen. "I am continually amazed at the extraordinary care and services that the VA Northampton provides to our veterans. Increasing learning opportunities for nursing students at the VA will expose them to not only role models in nursing, but the career opportunities the VA provides." Two 2008 Elms graduates have already accepted nursing positions at the Northampton VA.

A Leadership Role

In addition to these clinical and academic partnerships with hospitals and healthcare providers in western Massachusetts, Elms College is taking a leadership role in efforts to improve nursing education nationally and in the region.

The Elms is represented in the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education Nursing Initiative, which assembled one of just 11 teams in the nation chosen to present at the federal Nursing Education Capacity Summit held in Arlington, Virginia in late June. The summit was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration; the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation; the Center to Champion Nursing in America; and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration.

The summit's purpose was to engage state teams in "a solutions-based discussion, to foster action, identify best practices, and develop strategies to increase the number of nurses we can train."

The Elms College nursing program is also a member of the CAN DO partnership (Collaborating for Advancement of Nursing: Developing Opportunities), designed to advance nursing education in western Massachusetts and provide a model for replication by other regions. The Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation, a private family foundation established in 1970 which makes grants in the support and promotion of cultural, educational, and human service organizations, is the lead foundation for the CAN DO partnership.

Key partners are:

- The Massachusetts Long Term Care Foundation
- Employment boards of Hampden, Hampshire, and Franklin Counties
- Local schools of nursing (STCC, HCC, GCC, UMass, Elms, and AIC)
- Long-term health provider Heritage Hall
- Area hospitals (Baystate, Holyoke, Cooley Dickinson, Mercy, and Noble)
- Private foundations (Davis Foundation, Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts, Massachusetts Long-Term Care Foundation, and Frank Stanley Beveridge Foundation)

Last spring, Kathleen was elected president of the Massachusetts Association of Colleges of Nursing (MACN), which comprises deans, directors, or chairs from the 22 baccalaureate and graduate programs of nursing in Massachusetts. Its mission is to provide leadership and advocacy on matters pertaining to professional nursing education and practice in the state.

A Profession—Not a Gender

Left to right: Raymond Gilbert, Darius Taylor, Justin Ritter, Byron Bledsoe, Ryan Lavoie, and Jose Colon.

"Nursing is not a gender. It is a profession," says Maryann P. Matrow, operations manager of nursing at Elms College. Maryann authored a graduate research paper, "Men in nursing: being a minority in a female dominated workforce" this spring. Elms, like many other nursing programs, has been working hard to encourage more men to enter the profession in light of the current and projected nursing shortage, with some success: six of its 49 baccalaureate graduates in 2008 were men.

"There is somewhat of a reverse feminism going on" with men and nursing, Maryann says. "We're telling men, 'you can do whatever you want,'" yet men continue to be underrepresented in the profession.

Many men are entering the nursing field in mid-career, she says, motivated by the prospects for employment, stability, and advancement.

The strong identity of nursing with women is a relatively recent phenomenon, says Maryann. When the world's first nursing school opened in India around 250 B.C., she writes, only men were considered "pure" enough to become nurses. More recently in the United States, the Alexian Brothers in 1866 opened their first hospital in this country and educated men as nurses.

The Mills School of Nursing and St. Vincent's Hospital School for Men in New York were established in 1888, but by that time the nursing field was already beginning to be dominated by women.

The emergence of females into the profession began in 1863, when women physicians founded New England Hospital for Women and Children to provide nursing education for women. When the first convention of the Nurses Associated Alumnae of U.S. and Canada was held in 1900, the delegates included only one married woman and no men. In 1917, the Nurses Associated Alumnae became the American Nurses Association, and men were excluded from its membership until 1930.

A major impact of the professional nursing organizations was to exclude men from military nursing—only women could serve in the Army Nurse Corp when it was formed in 1901. The tables had turned, writes Maryann, as U.S. military nursing was transformed from being predominately male to exclusively female.

The Korean War reintroduced men into nursing in the military, she says. This shift in policy impacted civilian nursing, as nursing schools that had previously denied admission to men began to admit them.

The number of men in nursing has increased slowly ever since, rising from less than 1 percent in 1966 to 5 percent in 1996. Men currently represent 6 percent of the nursing workforce. But the six men who earned their bachelor of science degrees in nursing at Elms in 2008 are enthusiastic, dedicated, and optimistic about their future. They encourage other men who share their passion to serve to consider nursing as a profession. These graduates come from different backgrounds and became interested in nursing for different reasons, but they share a commitment to help people in need. Here are their stories:



Byron Bledsoe, 21, of Lake Forest, California, was taking business classes at a community college in California, and working for an attorney, and found it boring. His mother is a nurse, his father an x-ray technician, so he decided to give the healthcare field a try. He took a course in anatomy and physiology, and found he liked it. A volleyball player, Byron transferred to Elms College, where he could compete for the next two years while completing his degree.

When he got to the Elms, Byron says, he didn't know a whole lot about nursing, but now "I enjoy it a lot." A turning point for him was spending time with an elderly patient at the Heritage Hall Rehabilitation Center in Agawam over a period of months, and seeing him get well enough to return home with his family. "It was fun to watch him get better." Byron has taken a job as an intensive care nurse at the Western Medical Center in Santa Ana, California. From there, he will "see where it goes. Maybe a cardiac cath lab (providing care

for patients during the cardiac catheterization procedure), maybe management, maybe a clinical teacher."



Jose Colon, 45, is a retired United States Marine. The Bronx, New York, native says he considered his time in the military as service to his country; now he wants to offer service to others as a nurse. He has a good role model: his wife, who has been a nurse for the past 20 years. They live in Springfield with their two young children. Jose loves the people aspect of the job, as well as the medical and scientific coursework.

He feels Elms College's Catholic identity makes its approach distinct. "There's a value about caring for people here," he says, "and not just in nursing, but in all academic areas." He began working in the cardiac recovery unit at Hartford Hospital in Connecticut in July. Jose is committed to finding a way to balance the demands of work with family.



Raymond Gilbert, 23, of Westfield, was a pharmacy student at the University of Connecticut. He didn't like his classes, but wanted a career in the healthcare field, a job that was people-centered.

Elms helped Raymond "gain an appreciation for each patient population and how to work with them. I improved my communication skills, prepared for the job market, got clinical experience. I feel professionally prepared." He expects to be working in either orthopedic or cardiac care. Raymond is interested in critical care nursing as a path for his professional development.



A personal tragedy steered **Ryan Lavoie** into nursing. When he was 16, a high school friend in Ludlow was killed. It pushed Lavoie, now 21, in the direction of healthcare, developing his sense of compassion to help other people, either as a firefighter or a nurse.

He, too, had his eyes opened to nursing's possibilities at the Elms. "I had a general idea when I got here, but as an Elms student I got to see how much you could do in the field: critical … long-term … emergency … I particularly enjoyed the way the Elms promoted the Student Nurse Assistant Program (SNAP), getting to work one-on-one with a nurse." Ryan is working on the orthopedic floor at Baystate Medical Center in Springfield. "They do a lot of joint replacements, some traumas. It's a good learning floor." He expects to pursue a master's degree in a year or two, and is particularly interested in critical care nursing or becoming a clinical nurse specialist.



Justin Ritter, 25, of Belchertown got into nursing "by accident." He had begun a career in exercise physiology, but was not satisfied. He began applying to colleges, and the Elms was the first to accept him. He had heard about Elms College's nursing program, and decided to give it a try. He has loved it ever since.

Elms College, he says, has given him a great appreciation for what nurses do. "It's a lot of work, a lot more than giving medications," he says. "There's a lot more that goes on than what people generally see." Justin is now a nurse at the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Northampton. He eventually hopes to pursue a doctorate degree in nursing and join the Air Force.



Darius Taylor, 24, of Monson became interested in nursing while working as an emergency medical technician and firefighter. He came into contact with many nurses and doctors, and was impressed by the number of specialties within the nursing and healthcare field.

Similar to Byron Bledsoe, Darius says, "I didn't know what I was getting myself into." His time at the Elms has opened his eyes to a wide range of nursing experiences. During the spring semester, for example, he worked with high school students in Springfield at risk of dropping out of school. Darius now works in the emergency room at Manchester Memorial Hospital in Connecticut. He would love to be a flight nurse eventually, transferring patients between hospitals by helicopter.

Gender Bias

Most of Elms College's men in nursing say they have experienced some sort of gender bias during their time as students. "In our clinical rotations, our faculty would often ask patients if they minded being seen by a male student nurse," says Justin. "Often they would say 'yes.'"

"All of us have at one point felt we have been gender stereotyped," says Byron, "which is backwards for most of us. Patients were often given a choice about whether they wanted a male student nurse rather than just a student nurse, when in a normal setting, they would not be given that choice."

The maternity ward was especially challenging for these students. "I was the only guy in my group of 10," says Darius. "I was turned down, and did not get to see a live birth."

The male nurses are often mistaken for doctors, and the most common question he gets, says Ryan, is "are you staying in nursing, or are you going to become a doctor?" The others nod in agreement.

Gender shouldn't make a difference, they agree. Byron perceives that men are more likely to be on a fast track and move up to leadership positions, and Ryan says that occasionally there are jobs that require heavy lifting. "But I don't think gender matters," says Raymond. Compassion and caring are not gender specific, he says. "Men and women bring different qualities to the table, and patients are sometimes drawn to one or the other."

Adds Jose, "You bring different skill sets as individuals, but we all bring a sense of compassion."

Despite the stereotypes, all six Elms men in nursing, now graduates, are enthusiastic ambassadors for men thinking of becoming nurses. "It's an excellent profession," says Ryan, "with lots of opportunities, and potential for leadership. The sky's the limit."

"I love all the options," says Justin, "and I know I will always have a job."

"You can do whatever you want," says Byron, "and go wherever you want. You can become your own boss, set your own schedule … there's a lot of freedom for nurses."

He can work as a nurse, go into a related field like pharmaceutical sales, start his own business. Jose adds that there are numerous opportunities within the field of nursing, from hospitals to private care, nursing homes to schools.

Still, "you have to like nursing," cautions Justin. "Don't go into it just because it can lead to a good job."

In the final analysis, "it's not an employment issue," says Jose. "It's about the people and the patients, the people you meet and help in the recovery process."

"There's a great deal of satisfaction from helping a patient and having his or her family thank you afterward. That means so much," said Byron.

People considering the nursing profession should volunteer at a hospital, shadow a nurse, or get a job as a medical technician or orderly, suggests Raymond.

"Research the profession as much as you can," advises Darius.

"It's a tough profession, but you have a lot of help at the Elms," says Ryan.

Jose adds that he has been "very impressed" by the Elms community, from faculty and staff to his classmates. "You see a lot of young men and women of good character on this campus," he says.



Francine Vecchiolla Receives Mary Killeen Bennett Award

Francine J. Vecchiolla, Ph.D., dean of the School of Social Work at Springfield College, was honored as the sixth recipient of the Mary Killeen Bennett Award at Elms College April 10. The event was sponsored by the college's social work advisory board, which created the award to be given annually to a human service worker who has demonstrated a commitment to social change and justice and to the education and training of human service workers of diverse cultures. It is named for Elms alumna Mary Killeen Bennett, who for more than 20 years was a devoted member and chair of the college's social work advisory board.

Dr. Vecchiolla has more than 25 years of experience addressing child welfare, public health, and public policy issues, and has held positions as a direct service provider, senior administrator, consultant, policy maker, trainer, author, and graduate social work educator.

Pictured above: Francine J. Vecchiolla



Kennedy Leaves Bequest to Irish Cultural Center

George Kennedy was a loyal member of the Irish Cultural Center (ICC) at Elms College from its founding in 1999 until just before his death in January 2007. Once a week for all of those nine years, he volunteered at the Center, helping visitors with family searches or other requests. He was happiest when helping someone else find information.

