

## THEARTS&MORE

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[www.misericordia.edu/theartsandmore](http://www.misericordia.edu/theartsandmore)

Aug. 27  
*Opening Convocation*

Sept. 24  
*A Congo Journey: The Race to  
Save Bonobos and Make  
Conservation Go Viral*

Oct. 5 9  
*Tibetan Monks of the Gaden  
Shartse Phukhang Monastery*

Monday, Oct. 5 10 a.m.

Tuesday, Oct. 6 7 p.m.

Wednesday, Oct. 7 12 p.m.

Thursday, Oct. 8 5 p.m.

Friday, Oct. 9



The Vienna Boys Choir is in concert  
in Lemmond Theater on Dec. 3.

Photo by Lukas Beck

Monday Thursday 9 a.m. 4 p.m.,

Nov. 11  
*Interprofessional Ethics*

Nov. 17  
*Historians Against Slavery*

Nov. 19  
*The Living Philosophy Project*

Nov. 19  
*Thought* Food for

Dec. 3  
*Vienna Boys Choir*

April 9, 2016  
*MU Word and Music Festival*

odies of Art Music, Literature and  
isability

JOIN IN ON THE ADVENTURE  
**Dr. Noël Keller's Trips  
with a Difference  
2015**

Nov. 29 Dec. 8  
*Christmas Magic at the Markets*

2016

Late March or early April  
*Literary England and Downton Abbey*

Mid June  
*An Alaskan cruise*

Mid September  
*The Best of Italy: Venice to Amalfi Coast*

Dr. Marie Noël Keller, RSM, Th.D., is a  
veteran of more than 100 overseas trips.  
Center for Adult and Continuing Education  
(570) 674-6776, (570) 674-6924 or  
[srnoel@misericordia.edu](mailto:srnoel@misericordia.edu).

# Misericordia today

S U M M E R 2 0 1 5



## Making the world a little brighter

Teacher education students add  
a splash of color to special-needs  
school by painting murals in  
hallways of historic building

*Pages 12-14*

Record bequest establishes Curtis Family Scholarship Fund ...





It is easy to stay connected with the Misericordia University campus and alumni communities through our social media channels. Did you get a new job or welcome a new addition to the family? Share your news and pictures on Facebook and Flickr. Pick one site or several in order to share your news or to simply remain informed about the latest news at your MU. Stay connected at [www.misericordia.edu/social](http://www.misericordia.edu/social).

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BY JIM ROBERTS

Misericordia University's 90th anniversary celebration not only acknowledged the history of the University, but it served as a catalyst for planning its future. The campus community developed a new mission statement for the University with an accompanying values statement – both of which will guide and direct MU for years to come. As part of June 2014's successful reaffirmation of accreditation process, the evaluation team from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education noted that MU's existing mission statement might benefit from an update. In addition, the Conference on Mercy Higher Education, of which MU is one of 17 institutional members, also endeavored to better integrate the mission statements of the member institutions with an overall Mercy mission. With those factors in mind and an eye on the future, hundreds of people representing MU's primary constituents, engaged in a mission revision process over several months with the simple premise: "What words would you use to describe Misericordia University 150 years from now?" Sister Jean Messaros, RSM, vice president for Mission Integration, remarks on the process, "It was one of

the most collaborative, thoughtful, and reflective processes that I've experienced on campus. Sisters of Mercy in our area also contributed to the gathering of words and gave feedback on the draft materials as well."

Words such as "student," "community," and "family" were used often. The words and phrases were gathered and presented in a "word cloud" graphic. Then a small team crafted them into draft statements and sought feedback from the campus community. In the final phase, an expanded group of editors from the in-house Middle States Self-Study Committee consolidated the feedback and presented drafts that ultimately went before the Board of Trustees for final endorsement in June, and now serve as guiding documents.

"The new mission and values statements create a modern theme to unify the campus community and capture essential elements of 90 years of history," says Thomas J. Botzman, Ph.D., president. "The mission is a clear, concise declaration of what Misericordia University represents today and seeks to accomplish. I am inspired by how many members of our campus community took an active part in this process."

The mission and values now set a direction for a new strategic planning process, set to commence in the fall.

## MISSION STATEMENT

*Misericordia University, a Catholic liberal arts institution established in the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy, fosters intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, and respect for persons in an environment where all are welcome.*



## CORE VALUES

*As a community, we are committed to integrity and the values of the Sisters of Mercy as the foundation of University life. Our values are:*

<b>Mercy through</b> Compassion Love Caring	<b>Service through</b> Selflessness Sacrifice Action	<b>Justice through</b> Fairness Acceptance Advocacy	<b>Hospitality with</b> Dignity Respect Openness
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# Misericordia Today

Summer 2015 Volume XIX, No. 2

*Misericordia Today* is published by the Office of Marketing Communications.

Misericordia University  
301 Lake St. Dallas, PA 18612-1090

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## HONORS

*Misericordia Today* received recognition at the 2015 CUPRAP Conference. The staff received a bronze CUPPIE Award in the Wild Card category for a video news release that highlighted cancer research, and an honorable mention CUPPIE Award in the public relations campaign category for a series of stories that highlighted the annual mission trip to Guyana.