George generously remembered the ICC in his will, with a bequest of $60,000. (He also left bequests to the Polish Center of Discovery and Learning at Elms College, and Mater Dolorosa Church in Holyoke.)

"The money we receive will help to keep the Irish arts alive in the area," said ICC board president Gerry Healy. "We will treasure the gift itself, but more importantly, the gift will serve as a constant reminder of George's friendship and faithfulness."

George, who was a decorated veteran of the United States Air Force during the Korean War, taught at Chicopee Comprehensive High School from 1963-1992. He was a committed volunteer to his church, and assisted at their yearly festivals, sang in the choir, and attended retreats at the Passionist Monastery in West Springfield.

George had considerable expertise and energy in helping people to pursue their family roots. In addition to the work he did for the ICC in genealogy research, he also volunteered for years at the National Archives in Pittsfield and the Latterday Saints Library in Amherst and Ludlow.

Pictured above: George Kennedy



Students Take Last-Minute Opportunity to Study in Ireland

With only three weeks notice, seven Elms students packed up and traveled to Ireland June 5 for a two-week immersion course in Celtic studies.

The surprise opportunity was organized by Irish Studies program coordinator Dr. Damien Murray. During finals week in May, he received an email from a colleague at the Innisfree International College and Convention Centre in County Sligo, inviting him to send four students to the program, with free accommodations, food, on-ground transportation, admission to all sites, and three college credits via their affiliate, the National University of Ireland, Galway.

"We thought we'd have trouble finding people who could leave on such short notice," said Dr. Murray. "Instead, the problem was that we had too many students, and we didn't have the heart to turn them away. So we asked Innisfree if they could extend the offer to seven students, and they very generously agreed. You've never seen such happy students!"

"I'm excited to learn about Ireland's history through the eyes of the Irish people themselves," says Melissa Fijal, who is a history major with an Irish Studies minor.

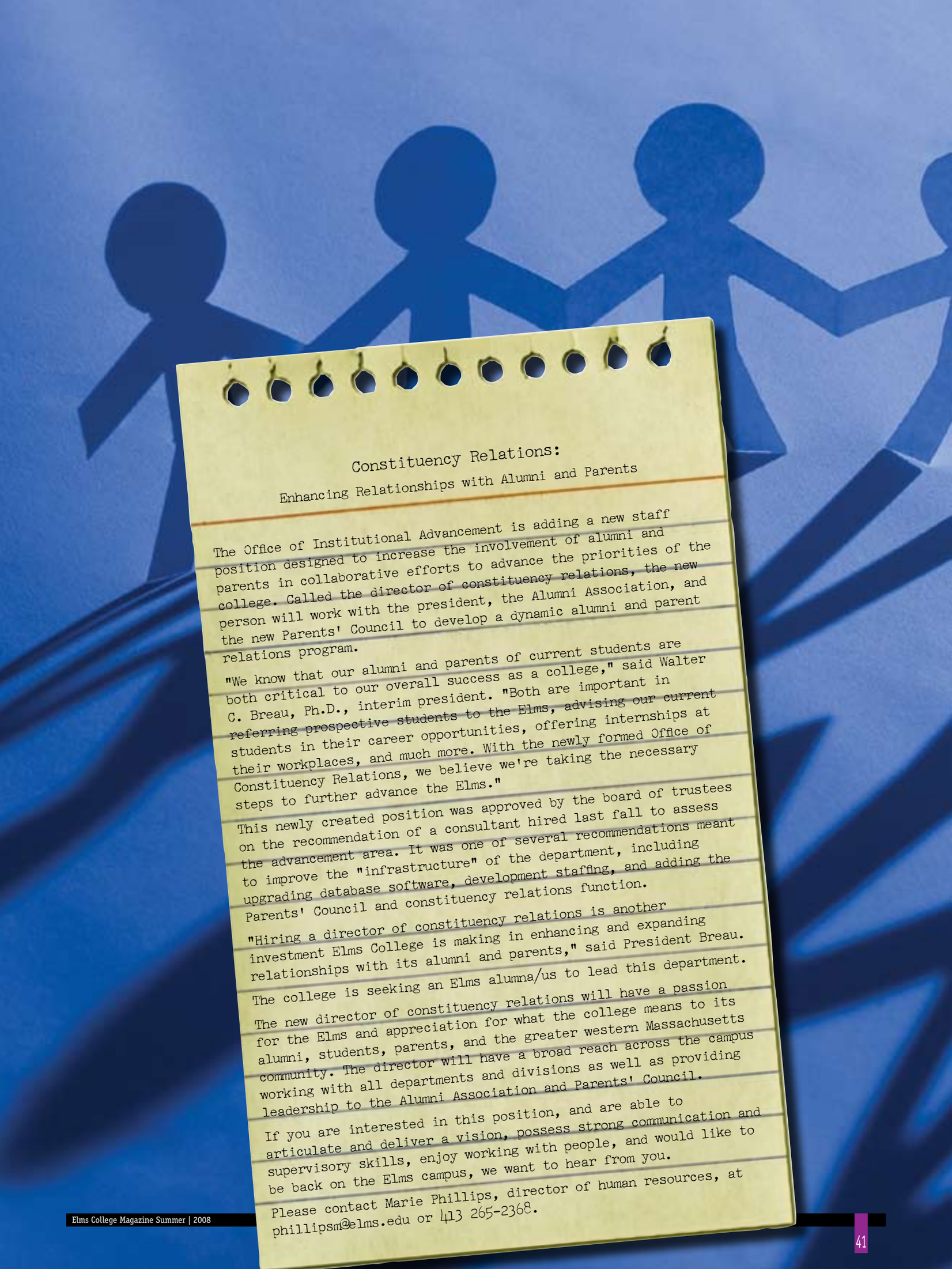
The students did have to pay for their own roundtrip airfare to Ireland, which is currently quite expensive. The Irish Cultural Center board voted unanimously to help them out with $500 stipends to defray the costs of participating in the program.

"Our center exists to help spread awareness and appreciation of Irish culture," says Sister Judith Kappenman, the center's director. "We had to do something to help make this happen."

Pictured above:

Left to right: Billy Dupre, Ben Masse, Will Jubinville, Shannon Schickler, Jessica Leary, Melissa Fijal, and Justina Thengumthyill.





Constituency Relations:

Enhancing Relationships with Alumni and Parents

The Office of Institutional Advancement is adding a new staff position designed to increase the involvement of alumni and parents in collaborative efforts to advance the priorities of the college. Called the director of constituency relations, the new person will work with the president, the Alumni Association, and the new Parents' Council to develop a dynamic alumni and parent relations program.

"We know that our alumni and parents of current students are both critical to our overall success as a college," said Walter C. Breau, Ph.D., interim president. "Both are important in referring prospective students to the Elms, advising our current students in their career opportunities, offering internships at their workplaces, and much more. With the newly formed Office of Constituency Relations, we believe we're taking the necessary steps to further advance the Elms."

This newly created position was approved by the board of trustees on the recommendation of a consultant hired last fall to assess the advancement area. It was one of several recommendations meant to improve the "infrastructure" of the department, including upgrading database software, development staffing, and adding the Parents' Council and constituency relations function.

"Hiring a director of constituency relations is another investment Elms College is making in enhancing and expanding relationships with its alumni and parents," said President Breau.

The college is seeking an Elms alumna/us to lead this department.

The new director of constituency relations will have a passion for the Elms and appreciation for what the college means to its alumni, students, parents, and the greater western Massachusetts community. The director will have a broad reach across the campus working with all departments and divisions as well as providing leadership to the Alumni Association and Parents' Council.

If you are interested in this position, and are able to articulate and deliver a vision, possess strong communication and supervisory skills, enjoy working with people, and would like to be back on the Elms campus, we want to hear from you.

Please contact Marie Phillips, director of human resources, at phillipsm@elms.edu or 413 265-2368.

Importance of scholarships stressed at brunch

On April 27, when four new endowed scholarships were announced at the annual donor/scholar brunch, senior Catherine "Cate" Avery gave personal testimony to the importance of such scholarships for Elms students.

Cate, who was the recipient of the Diggins Endowed Scholarship and the Hurst Endowed Scholarship this year, told the audience of donors, scholarship recipients, their families, and members of the college community, that "I am deeply appreciative of these scholarships, for, without them, I may not have been able to participate in this valuable education."

Her Elms College education, she said, would lead her after graduation to working with 'at risk' youth for PeaceJam Northeast, an international education program built around Nobel Peace Laureates who work personally with youth.

Cate said that she had become actively interested in social justice and peace building at the Elms after taking a sociology class with Professor Scott Hartblay called "Human Oppression," which dealt with issues ranging from genocide to the Civil Rights movement.

The class "got me to really ask questions of myself and society," she said. "The main questions were 'Why?' 'Why again?' 'What else?' and 'What can each person contribute to change, starting with myself?'" she said.

That last question led to her involvement in the Elms Social Justice Series planning committee and participating in the college's programs with PeaceJam, including work on the April 4-6 conference with Nobel Peace Laureate Jody Williams.

None of this might have happened were it not for the scholarships, she said.

"I'm sure the other student scholars would agree with me when I say that these scholarships are very important to us – so that we might receive an Elms education and that we might continue on our paths to pursue our dreams," she said.

Four new scholarships

The four new endowed scholarships announced at the brunch were: the George Antroll Endowed Scholarship, the Thomas J. and Margaret E. Brigham Endowed Scholarship, the Catherine McDonnell Pitoniak '47 Endowed Scholarship, and the Margo Sullivan '55 Endowed Scholarship.

The George Antroll Endowed Scholarship

The Antroll Scholarship was established for a deserving student from western Massachusetts and funded by a bequest from George Antroll, 93, of South Hadley, who is the father of Elms trustee Bill Frain.

Bill said that his father, a life-long western Massachusetts resident, served with the Army Tank Corps in Africa during World War II. Wounded in battle, George spent 18 months recuperating and then signed on for another tour of duty.

Bill said the scholarship had its origin when his father had a health scare, which made him think about what to do with his estate. Bill said he suggested that $100,000, which would have gone to him and his sister, be used instead to establish a scholarship at the Elms.

Bill, who has been on the college's board of trustees since 1996, himself made a pledge of $1 million in 2000. One-half was to be used for the Mary Antroll Endowed Scholarship in memory of his mother, and the other half was to go to the general fund.

Bill said his father attended the brunch and really enjoyed the opportunity to talk with scholarship recipients.

The Thomas J. and Margaret E. Brigham Endowed Scholarship

The Thomas J. and Margaret E. Brigham Endowed Scholarship was established by Jean Brigham '69 of Palmer.

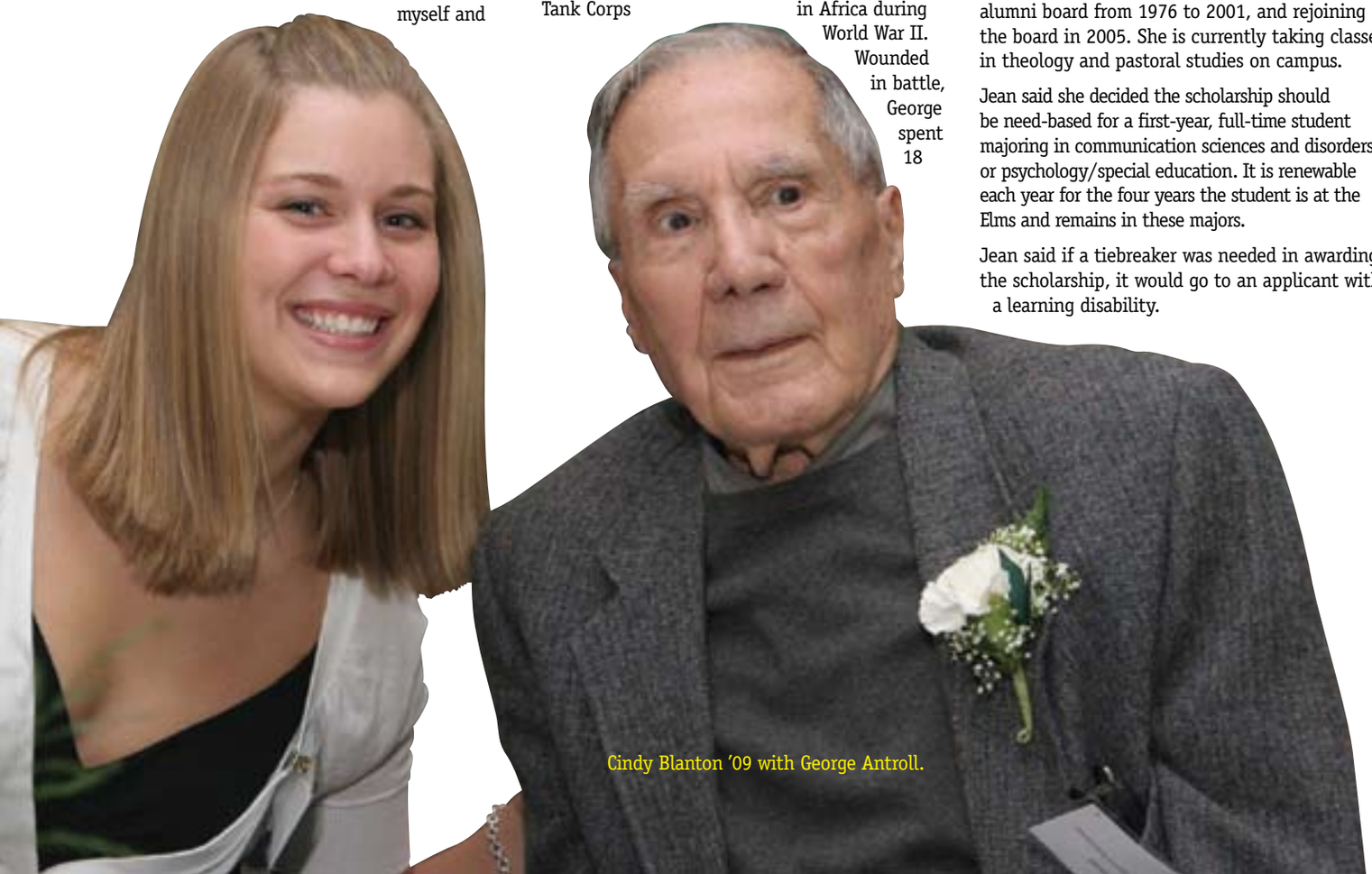
Jean, a retired school psychologist in the Palmer school system, said that she established the scholarship "to thank my parents and the Elms."

After her father died 13 years ago and her mother 11 years ago, Jean said she rented out her parents' home for 10 years. When she sold the home last August, she said she decided to use some of the money to fund the scholarship.

Jean, who received her master's degree from Fitchburg State College, said she has never really left the Elms campus, having served on the alumni board from 1976 to 2001, and rejoining the board in 2005. She is currently taking classes in theology and pastoral studies on campus.

Jean said she decided the scholarship should be need-based for a first-year, full-time student majoring in communication sciences and disorders, or psychology/special education. It is renewable each year for the four years the student is at the Elms and remains in these majors.

Jean said if a tiebreaker was needed in awarding the scholarship, it would go to an applicant with a learning disability.



Cindy Blanton '09 with George Antroll.

The Catherine McDonnell Pitoniak '47 Endowed Scholarship

The Catherine McDonnell Pitoniak '47 Endowed Scholarship was funded by Liz Pitoniak '87 of Westfield in memory of her mother, who died in August 2007.

Liz, who is a psychotherapist and an adjunct professor at the Elms, said that early this year she was mulling what she could do at the Elms to commemorate her mother – who was a kindergarten and first grade teacher in West Granville for 28 years. She met with Bernadette Nowakowski, the college's director of annual giving, who suggested the endowed scholarship.

Liz said she discussed the scholarship idea with her two sisters and two brothers, and they agreed it would be a good way to honor their mother Catherine, whose four sisters also attended the Elms.

Catherine was able to attend her class's 50th reunion weekend in May 2007 although she was already quite sick, Liz said. She passed away three months later.

"She really loved the Elms," Liz said.

The Margo Sullivan '55 Endowed Scholarship

The Margo Sullivan '55 Endowed Scholarship for education majors was created by Attorney John Sullivan III of Beachwood, Ohio in memory of his late mother, a former elementary school teacher in Springfield and Boston as well as a former substitute teacher in Ohio.

"She was a great mom," John said, and "she just loved the Elms." Some of her classmates remained friends for her entire life, and she returned to the campus for each of her five-year reunion weekends, he said.

Because of his mother's teaching background, the Margo Sullivan scholarship is for education majors. The main criteria are academic merit and financial need. If a tiebreaker is needed, John said he chose participation in college athletics because he has been impressed by the high achievement record of college athletes at the Elms.



Cate Avery '08, recipient of the Diggins Endowed Scholarship and the Hurst Endowed Scholarship, provided remarks to those in attendance.



Jean Brigham '69 receives recognition from President Mullen for establishing the Thomas J. and Margaret E. Brigham Endowed Scholarship in memory of her parents.



Sisters Clare and Liz Pitoniak '87 established of the Catherine McDonnell Pitoniak '47 Endowed Scholarship in memory of their mother.

Alumni Association



Letter from the President, Alumni Association Board of Directors

Dear Fellow Alumni,

First, let me welcome the 301 graduates of the Class of 2008 to the Alumni Association! We applaud your accomplishments, and we are thrilled to have you join us.

Our newest alumni join an impressive group of 9,000 women and men who have graduated from the Elms. It is a group of which we are very proud, and want very much to stay connected with and to serve. Events like our most recent and successful Reunion have always helped reconnect our alumni, and now we are undertaking some important changes to better help you stay connected.

You may have already heard from Harris Direct, an organization that is helping us update our alumni records. Please take the time to respond to their inquiries, as this is the best way to insure that you'll hear about what's going on at our college.

In addition, the college is developing a new website. There you will find new opportunities to reconnect with other alumni, learn about campus events and programs, alumni association activities, and stay in touch with the campus community.

Further, we are set to undertake a marketing research study to help us better understand the thoughts and opinions of our alumni. We want to know what you think about reunion weekends, summer events, the *Elms College Magazine*, and many other topics related to the college. Your ideas and input are very important as we further consider ways to involve you in the life of the Elms.

All of these initiatives will lead to a restructuring of the Alumni Association as we align our work with the goals of the college. We've established a task force to study our governance, structure, and committees, made up of Sr. Margaret James McGrath '44, alumni relations director Peggy Clark '65, Jean Brigham '69, Linda Kaczmarczyk '71, Kristin Irey Reardon '03, Jason Ostrander '04, and me. We will consider the results of the marketing research study, benchmark ourselves with other alumni associations, and consider how best we can serve the alumni of Elms College. We'll be sure to keep you updated on these efforts.

Finally, I want to extend to Walter Breau, our interim president, our gratitude for his willingness to lead the college in this new academic year. His scholarly accomplishments as a professor and reputation as a committed and visionary vice president ensure that the college is in good hands.

Yours for the Elms,
Judith Riordan '60
President, Alumni Association

P.S. Don't forget to check out our calendar, listing upcoming alumni association events. No matter what your interest, we have something for you, and we'd love to have you join us.

Alumni Association Board of Directors

Officers
President: Judy Riordan '60, Indian Orchard
Vice-President: Rosemary Broderick O'Connor '60, West Springfield
Secretary: Rae Holland Long '65, East Greenwich, RI

Directors
Carol Brodeur Bardzik '62, Chicopee
Sandra Belanger '81, Holyoke
Meg Benoit Beturne '99, Hampden
Jean Brigham '69, Palmer
Patricia Broderick '83, Holyoke
Carol McKenna Burke '60, West Springfield
Maria Cardaropoli '01, Brewster
Kathi Carduff '97, Longmeadow
Patrick Carpenter '02, Chicopee
Vuthy Chhum '06, Springfield
Mena De Carvalho '75, Springfield
Lorita Calderella Decorie '57, Pittsfield
Martha Deusser '02, Mashpee
Patricia Devine '83, Chicopee
Toni Scibelli DiMichele '68, East Longmeadow
Ellen Baker Doyle '51, Springfield
Joyce Doyle '55, Springfield
Donna Duval '80, Chicopee
Darcy Flynn '03, Westfield
Suzanne Frennier '69, Indian Orchard
Barbara Gregory '48, Chicopee
Mary Hayes '50, Springfield
Carmela Isabella '04, Woodhaven, NY
Linda Kaczmarczyk '71, Cromwell, CT
Judith Di Santis King '93, Pittsfield
Patricia Gorman Kuralowicz '02, Chicopee
Sr. Margaret James McGrath '44, Holyoke
Patricia McGrath '74, Easthampton
Anne McTiernan McLaughlin '66, Agawam
Martha Noonan Murtaugh '68, Manchester, CT
Jason Ostrander '04, Sheffield
Anita Lussier Perry '60, West Springfield
Sr. Kathleen Reagan-Faculty Alumni Liaison, Chicopee
Kristin Irey Reardon '03, Springfield
Rita Rodden '44, Westfield
Terry Cachet Sawicki '65, Dalton
Teri Marchese Sergentanis '69, Springfield
Theresa Shea '90, Springfield
Mary Jane Cameron Sheehan '61, Springfield
Bonnie Anne Monachelli Stevens '74, Westfield
Eileen Zajchowski Walczak '75, Lee
Kathryn Riley Whitman '68, Dalton
Julie Wickman '09 - Student Representative, Hampden, MA

Alumni Calendar

All alumni, spouses, and friends are welcome at all events.
For further information on any of these events, call Peggy Clark in the Alumni Office at 413-265-2227.

First Friday Masses

In memory of deceased alumni, members of the Elms College community, and their family members.
Our Lady's Chapel, 12 noon:
September 5, October 3, November 7, December 5

Monthly Luncheons for Alumni

Munich Haus, Chicopee Center
Wednesdays, 12 noon:
September 3, October 1, November 5, December 3

Alumni and College Events

Rhode Island Chapter Event
August 21 (Thursday)
Newport Playhouse and Cabaret Restaurant

Berkshire Chapter Event
September 14 (Sunday)
Berkshire Scenic Railroad and luncheon at Sullivan Station

"Alumni Campus Abroad" Trip to Ireland
September 25-October 3 (Thursday-Friday)
Sponsored by the Alumni Associations of Elms College, along with Western New England College, Plymouth State University, Champlain College, and Lasell College.
Accommodations for seven night in Ennis, the capital of County Clare. Includes informative educational programs presented by local experts, and excursions to the Craggaunowen Project, the Burran, the Cliffs of Moher, the Aran Island of Inishmore, and more.
Cost is $3,389 per person. Contact Peggy Clark for more information at 413-265-2227.

Alumni Association Board Meeting
September 28 (Sunday)

Homecoming/Family Weekend
October 24-26 (Friday-Sunday)

Class of 1959 Pre-Reunion Liturgy and Luncheon
November 7 (Friday)

After Work Social
November 20 (Thursday)
4:00-6:00 p.m.
Chili's, West Springfield
Complimentary Appetizers and Cash Bar

Irish Cultural Center Events

The Irish Cultural Center at Elms College was established in 1999 for the purpose of "keeping alive the Irish arts" by offering programs, all of them open to the public, many of them free. The Cultural Center, located in Berchmans Hall, is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. and by appointment. Irish language study opportunities, a genealogy support group, and a bimonthly newsletter are ongoing. For more information, call Sister Judith Kappenman, director, at 413 265-2537, email irishcenter@elms.edu, or visit their web site at www.irish-cairde.org.

Irish Music Seisiún
Third Sundays: August 17, September 21, October 19, November 16
1:00-4:00 p.m.
Mary Dooley College Center, dining hall annex
Musicians of all skill levels and audience welcome.

A Journey Into Ireland's Literary Revival:
Robert Todd Felton Photography Exhibit
September 4-22
Borgia Gallery (open daily 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.)
Opening Reception: September 7 (Sunday)
2:00 – 4:00 p.m.
Amherst writer and photographer Robert Todd Felton traveled through the Ireland of William Butler Yeats, John Millington Synge, Sean O'Casey, and Lady Gregory to gather images and material. He visited Galway, the Aran Islands, Mayo, Sligo, Wicklow, and Dublin. Along the route, he made images of the cottages and castles, crags and glens, theaters and pubs where some of the country's finest writers shaped an enduring vision of Ireland.

Irish Film Series
September 10 (Wednesday), 17 (Wednesday), 18 (Thursday)
7:00 p.m.
Alumnae Library Theater

September 10:
Once (2007, drama rated R)
An Irish street musician meets a flower-selling Czech immigrant and they embark on an eventful week of music and friendship.

September 17:
Patrick (2004 documentary not rated)
This documentary shows Patrick's transformation from slave to liberator. Narrated by Liam Neeson with Gabriel Byrne as the voice of Patrick.

Secrets of the Dead: Irish Escape (2007 documentary not rated)
In the 1870s, Irish patriot John Devoy sends Captain Anthony to Western Australia to free six political prisoners from an impenetrable jail.

September 18:
Gaelic Storm (2006 concert not rated)
Filmed live at the House of Blues in Chicago.
(The group will appear at the Calvin Theater in Northampton on September 21.)

Wine Tasting
September 27 (Saturday)
5:30 p.m.
Fundraising event for the Irish studies program.

Fall Lecture Series: *The Ubiquity of Religion in Irish Studies*
September 28, October 26, November 23 (Sundays)
2:00 p.m.
The Irish Cultural Center anticipates its 10th anniversary in October 2009 with a year of celebrations, beginning with this lecture series featuring three Irish Studies professors.

September 28:
Dr. Thomas Moriarty, Elms College History Professor Emeritus
Pope, Patrick and Monk: How Christianity Took Root in Ireland.

October 26:
Peggy O'Brien, English Professor, University of Massachusetts Amherst
Poets on Pilgrimage: Lough Derg as an icon of Catholicism and Nationalism.

November 23:
Dr. Damien Murray, Elms College history professor
Either Ireland is right or Bolshevism is right: The Catholic Church and Irish American Nationalism after World War I.

Christmas with an Irish Touch
December 6 (Saturday)
Our longest-running and most popular event includes liturgy in Our Lady's Chapel at 4:00 p.m., followed by refreshments and traditional Irish Christmas entertainment in the Mary Dooley College Center dining room.

Journey of the Soul Tour-Springtime in Ireland
April 19-29, 2009
This Journey of the Soul will take us to the Southeast and Southwest coastlines of Ireland. On this exciting trip we will experience the beauty and magic of Ireland in the spring as we visit the medieval town of Kilkenny, the beautiful Wicklow Mountains (The Garden of Ireland), Avoca (where Ballykissangel was filmed, and tour Avoca Handweavers Mill, Ireland's oldest), Midleton (Jameson's Distillery), Glendalough (St. Kevin's sixth century monastic site), Kinsale (the Gourmet Capital of Ireland), Cobh (Queenstown, where over 2.5 million immigrants departed, and the last port of call for the Titanic), Bantry Bay House and Gardens, Blarney, the Dingle Peninsula (optional tour to the Great Blasket Island) and the majestic Cliffs of Moher. Special evenings with music, dance and song at Kate Kearney's Cottage in the Gap of Dunloe and the Medieval Banquet at Knappogue Castle, as well as a few other surprises! Watch for further details.

SAVE THE DATE!

Homecoming/Family Weekend
October 24-26, 2008

Friday, October 24:
- Taste of Academics – Join your daughter/son in their classrooms.
- Athletic Hall of Fame – Golf outing and induction dinner.

Saturday, October 25:
- Students' showcase
- Parents' panel
- Alumni panel
- Class agents' gathering
- Picnic with live entertainment
- Chair massage
- Beer tasting
- Athletic events
- Ice cream social
- Liturgy
- Emeriti dinner
- Book signing
- Family entertainment in the evening

Sunday, October 26:
- Farewell Brunch

Via Veritatis Medal

We are seeking recommendations of possible candidates for the *Via Veritatis* Medal, which is awarded in May during commencement activities.

The Elms College *Via Veritatis* Medal is awarded to a Catholic woman who exemplifies Catholic womanhood and culture at their best, and who has made significant contributions to society. The medal is awarded to a person who is not a member of the college community at the time of the awarding, or an alumni. The recipient must be present for the awarding.

Please send the name of the candidate you are recommending and an essay substantiating why this person is deserving of the award, to:

President, Elms College, 291 Springfield Street, Chicopee, MA 01013



Anne Marshall '48



Ellen Moore Reardon '56



Anne Conlee Cronin '64

Class Notes

Everyone at Elms College shares great pride in the accomplishments of our alumni. We'd like to tell you about the good works, honors, lives, and achievements of some of our notable graduates.

We'd love to hear about your life and accomplishments, from career news and engagements to awards and retirements. Please email your information and/or photos to emanuellia@elms.edu, or mail them to Marketing Editor, Elms College, 291 Springfield Street, Chicopee, MA 01013.

1940s

Sr. Ann Marshall RSM '48 was the recipient of the Annual Witness Award given by the Passionist Volunteers. This award is in recognition of individuals who witness to the passionate love of God in their lives.

1950s

Ellen Moore Reardon '56 has been happily married for a year to Carl Price, with whom she worked for 33 years. She says it is truly wonderful to have someone to share her "golden years," and together they publish a monthly essay on the scientific background of gardening. Ellen was privileged to teach a course on photography to children who had very limited language skills, and says she is delighted to hear about the autism courses that are being added to our curriculum.

1960s

Anne Conlee Cronin '64 recently vacationed in New Zealand with her husband Basil. While enjoying a day at the very remote Farewell Spit Beach in Wharaneki, she encountered Elms student Leigh Anne Novotney '08, who graduated in May and is now a fellow alumna. What a small world!



Sr. Maxyne D. Schneider '65, executive director of House of Peace and Education, was presented the Citizen of the Year Award by the Gardner Greater Chamber of Commerce. The award is given to an individual who has consistently demonstrated excellence in professional and community leadership, who has made a significant contribution to the welfare of the community, and who has freely given time and energy to better the community. Sister Maxyne, a nun for 40 years with the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Springfield and a former faculty member at Elms College, founded HOPE with three other nuns from the Springfield congregation 12 years ago.

Alumna Margaret Scanlon '52 Recalls Life at the Elms Half a Century Ago

The world was a very different place in 1948.

Europe was recovering from World War II, and Cold War tensions with the Soviet Union were increasing. The Supreme Court ruled that religious instruction in public schools violated the Constitution; Indian pacifist Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated; and Warner Brothers showed the first color newsreel. Orville Wright and Babe Ruth died, and Al Gore and Prince Charles were born. And Margaret Scanlon began her education at the College of Our Lady of the Elms.

"Things were very different at the Elms back then," she says.

Students could not go out on weeknights, and could only go home every other weekend, Margaret recalled. They attended Mass every morning, had proctored silent study hours alone in their rooms at night, and sat in assigned seats in the dining room. They received demerits for having wrinkles in their bedspreads, and were fined fifty cents for walking on the marble steps in Berchmans Hall. There was a "dean of discipline."



"You certainly developed a respect for authority," Margaret said. "We got a wonderful education, and we developed a good sense of values. But we also had our laughs."

She recalls a group of girls going to a movie at the Rivoli Theater right before Thanksgiving, and one of them winning a live turkey. "They brought it back to O'Leary, and it got loose," she said. "That was quite a scene!"

And she recalls as a senior, having to wear caps and gowns to Mass every morning. "Sometimes, if we were late, we'd slip the gowns on over our pajamas, and roll up the legs of the pajama bottoms so they weren't visible," she said. "But it never failed that when you walked up to receive communion, the pajama leg would fall down in front of the nuns."

She smiles at the memories.

"That's why all of us 'Elms girls' developed such a great bond, because we lived it together," she said. "And we still have that bond, 50-plus years later. My classmates are all like family, still."

Margaret and her classmates from the class of 1952 celebrated their 50th reunion in 2002. They reminisced about the years spent at the Elms, and all agreed: although times have changed, the memories they have of the "good old days" are memories of some of the best years of their lives.

After graduating in 1952, Margaret went on to teach kindergarten for 40 years, most of it at Pottenger School in Springfield.

"In fact, early in my career I had Mark Stelzer and Patty Hottin as kindergarteners!" she says, referring to the Father Mark, who is now special assistant to the president of the college for mission and Catholic identity, and Sr. Patty, who was associate dean of students.

"I stayed 40 years because I was having so much fun," she said. "We had a fireplace, so on snowy days we'd build a fire and roast marshmallows. And when we read *The Three Little Pigs*, I'd have a farmer bring in three piglets for the children to see. And every year, I took all 60 kids to the circus. Yes, we had fun."

Margaret recalls making arrangements with the Forest Park Zoo to bring animals into the classroom, and the fun that arose from their visits: a calf, who was tied to a doorknob until it began to eat the drapes; a monkey, who got loose and ate potato chips in the cafeteria; and a parrot that the maintenance staff taught to say a curse word.

"We had fun," Margaret repeats with a smile.

Margaret credits the Elms with preparing her for a career that was so long-lived and enjoyable, and notes that she received a full scholarship to attend the college. So in honor of her 50th reunion, Margaret established an endowed scholarship, with the hopes of repaying a debt she felt she owed.

"Someone helped me go to school here, so I felt I should help someone else," she said. "I hope the recipients of my scholarship go on to have rewarding careers because of their Elms College educations."

Margaret received the Distinguished Alumni Award at commencement 2008, recognizing her as one who has distinguished herself through unusual service to profession, community, family, or religious life.


Leslie Clark-Yvon '72


Nelly de Carvalho '78


Anna Flynn Doerle '79

Nancy Noonan Woitkowski '65 has been appointed Westfield State College's liaison to the Berkshire Region. Nancy was former director of guidance at Taconic High School and educator in the Pittsfield school system for more than 30 years, and will work with the WSC Alumni Relations Office as a resource for alumni, and for students wanting to learn about the college.

Leslie Clark-Yvon '72, principal of the Franklin Avenue Elementary School in Westfield, was named recipient of the 2008 Thomas C. Passios Outstanding Principal Award, and as a result, will be recognized by the National Distinguished Principals Program in Washington, D.C., in October. Leslie has been principal of the FAE school, which serves some of the most economically challenged and educationally deprived children in Westfield, for 15 years. Under her leadership, student performance on state testing has shown increases for five consecutive years, and the school has been named a Compass School by the state. (The Compass School Program, established in 2001, recognizes and celebrates improvement in Massachusetts public schools; gathers and disseminates information and encourages networking and sharing of good ideas, best practices, and models for success; and identifies schools that may participate in research of specific programs and instructional practices.) The Passios Award is sponsored jointly by the Massachusetts Elementary School Principals Association, the Massachusetts Department of Education, and the Fitchburg State College Alumni Association; and the National Distinguished Principals Program is co-sponsored by the U. S. Department of Education and the National Association of Elementary School Principals.

Nelly de Carvalho '78 has been named principal of Our Lady of Hope School in Springfield, MA. She will assume her new position in the fall.

Ruth E. Willemain '66 retired in 1999 after having taught for 45 years. She was then called to become a hospice volunteer, and has given thousands of hours to hundreds of patients as a companion, nurturer, Eucharistic minister, and vigil team member. For this work, Ruth was recognized and honored as a "Hometown Hero" at the Log Cabin in February. Ruth is in the process of creating a home called Harmony House to provide 24-hour, compassionate, personal care to 12 terminally ill individuals. For this effort, she received an award as an "Unsung Heroine of Massachusetts" at he Statehouse in May. Ruth and her eight-member board of directors are fund-raising and viewing sites for a location.



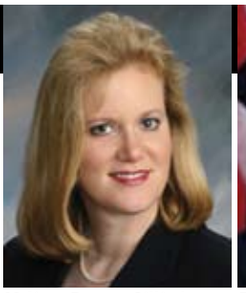
1970s

Sister Joyce Wise '71 was honored by the Springfield Women's Committee on March 7, which recognized outstanding women for their commitment to women and for their help in shaping progress in the city of Springfield. She has been a mediation counselor for at-risk children at the Forest Park Middle School for nine years. The Springfield native said she accepted the award on behalf of all the Sisters of St. Joseph and the teachers at the school who work quietly behind the scenes helping those in need.

Anna Flynn Doerle '79, member service officer and teller supervisor for Greylock Federal Credit Union, was elected to a two-year term on the board of directors of Village Ambulance Service in March. Anna will serve as the board's liaison with the Williamstown, Hancock, and New Ashford communities, which comprise the service's primary coverage area for emergency medical transportation.



Christine Halloran '86



Melissa Rogers Gillis '96



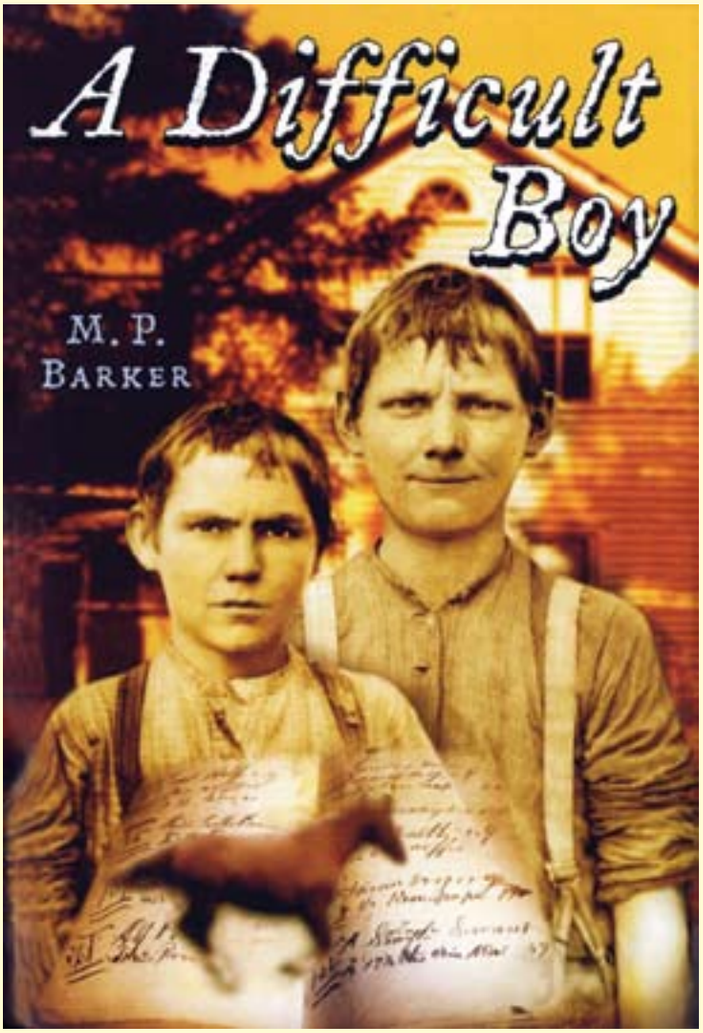
Elizabeth Goebel '02

M. P. Barker '81 recently published her first novel, *A Difficult Boy*, with Holiday House, and a review in *Publisher's Weekly* called it "an absorbing first novel." Set in western Massachusetts in 1839, *A Difficult Boy* tells the story of two young indentured servants—one of them Irish—who must overcome their differences to outwit their abusive master and win their freedom.

Because of his family's debts, young Ethan must work for Mr. Lyman, a wealthy shopkeeper. Ethan tries to befriend the Lymans' other indentured servant, but Daniel, as everyone says, is a difficult boy. Sixteen years old, Irish, and moody, Daniel brushes off Ethan as if he were a pesky gnat. Ethan resolves to ignore the older boy, but is then shocked to see how cruelly Mr. Lyman treats Daniel. Soon, Ethan, too, is suffering Mr. Lyman's blows. Self-preservation drives the two boys together and they begin to forge a friendship. Then they discover a dark secret about the past that could change their lives forever.

A Difficult Boy draws on M.P.'s experience working as a costumed historical interpreter at Old Sturbridge Village and as an archivist at Springfield's Connecticut Valley Historical Museum. M.P., who completed a double major in English and history at Elms, got an assist from history professor Thomas Moriarty, who is listed in the novel's acknowledgments for providing Irish translations. Dr. Moriarty, in turn, said he considers M. P. one of the finest students he has ever had.

The manuscript for the historical novel won the PEN New England Children's Book Caucus Discovery Award. An April 28 review in *Publisher's Weekly* said "Barker's gift for historical detail



illuminates this absorbing first novel, accurately portraying the pleasures and the harsh realities of 19th-century Massachusetts farm life," and in the April 15 issue, *Kirkus Reviews* described the book as "ringingly, cringingly true to life."

A calendar of M. P.'s appearances, and other information about *A Difficult Boy* and its author, is available on her website, *www.mpbarker.net*.



M.P. Barker '81

1980s

Nancy Reilly-Wohl '84 is working as a diabetes nurse practitioner in private practice in New York City. She previously had the same position at the Manhattan V.A. Medical Center for 15 years.

Beth Hawley '85, a teacher at Our Lady of Hope in Springfield, was recognized as Junior Achievement Teacher of the Year.

Christine Halloran '86 is living on Long Island and teaching math at North Shore High School. She received an M.Ed. in 1987 from the University of Massachusetts. Christine recently chaperoned 120 students from the band, orchestra, and choral groups at her school in a music tour to Eastern Europe (Prague, Vienna, and Budapest). She is also one of 160 teachers from the United States to receive an award from the Japan Fulbright Memorial Fund to visit Japan for three weeks and study Japanese education.

1990s

Melissa Rogers Gillis '96, who earned her J.D. from Quinnipiac University School of Law, has joined the Springfield-based regional law firm of Bacon Wilson, P.C. as an associate. Melissa's practice will focus on real estate and family law. She recently took part in the 13th Dial-A-Lawyer event hosted by the state Bar Association. She lives in Feeding Hills with her family.

2000s

Elizabeth Goebel '02 has been an art teacher at Academy Hill in Springfield for the past six years. She coordinated the school's annual student art exhibit featuring Asian-inspired works, which was displayed at the Borgia Gallery at the Elms from May 22–30. Elizabeth credits much of her success as a teacher to Geri Brunell, who was her art professor at Elms College.


Jeff Leandro '02


Amanda Huston '03


Rachel Bradford '05


Pamela Dest '07


Rachel Peck '07

Jeff Leandro '02 had the honor of ringing the bell at the New York Stock Exchange on March 17. Sponsored by Solutia, where he is employed, Jeff and his wife, **Tara Shea '02**, enjoyed an all-expense-paid trip to New York and a stay at the Waldorf Astoria. To view the event, choose the Windows Media Player link at *http://www.nyse.com/events/1205405052729.html http://www.nyse.com/events/1205405052729.html* (Jeff is the one in the front row wearing the green tie in celebration of St. Patrick's Day!)

Amanda Huston '03 is vice president of operations for Junior Achievement of Western Massachusetts. She had the honor of presenting the Volunteer of the Year awards to the 2008 recipients.

Rachel Bradford '05 received her juris doctorate from Western New England College on May 17. Rachel was assistant editor of the Law Review, and graduated 27th out of 139 in her class. She is currently prepping for the Connecticut and Massachusetts bar exams.

Pamela Dest '07 is attending Central College. She just received a six-month internship in business to work with Disney in Florida, and is excited about this outstanding opportunity.

Rachel Peck '07 is teaching special education at Putnam Vocational Technical High School in Springfield, Massachusetts. She is planning to pursue a master's degree in special education.

Weddings



Eleanor Moreau Wilson '89 married Toby Wilson at the Log Cabin in Holyoke on New Year's Eve 2007. **Mary-Frances Maffucci Eager '89** served as her maid of honor. Ellie works at Cooley Dickinson Hospital as a human resource generalist.



Grace O'Strander '06 married Kris Zacharie on July 4, 2008 at St. Rose de Lima Church in Chicopee. A reception followed at the Log Cabin in Holyoke. Grace is working at Baystate Medical Center as a telemetry nurse and a STAT RN.

Births



Kimberly Mikaelian Davidson '90 gave birth to Victoria Ann on February 4. The baby weighed 7 pounds, 13 ounces, and was 21 inches long. Kim has returned to work as a registered nurse at Baystate Medical Center.



Erica DiNapoli Lumb '93 gave birth to Colin Michael on March 28. Colin weighed in at 7 pounds, 12 ounces, and was 22 and 1/4 inches long.



Aimee Morrison Hefron '95 and her husband Michael welcomed identical twin boys on January 3. Liam and Seamus were born seven weeks early and spent 16 days in the NICU, but are now home and are healthy, happy little boys.



Tara Christian Clark '96 MAT and **William C. Clark '99 MAT** are the proud parents of Kathryn Kennedy Clark, born May 20, weighing 9 pounds, 10 ounces, and 21 inches long. Her big sister Hope is thrilled with the new baby, as is her grandmother, Peggy Clark, director of the Alumni Office.

Jenny Durphey Kapinos '00 gave birth to twins on June 27. Elizabeth Kate weighed 5 pounds, 3 ounces, and Thomas James weighed 4 pounds, 6 ounces. Jenny has returned to work at Freedom Credit Union.

In Memoriam

Thanks to all who made gifts to Elms College in memory of their deceased loved ones.

Alumni:

1920s

Mary L. Butler '27, of Worcester, a former special needs teacher, passed away at the age of 98 on April 1 at Notre Dame Long Term Care Center. Mary was born in Webster, and graduated from St. Louis High School in Webster, Our Lady of the Elms, and Worcester State College. She also completed graduate studies at Boston University. Mary taught for 42 years in New York, Dudley, Webster, and Worcester.

1930s



Margaret Geran Webber '32, a member of the Elms College Charter Class of 1932, died April 27 at the age of 99. She was born in Holyoke, and after attending the Elms, also completed graduate courses at Columbia University and Westfield State College. She worked for the Massachusetts Division of Employment Security for 38 years, retiring as the western Massachusetts district principal counselor in 1972. She loved to travel to Ireland to visit relatives, whom she also entertained in her home. She was pre-deceased by her husband, Charles A. Webber, who died in 1982; a grandson, Brian Corbett; and her two brothers, John and James Geran. She is survived by her son Charles of Springfield, stepdaughter Mary Ann Corbett of Framingham, granddaughter Helen Jo Corbett Trudeau, grandsons David and Christopher Webber, and Michael, David, Patrick, and Gregory Corbett. She also leaves 12 great-grandchildren and five great-great-granddaughters. Donations may be made to the Margaret Geran Webber Endowed Scholarship at Elms College.

Mary Lalor Ryan '37 died on June 15 at Franklin Medical Center in Greenfield at the age of 92. Mary, who was also a graduate of North Adams State College, began a long teaching career at Deerfield Elementary School and Deerfield High School. In 1941, she was married to Paul F. Ryan and resided in Demarest, New Jersey, and taught in private school in Englewood, New Jersey. After moving to Arcadia, California in 1948, she taught in the San Gabriel School District for 30 years. When asked if she had any children, she would smile and say "hundreds." In 1989, she moved back to Greenfield, saying, "It was a great move to be back home." She was a communicant of Holy Trinity Church and a member of the Rosary Society. Mary enjoyed outings with her many friends, golfing, bowling, and traveling. Her husband Paul predeceased her in 1988. Survivors include her sister-in-law, Mary Dillensneider of Greenfield; several nieces and nephews, and her caregivers, Bill Conant, her godson, and his wife Barbara, Richard Shortell and Megan Palmeri, all of Greenfield.

Helen Killeen Madden '38

1940s

Mary Leary Giddings '42, a long-time high school teacher, died on March 26 in the Rose Monahan Hospice Residence in Worcester. She was born in Worcester, and lived there all her life. She received a master's degree from Boston University, and also studied at Clark University. She was a teacher in the Worcester public school system for 30 years, retiring in 1981. She was a member of the Boston University Alumni Association, the Boston University Women's Club of Worcester County, the Southern Worcester County Retired Teachers' Association, the Massachusetts Retired Teachers' Association, and the National Education Association. She is survived by her husband of 52 years, Robert R. Giddings, and numerous cousins.

Gertrude O'Connor Swords '43 died in Auburndale on April 16 at the age of 86. Born in Worcester, she was raised in Chicopee, and had lived in Stamford, Connecticut and North Kingston, Rhode Island before moving to Auburndale two years ago. She received her bachelor's in Spanish from the Elms, and was an active alumna. She served in the United States Army during World War II. She was predeceased by her husband John Swords, her son Brian Swords, and her brother Justin O'Connor, and is survived by three sons, John Swords of Paoli, Pennsylvania; Kevin Swords of Glen Rock, New Jersey; and Brendan Swords of Boston; three daughters, Patricia Swords of Storrs, Connecticut; Christine Swords of Doolin, County Clare, Ireland; and Maureen Fahy of Norwalk, Connecticut; a brother, Jerome O'Conner of Cleveland, Ohio, and a sister, Joan Newby of Bowie, Maryland; three sisters-in-law (including Sr. Christine Swords, SSJ, of Holyoke), and 19 grandchildren.

Elizabeth "Betty" McDonnell Brady '45, a native and longtime resident of Chicopee, passed away on June 24 at the age of 83 at the Palmer Health Care Center, where she had been living for the past three years. Betty received her bachelor's degree from the College of Our Lady of the Elms and had also attended the Hartt School of Music in West Hartford. An accomplished pianist and organist, she played piano for bands and orchestras at summer resorts in New England during the 1950s. In the 1980s, she served as the musical director and pianist for the Elms in their theatrical productions of *No, No, Nanette* and *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*. In the 1970s, Betty had served as church organist for Holy Name Church in Chicopee. She also served as pianist for dance classes at Springfield College, where she received commendation from the college's faculty and staff. She had also held several teaching positions during her career, including as the kindergarten teacher at the Patrick E. Bowe School in Chicopee, and in the high school in Bristol, New Hampshire, where she also coached the cheerleading team. A trained librarian, Betty also worked as assistant librarian at the Memorial Square branch in the Springfield city library system. She was predeceased by her husband of 51 years, Dr. William Joseph Brady, who died in 2005, and two of her sisters, Catherine Pitoniak and Mary Murphy. She is survived by her son, William J. Brady Jr. of Jupiter, Florida; her daughter, Dr. Mary T. Brady of San Francisco, California; her sisters, Claire A. McDonnell of Springfield and Cecele McDonnell of Florida; and two grandsons, Michael J. Brady of Jupiter, Florida and Danny Brady Cole of San Francisco, California. Contributions in Betty's memory may be made to the College of Our Lady of the Elms or to the Alzheimer Association.

Dorothy Miner Head '47, a native of Providence, Rhode Island, died recently at the age of 82. She graduated from the Academy of the Sacred Heart, and received her bachelor's from the College of Our Lady of the Elms. She also earned an MS degree from Catholic University, and an MA from Providence College. She served on the faculty of St. Joseph's College in Emmetsburg, Maryland, was a member of the Corporation of Providence College, and taught at Prout Memorial High School. She served as president of the Women's Auxiliary to the Rhode Island Medical Society, and the St. Joseph's Hospital Women's League. She was an Oblate of St. Benedict and a member of the Dunes Club and Pt. Judith Country Club. She was predeceased by her husband, Dr. Thomas F. Head, and leaves a son, Professor Thomas Head of Manhattan and Narragansett.

Sr. Mary Carr '49 (also known as Sister Charles Joseph Carr), 94, beloved member of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Springfield in her 76th year, died in Warwick, Rhode Island on March 29. Born in Cumberland, Rhode Island, she entered the Sisters of St. Joseph from Sacred Heart Parish in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. She graduated from Sacred Heart High School in Pawtucket, and earned an A.B. degree from the College of Our Lady of the Elms. Sister taught in the Diocese of Providence, Rhode Island in St. Joseph School in Newport for 28 years, and in St. Francis School in Hillsgrove for 31 years. Since 1994 she has served at St. Francis School as a teacher's aide.

1950s

Audrey Kelly Flanagan '53 died on May 14 at home in Dennis on Cape Cod after a brief illness. She was born in Springfield, and graduated from Cathedral High School and Elms College. She married Joseph P. Flanagan and they raised their eight children in Broadalbin, New York. She taught various elementary grades at the Broadalbin Central School for 30 years, and also owned and

operated a clothing boutique in upstate New York. After her retirement from teaching, she settled in Dennis, and was proprietor of Audrey's Antiques there. Audrey loved children, playing the piano, and the beauty of Cape Cod. She is survived by her husband Joseph and their children, Joseph Flanagan of Dennis, Eileen Flanagan of Lake Tahoe, Nevada, Diane McKenna of Columbus, Ohio, Mark Flanagan of Chappaqua, New York, Paul Flanagan of San Diego, California, Neil Flanagan of Rye Brook, New York, Dean Flanagan of Manhattan, and Laura Lee Flanagan, of Brewster; 12 grandchildren: Casey, Connor, Corey, Lauren, Craig, Ryan, Kelsey, Allyssa, Jack, Charlie, Kelly, and Audreyanna; and a sister, Barbara Boyd of Ventura, California. She was predeceased by brothers John and James Kelly.

Margaret McTiernan '55 (also formerly known as Sister James Maria) died June 8 at Quaboag on the Common Nursing Center in West Brookfield at the age of 86. As an SSJ, she was an elementary school teacher for 40 years in Diocesan schools in Worcester, and later taught special education in the Worcester Public Schools for 10 years before retiring. She leaves two sisters-in-law, Eileen McTiernan of Spencer and Lillian McTiernan of Flint, Michigan, and many nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her brothers, Dr. Robert McTiernan, Dr. James McTiernan, and Francis McTiernan.

Ann M. Roache '57 died at the Epoch Senior Health Center in Harwich at the age of 72. A graduate of Cathedral High School in Springfield, she received her bachelor's in sociology and education at Elms College, and was a primary teacher at the Westover Air Force Base School and Holy Cross School in Springfield. She was an active worker for the Ahearn Pilgrimage Foundation to St. Anne's Canada. She leaves her sister, Sister Margaret Roache, SFCC, from West Dennis, and several cousins.

Sr. Julia A. McGrath '59 (also known as Sr. Teresa Edward), beloved member of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Springfield in her 63rd year, died in Mont Marie Health Care Center on April 11 at the age of 82. A native of Northampton, she graduated from St. Michael High School and entered the Sisters of St. Joseph from St. Mary Parish in Northampton. She earned a B.A. from the College of Our Lady of the Elms and an M.A.T. from St. Michael College in Winooski, Vermont. Sister taught in the Diocese of Springfield at St. Joseph High School in North Adams; Pittsfield Central Catholic; and St. Agnes School in Dalton. She taught in the Providence Diocese at St. Joseph School in Newport, Rhode Island, and in the Worcester Diocese at St. Peter School in Worcester. She served many years in Williamstown in parish ministry, including as a companion to the elderly at St. Raphael/St. Patrick parishes.

1960s

Kathleen M. Swords '60 died on May 1 in Baltimore, Maryland at the age of 69. She was born in Holyoke, and graduated from Saint Jerome High School there, and the College of Our Lady of the Elms. She had been a family service caseworker for 30 years with the Baltimore City Department of Social Service, where she worked with foster children and victims of abuse and neglect before retiring in 2007. She is survived by four children: Catherine Snow of Georgia, Karina "Tinker" Monroe of Granby, Leo Villafana of Virginia, and Rosa Harper of Maryland; grandchildren Adeline, Dillon, and Kerr Monroe; Alec and Amanda Villafana; and Ashley, William, Brooke, and Taylor Harper; a brother, John J. Swords III of Palm Beach, Florida; niece Julia Reynolds-Swords of Kentucky; nephew Terrance Swords and his children Maisy and RubyKate of New York; and four cousins: Joan Quinn, Judge Daniel Swords, Thomas Swords, and Dr. Robert Swords.

Joan Clarkin Guilmette '64



Mary Ann Martin Durso '65, who had been honored as the recipient of the Elms College Distinguished Alumni Award last May, died of a heart attack in Florida on May 29 at the age of 64 after six months of battling a rare blood disease. She was born in Methuen, and worked for years as a teacher and biochemist. She was a woman who dedicated her life to volunteering, and became a driving force behind the Collier County (Florida) Habitat for Humanity chapter. For the past 15 years, she and her husband Sam have worked as full time volunteers for Habitat, making the Collier chapter one of the most industrious in the nation and providing shelter for more than 5,000 people in 1,100 families. She served as executive director and vice president of family services, and she knew each of the 1,100 families by name, and remembered each of their stories. She was described as a compassionate person with an indomitable spirit, committed to work for those who are often invisible in the community. Mary Ann also served as a guardian ad litem, on the Collier County Guardian ad Litem Advisory Board, the county's Housing Development Corporation, and the Ronald McDonald Care Mobile Advisory Board. She and her husband received many local and national awards for their volunteer service, including the Habitat for Humanity International 2003 Volunteer of the Year award. She leaves her constant companion, best friend, and husband of 42 years, Dr. Sam Durso; five children: Katie, Sam III, Jeffrey, Steve, and Kara; eight grandchildren: Andrew, Max, Ellie, Ryan, Cameron, Kaleigh, Olivia, and Jack; a brother, James Martin of Seabrook, New Hampshire, and many nieces and nephews. "In her memory, we will continue to work until there is no child in Collier County who sleeps on a cold floor, whose whole family lives in one room, who suffers from terrible asthma because their trailer is covered with mold, or who goes without food to pay the rent," said her family and friends.

M. Virginia Burke Sloan '66 died at Wingate in Springfield on March 24 at the age of 79. Born in Springfield, she was a 1947 graduate of Sacred Heart High School in Springfield, and received her bachelor's degree from the Elms and her master's degree in elementary education from American International College. She was a communicant of Holy Cross Church in Springfield and a member of its women's club. She was employed by the Springfield District Court, holding many positions including principal clerk of the civil department. She was also a special education teacher in the Springfield public schools for many years. Throughout her life, she devoted much of her time to many organizations, including being vice president of the Venture Club of Springfield, a member of the Women's Auxiliary of Springfield Goodwill Industries, Notre Dame and the College of Our Lady of the Elms Alumni Association, and the Century Club of St. Francis Chapel in Springfield. She was a volunteer for the Massachusetts Arthritis Foundation, the Pioneer Valley Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, and the United Fund of Springfield, and an incorporator of the Catholic Scholarships for Negroes and of the Springfield Symphony Orchestra. She was predeceased by her husband, Judge Charles Sloan, in 1992. She is survived by her sister, Barbara Arborio of East Longmeadow, and by four nieces, Patricia Stewart Brent, Kathleen E. Stewart, Joanne Gustafson, and Mary Lemelin. Donations may be made to Elms College in Virginia's memory.

Alice Connolly Clancy '68 of Tiverton, Rhode Island died on May 3 at Newport Hospital at the age of 62. She was born in Newport, Rhode Island, graduated from St. Catherine's Academy, and crossed the bridge in September 1963 to enter the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Springfield. She taught at St. Mary's in Milford until leaving the Sisters of Saint Joseph in 1970, when she returned to Newport as a reading specialist at Sullivan School. She taught at Rogers High School and Thompson Middle School, where she was also involved in the teachers' union. In 1990, she became principal of Cranston-Calvert School. Following her retirement from the Newport School Department in 2001, she was a reading specialist at New England Institute of Technology and curriculum director of Westport Schools. She was appointed principal of St. Mary's Academy Bay View Elementary School in East Providence in July 2007. All of her vocational positions, both secular and non-secular, were a reflection of her abiding commitment to service and social justice. She leaves her husband, James E. Clancy, to whom she had been married for 33 years; a son, Thomas P. Clancy II of Dover, N.H.; a daughter, Dr. Mary Alice C. Clancy of Derry, Northern Ireland; two brothers, John P. Connolly of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida and Edward A. Connolly of Pawtucket; and a sister, Mary C. Connolly of Newport.

Janice Zimmer Rushton '68 passed away after a lengthy illness on June 27 at Windham Hospital in Connecticut at the age of 67. A native of Holyoke, was a teacher for 30 years, working in Massachusetts, California, and Iowa, and culminating with a 20-year tenure in the Plainfield (Connecticut) School System. She earned a master's degree in elementary education from Eastern Connecticut State University in 1978, and studied at Yale University, through which she received a Fulbright Scholarship to study in China. Her interest in the Far East allowed her extensive travel opportunities in later years. She was predeceased by her infant son Joseph Rushton, brother Raymond Zimmer, and sisters Arlene and Joanne Zimmer. She is survived by her son Robert C. Rushton of Norwich, Connecticut; two brothers, William Zimmer of Storrs, Connecticut and Christopher Zimmer of Odessa, New York; three sisters, Diane McKain of Northfield, Vermont, Gail Rusiecki of Stafford, Connecticut, and Helen Babonis of Swanzey, New Hampshire; and many nieces and nephews. Donations in her memory may be made to the fund for Retired and Infirm Sisters of St. Joseph at Mont Marie in Holyoke.

1970s

Donna Marie Andrews Stefanik '79

1980s

Elizabeth "Betsy" Korytoski Rankin '80 died on May 24 in Greenfield at the age of 49 after a courageous struggle with cancer. A native of Northampton, she graduated from Northampton High School and received a bachelor's in education from Elms College. She is survived by her husband, John "Cal" Rankin and their children Max and Korynna Rankin; her parents, Robert and Dorothy Korytoski; six siblings; and 12 nieces and three grandnephews.

1990s

Sylvia Keller Brownstein '96, of Longmeadow, died March 28 at Baystate Medical Center at the age of 65. She is survived by her husband, Dr. Fredric Brownstein; her daughters Bryna Klevan of Newton and Ilana Schubin of New York City; her grandchildren Rachel, Jason, Marcus, and Andrew; her brother Larry Keller of Sante Fe, New Mexico; and her mother Ann Keller of Florida. Her father, Morris Keller, passed away in 2001. Sylvia graduated from Elms College with a bachelor's degree in nursing, and worked with her husband at his office as a practice administrator and nurse.

2000s

Mary Ann Niedzielski Fox '08 died in Southwick at the age of 49 after a courageous five-and-a-half-year battle with cancer. Born in Holyoke, she was educated in Westfield schools, and graduated summa cum laude this May from Elms College with a bachelor's degree in English and early childhood education. She previously worked at the Southwick Florist Shop. She will be remembered for her collection of lighthouses, and her love for crocheting and knitting. She leaves her husband Raymond Fox; her parents Joseph and Anna "Mary" Niedzielski of Westfield; three brothers: James Niedzielski of Southampton, Joseph Niedzielski of Easthampton, and Michael Niedzielski of Methuen; two sisters, Elizabeth Gazda of Holyoke and Kathleen Niedzielski of Westfield; her niece Jennifer; and three nephews: Matthew, Benjamin, and Patrick.

Husband of:
Margaret Diotalevi Thompson '73
Anna Gwozdz-Staff
Dr. Kathryn James–Faculty

Mother of:
Barbara Brunet Hamdan '54
Joan Brunet Barnett '56
Constance Brunet Jabbar '56
Marilyn Brunet '61 (dec)
Joan St. Clair Hayes '63
Mary Jean McKenna Reilly '75
Kathleen O'Brien Moore '76
Ellen Leahy O'Brien '81
Eleanor Moreau Wilson '89
Barbara Mulcahy-Staff

Father of:
Kathleen Angeli Stewart '78
Laura Fitzell '83
Eleanor Moreau Wilson '89
Monika Gwozdz '09
Lynn Gamble–Staff

Sister of:
Maureen A. O'Sullivan '64
Mary C. Connolly '65

Brother of:
Sr. Michael Joanne (Mary Agnes) Shea '51
Diane Newman Cote '60
Carol Acus Donovan '65
Alice Acus Zendonis '69
Sr. Patricia Ritchie '70
Sr. Marita Joseph Cavanaugh (dec)-Former Faculty

Grandfather of:
Kara Dupre '03
Ashleigh Fitzell '07
Melissa Fijal '09

Former Faculty:
James L. Shea

Former Staff:
Rina Kasza Jamrog

Honorary Degree Recipient
Sophie J. Chmura

Nominations Sought for Alumni Association Board of Directors

Elms College is on the move! The school has record-breaking student enrollment, new facility upgrades, and expanding academic programming, but all of this growth means nothing without our alumni.

The Alumni Association board of directors is looking for new members who want to continue to the momentum, as well as offer fresh ideas and a new energy. Board members help support the college's mission and goals, act as a voice for alumni and students in the strategic planning process, and help the college continue its growth.

Alumni Association board members serve three-year terms, attend four board meetings each year, participate in subcommittees, and work to further the mission and vision of the Elms. If you are willing to make this commitment or know someone who is, please nominate yourself or a fellow alumna/us by contacting Peggy Clark '65, director of alumni relations, at 413-265-2227 or clarkm@elms.edu.

When the Elms community bands together, nothing can stop us!



Elms College is all in the family for these women! Left to right: Bridget Moran Roffe '96 (holding her daughter Emma Rose, who is wearing her grandmother's Elms College beanie), Gertrude Footit Britton '39, Kathleen Moran '94, and Barbara Britton Moran '67.

Three Generations of Alumnae Work To Support Their College

Elms College is an important thread in the warp and woof of Gertrude Footit Britton's life.

Since her graduation from the Elms in 1939, 10 close relatives have also become alumni of the college: two of her sisters, Nancy Footit Dromey '50 and Susan Footit Szetela '56: a sister-in-law, Joan Roy Footit '50; four daughters, Ann Britton Kotfila '65, Noreen Britton Minkler '66, Barbara Britton Moran '67, and Elizabeth Britton '81; a niece, Mary Footit Gentile '83; and two granddaughters, Kathleen Moran '94, and Bridget Moran Roffe '96.

On a partially overcast day in June, three generations of the family – Gertrude, her daughter Barbara, and granddaughters Kathleen and Bridget – gathered in Gertrude's comfortable living room on Dunn Avenue in Holyoke to discuss why all four of them volunteer to serve as college class agents.

The three generations span nearly the entire history of the Elms.

When Gertrude entered as a freshman in 1935, the college was just seven years old. There was only one dorm on the campus, and her graduating class in 1939 had 33 students. In order to graduate, they were required to take comprehensive oral exams. And, she recalls, students in her time wore black uniforms with stiff white collars, which surprised her granddaughters.

When Gertrude's daughter Barbara graduated 28 years later in 1967, there were 125 in her class. She recalls being required to wear a white blazer for Mass and Friday assembly. By her time, the oral exams were gone, but students were required to take comprehensive written exams at the end of the year.

Another 27 years later, when Gertrude's granddaughter Kathleen graduated in 1994, there were approximately 300 in her class.

When the Elms decided to have class agents become part of the annual fund-raising campaign last year, the four women were recruited by Bernadette Nowakowski, director of annual giving, and each made a two-year commitment to the project.

Barbara said that for her, deciding to be a class agent represented a way for her to repay the Elms "for the goodness the college gave me."

Her daughter Kathleen says being a class agent gives her a "great chance to reconnect with classmates" and "a way to say thank you to the college."

But for Gertrude, the rationale for her decision was more basic – to ensure the survival of the college.

Prior to the program that began last year, the role of class agents had been to encourage alumni to return to campus for reunion weekend. That part of the job still continues, the four women said.

Barbara said she doesn't rely just on being a class agent to promote reunion weekend. She said she sometimes sees alumni at the Open Window, the diocesan bookstore where she works, and urges them to return. She was pleased that two alumni with whom she spoke, and who had not been at reunion for many years, returned this year.

Kathleen says she tries to persuade classmates to participate in whatever the college is doing – such as luncheons and golf tournaments – in addition to reunion weekend. She said that while she sees the class agent role as being a voice for the college, providing outreach to keep classmates connected, "There is nothing wrong with coming out and asking for money."

Gertrude's granddaughter Bridget, who was holding a fourth generation of the family in her arms – her four-month-old daughter, Emma Rose – says it might be difficult for the next few years to persuade her classmates to return to campus. With young families, someone will always have a soccer match or other children's activity scheduled, she said.

When it came to fund-raising, the challenges faced by the four class agents varied by generation.

For Gertrude, it is that only three of her 33 classmates survive.

Two generations removed, her granddaughter Kathleen said the issue for her class is that at their age, they are just getting started on the income-building portions of their careers.

In preparing for their class agent roles, Kathleen said that while the family didn't get together for a formal planning session, they did make a lot of telephone calls to one-another exchanging suggestions on what to put in the letters that were sent to classmates prior to the phone calls.

Barbara says that she found a good way to break the ice on the phone was to exchange stories with classmates about their years at the Elms and what has transpired in their lives since graduation.

Gertrude called it a "What's new?" approach.

The two-year commitment that the family members made to serve as class agents ends this year, and Bridget says it will be time "to pass the torch" to other alumni.

Barbara says they will provide feedback to Bernadette based on their experience with the program in hopes of helping future class agents.

One thing they all agree on is that the Internet, including e-mail, will play a bigger role for class agents in the future.

Bridget says it can provide a way for alumni who can't come to reunion to find out what's new in classmates' lives.

Kathleen says an Internet site could be created for social networking for alumni. But, she concludes, "The class agent can be a wonderful connector to the college, no matter what medium is used."

ELMS COLLEGE fund

Building a Tradition of Annual Giving Through Five Funds for Excellence

Priorities

Elms College was born of a vision, inspired by imagination, and built on faith. The college's proud history and heritage, molded by the charism of love and service provided by the Sisters of St. Joseph, infuses its students and graduates with the power, the drive, and the ability to change the world.

When the Sisters founded the College of Our Lady of the Elms 80 years ago, it was their vision to create a college where students would not only develop academically, but also as people of principle, committed to values, and dedicated to service. Our alumni reflect the success of their mission.

Our alumni often tell us that they feel an intense loyalty to the Elms because of the deeply personal and life-determining experiences they encountered here. This is the legacy of the Sisters of St. Joseph: the quality education; the attention paid to the development of the whole student; the joy and character-building value of health and fitness activities; and the enjoyment of our small and charming campus.

To strengthen our relationship with our alumni, Elms College has established five Funds for Excellence to better showcase the accomplishments and annual priorities of the college. Support of these funds helps to honor the college's place in the life of her alumni, and assures a place for future generations of students at the College of Our Lady of the Elms.

The Heritage Fund for Excellence

A combination of excellence in moral development and academic achievement has made an Elms College education special. For many years, this vision was made real by Sisters of St. Joseph – many of whom dedicated 30 or more years of their lives to Elms College students – as well as by dedicated lay educators committed to guiding young people to a lifetime of service.

The Heritage Fund for Excellence supports a variety of priorities at the Elms that positively impact our students and faculty. This fund also helps provide scholarships to ensure that the excellence of an Elms College education is within reach of needy students, including many who are the first of their families to attend college.

Your support of The Heritage Fund for Excellence is a way to honor a favorite spiritual mentor at Elms College, or to acknowledge the college's 80-year tradition of service.

The Student Life Fund for Excellence

From its founding, Elms College has stressed that a true education goes beyond pure academics. At the Elms, student activities outside of the classroom represent opportunities for development of the whole person. Every student is required to perform 30 hours of community service, and many go far beyond that. It is in their on- and off-campus activities, clubs, and service projects that many students form the friendships that will last a lifetime.

The Student Life Fund for Excellence supports all the programs outside the classroom that help Elms College students grow into well-rounded and accomplished adults, paying special attention to creating programs that integrate all students into the life of the campus. Support of this fund advances student community service programs both locally and across the globe, while fostering favorite student activities and clubs on campus.

Your support of The Student Life Fund for Excellence is a way to acknowledge student development activities as important to the overall wellbeing of Elms students.

The Academic Fund for Excellence

Elms College has always been committed to excellence in academics and to developing "creative learners." Maintaining academic excellence is an ongoing challenge for any institution of higher learning, particularly for one that is growing and adapting as rapidly as Elms College. We know academic excellence is important to employers who place a high value on hiring Elms graduates in their business, hospital, school, or charitable organization.

The Academic Fund for Excellence supports ongoing professional development by the faculty, the development of new curricula and programs such as the new master's degree in autism, as well as new partnerships with other institutions. The Alumnae Library and research projects done by faculty and students are key components to academic progress and quality. Support to this fund encourages efforts to improve existing programs and develop new areas of academic distinction that also increase the reputation of Elms College, making every one of our degrees more valuable.

Your support of The Academic Fund for Excellence can reflect your remembrance of a professor who had a special influence on you, a family member, or friend.

The Fund for Excellence in Health and Fitness

Since its founding, Elms College has encouraged the physical development of its students as a way to promote health, build confidence, and develop leadership skills that serve our graduates for life. Today, the Elms strives to encourage the participation of all students in life-long patterns of health and fitness, including through our 15 intercollegiate Division III athletic teams, a wide variety of intramural sports and other fitness programs, and a comprehensive Health Center.

The Fund for Excellence in Health and Fitness supports programs and activities that promote wellness of body and mind for all of our students, alumni, and community members.

Support for The Fund for Excellence in Health and Fitness recognizes your belief in the importance of strength in mind and body, and may be in remembrance of a special coach or teammate.

The Campus Enrichment Fund for Excellence

Every student who has ever attended Elms College has benefited from the foresight of those who



developed a lovely campus where tranquility fosters contemplation, and compactness lends itself to unity and school spirit. It is important for current and future students to have the same experience of development in the midst of serenity and beauty.

Maintaining buildings, adding new technology, and adapting to a growing student body are an ongoing financial priority for Elms College. The Campus Enrichment Fund for Excellence supports maintenance and updating of buildings to make best use of new technology in classrooms, residence halls, and facilities, and to improve energy efficiency. It also provides for necessary modifications to existing facilities to meet the needs of a growing student body.

Support for The Campus Enrichment Fund for Excellence will reflect your appreciation for the affect of physical surroundings on personal and spiritual reflection, harmonious relationships, and positive outlook by faculty and students on the Elms campus.

By thinking about how your relationship to Elms College intersects with these five Funds for Excellence, we hope you will discover motivation to continue - or increase - your support of the college in the coming year. During this period of growth, the College of Our Lady of the Elms has many priorities. We hope you will select the priority of highest interest to you as you reflect on what you gained from your affiliation with the Elms. Your contribution provides a continued legacy, ensuring that others will benefit as much from their experience here as you have.

Please watch for more information about the Elms College Funds for Excellence.

During Telethon, Current Student Will Dziura Learns Grandmother Maloney '47 Created Mischief at the Elms

When first-year student Will Dziura '11 of Chicopee signed on to participate in the annual student telethon, he wasn't expecting to learn about mischief that his grandmother, Rosemary Maloney '47, had been involved in as an undergraduate.

But in talking to his grandmother's classmates, he learned about how she and her friends had once passed chocolates around in the chapel.

"Maybe that was not such a good thing to do," he says wryly.

Will is the first male student to ever participate in the student telethon, which takes place for 10 weeks in the fall and 10 weeks in the spring. The telethon seeks contributions from alumni for the college's annual fund, but its added and not unsubstantial side effect is to have today's students connect with students from the past.

Bernadette Nowakowski, director of annual giving, says that feedback from alumni is very positive about the work of the students and the class agents in thanking past contributors and contacting potential contributors. It establishes a contact between alumni and current students and makes the alumni feel good about the college, she says.

Will says that once he got over his initial awkwardness, he found it "very enjoyable" to talk to alumni and hear about the campus "30 or 40 years ago." It was in these conversations that he heard about his grandmother and the chocolates.

Alumni in turn wanted to be updated on today's campus and the changes that have taken place. When he filled them in on the new athletic fields, "they were truly amazed," he said.

But he never lost sight of his primary role, which was to seek contributions from the alumni to the college's annual fund.

"Alicia kept us up-to-date and we could see the impact we were making," he said.

Alicia is Alicia Germain, alumni and annual fund coordinator, who oversaw the efforts of the eight students who worked for three hours either two or three nights a week during the fall and spring 10-week drives.

The students began by calling alumni with a history of pledging money to the annual fund, and then went on to those who have not pledged in the past. The effort results in 16,000 phone calls during the year.

The impact that Will mentioned was substantial, Alicia said, with a 69 percent increase in the amount of money pledged compared to the previous year. In the spring effort alone, 689 pledges were received.

The telethon operates from the Institutional Advancement Office with students recruited during a job fair in the fall, she said. The students get paid minimum wage for their work.

Will, who will return for his sophomore year in the fall, says he plans to sign on for the telethon again.

"I can't wait until I can start calling next year," he says. "Maybe I'll find out more about my grandmother from her college friends!"



Will Dziura, a first year student at Elms who took part in the 2007-2008 student telethon, is seen here with his grandmother, Rosemary Maloney of Wilbraham, a 1947 Elms graduate.

Seeking Nominations – Distinguished Alumna/us Award

We are seeking recommendations from our alumni for candidates for the Distinguished Alumna/us Award, which is awarded in May during commencement activities.

Please send the name of the candidate you are recommending, and an essay substantiating why this person is deserving of the award. The award winner should have distinguished herself/himself in one or more of the following areas:

__ Professional or business life
__ Contribution to the Church
__ Intellectual pursuits
__ Personal, home, family life
__ Loyalty to Elms College

The recipient must be present for the awarding.

Date: _____

I recommend: _____ Class of _____

Recommended by: _____ Class of _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Return nomination form to:

Peggy D. Clark, Alumni Office, Elms College, 291 Springfield Street, Chicopee, MA 01013

Your gift to **The Elms College Fund** through the Academic Fund for Excellence helps provide all the best that is Catholic liberal arts learning — *passion for excellence, openness to ideas, respect for the nuance and the complexity of the human condition, commitment to service, respect for the dignity of every person.*

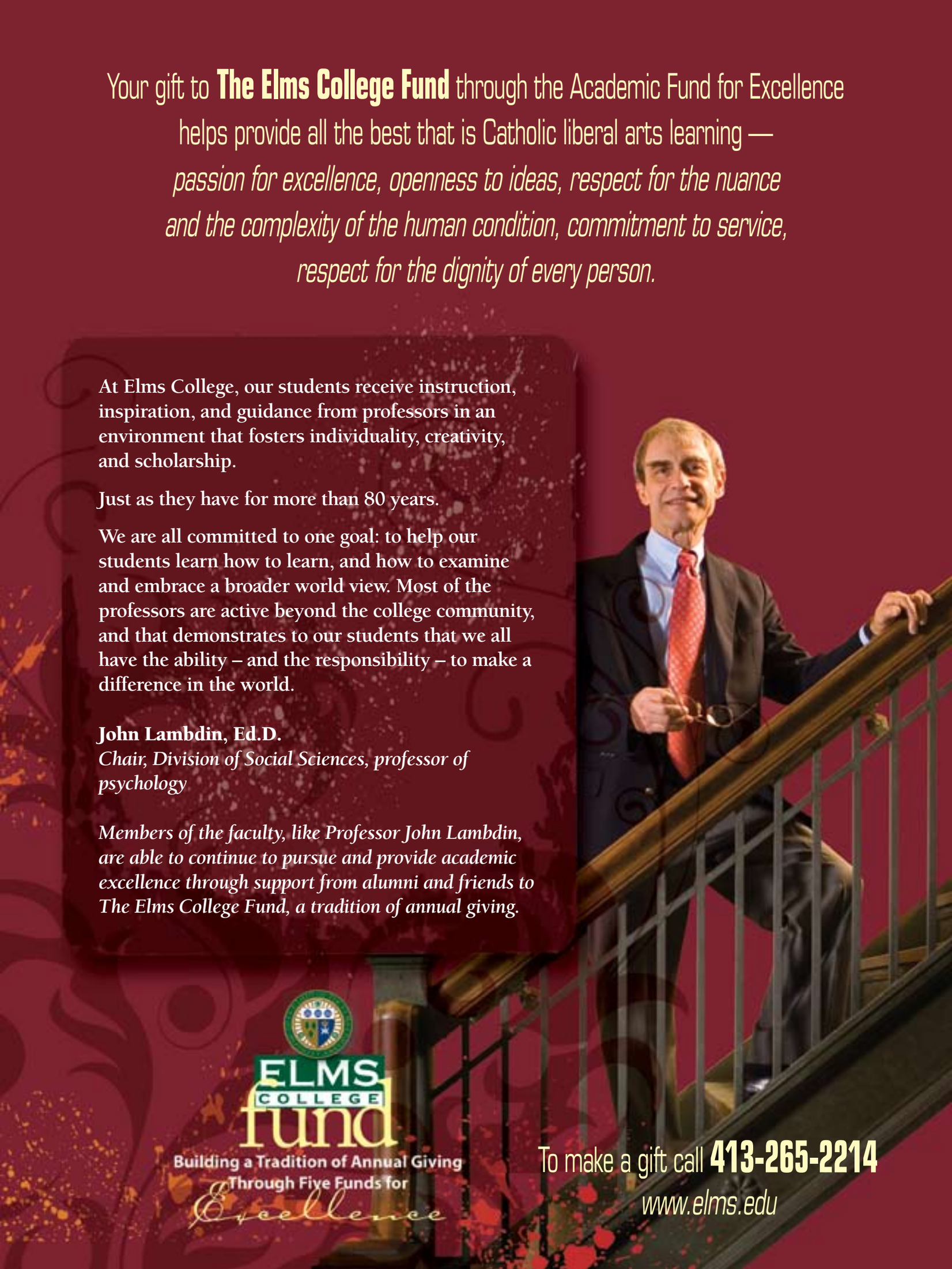
At Elms College, our students receive instruction, inspiration, and guidance from professors in an environment that fosters individuality, creativity, and scholarship.

Just as they have for more than 80 years.

We are all committed to one goal: to help our students learn how to learn, and how to examine and embrace a broader world view. Most of the professors are active beyond the college community, and that demonstrates to our students that we all have the ability – and the responsibility – to make a difference in the world.

John Lambdin, Ed.D.
Chair, Division of Social Sciences, professor of psychology

Members of the faculty, like Professor John Lambdin, are able to continue to pursue and provide academic excellence through support from alumni and friends to The Elms College Fund, a tradition of annual giving.



ELMS COLLEGE fund

Building a Tradition of Annual Giving Through Five Funds for Excellence

To make a gift call **413-265-2214**

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