**Have a story to share?**

(570) 674-6372

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*Misericordia Today*



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Physical therapy professor volunteers to advocate and train therapists in Rwanda.

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Students and faculty explore bioremediation with the duckweed plant.

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Women with Children program graduate's business fills void for adults with autism.

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Occupational therapy students, faculty address needs of underserved in Jamaica.

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Alumna's job as a forensic interviewer empowers abused children.



*Misericordia Today* is published in February and August by Misericordia University. The magazine is distributed for free to alumni, parents and friends of the University. To request a subscription, please call (570) 674-6764. Postmaster: Send address changes to Alumni Office, Misericordia University, Dallas, PA 18612-1090. Copyright Misericordia University 2015.

## ON THE COVER

Teacher education students Melissa Smith 18, foreground, Jennifer Spera, 18, center, and Megan Ostrum 18 make the learning environment for special needs children a little brighter by reinforcing the school's philosophy of being responsible, respectful and safe through colorful murals.





## We are on a mission

Our campus community kicked off an effort to revise our mission and core values at the beginning of the 2014-15 academic year. Students, alumni, faculty, staff, Sisters of Mercy, and community members generated more than 1,200 words that described and celebrated Misericordia University. Working with those words and phrases, we continued to refine and debate them until we arrived at new, concise statements. With the following statements, we will create a new strategic plan during the academic year to guide our actions as we look to continue building our young University in the Mercy tradition.

### MISSION STATEMENT

*Misericordia University, a Catholic liberal arts institution established in the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy, fosters intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, and respect for persons in an environment where all are welcome.*

When asked why we serve those who are not Catholic, the late Bishop James A. Hickey of Washington replied: "We do it not because they are Catholic, but because we are Catholic." To truly be a Catholic institution, we must always recognize all are welcome on campus. We welcome students of all ages and aspirations, alumni returning to their collegiate home, and faculty and staff who foster a spirit of academic excellence and inspire personal growth. We welcome a community that holds meetings on campus, cheers for our athletic teams, and receives treatment in our health care clinics or tutoring from our students. As a Catholic liberal arts institution, we free ourselves to be welcoming to all as we seek to explore the world with intellectual curiosity and critical thinking, while always remembering that our respect for and service to others is grounded in the Catholic and Sisters of Mercy traditions.

### CORE VALUES

*As a community, we are committed to integrity and the values of the Sisters of Mercy as the foundation of University life. Our values are:*

*Mercy through Compassion, Love, and Caring  
Service through Selflessness, Sacrifice, and Action  
Justice through Fairness, Acceptance, and Advocacy  
Hospitality with Dignity, Respect, and Openness*

Our actions speak our values for us without saying a single word. We demonstrate compassion, love, and caring for others in so many ways: students and faculty traveling to Jamaica to provide wheelchairs to the homebound; transforming campus into a welcoming shelter for evacuees, or welcoming veterans as we remember their contribution to our freedom. We serve in student fundraising efforts for nonprofits and display justice in our acceptance of others in their views and cultures. Remember "all are welcome" greets our campus visitors, and we must graciously accept the welcome of others as we travel beyond the campus borders.

We are on a mission, seeking to serve others as we educate in the traditions of College Misericordia and Misericordia University. Please join us soon where all are welcome.



President Thomas J. Botzman, Ph.D.

## Colors of the world

Misericordia honors  
graduates for service  
and study abroad

BY MARIANNE TUCKER PUHALLA

**A**mong the 354 graduates who received degrees at Misericordia University's 89th annual Commencement ceremonies on May 16, there were a few who stood out from the crowd. Sporting brightly colored stoles over their gowns, nine graduates were recognized for having completed service and/or study abroad during their studies at Misericordia. With majors that ranged from English and government to occupational therapy and speech-language pathology, the nine received special stoles that represented the countries they visited, including Jamaica, Guyana, Honduras, Italy and England.

The recognition is part of an effort to expand and enhance service and study abroad experiences. In November 2014, Misericordia joined the Generation Study Abroad Initiative, a program of the Institute of International Education to form a coalition of institutions committed to doubling the number of American students who study abroad by the end of the decade.

The graduates honored collectively agreed that their experiences abroad provided life- and career-changing experiences.



Hilary Hoover '15, who earned a master's degree in speech-language pathology (SLP), took part in the service trip to Guyana, South America, in 2013. She also studied in Florence, Italy in 2012. "Being in Guyana completely changed my outlook on health care, both domestically and internationally," she said. "Because of my experiences, I see health care as both a basic human right and as a symbol of prosperity. Being able to provide affordable, accessible, and quality health care to every citizen regardless of financial status should be a country's foremost concern."

Once licensed in SLP, Hoover hopes to return to Guyana to again work with the children and professionals that she met in 2013. "My experience has shaped me into the therapist and advocate that I am today," she added.

John Ignatovich '15, awarded a master's degree in occupational therapy (OT), completed a service-learning mission to Honduras in 2014, and participated in a service trip with OT students and professors to Jamaica after graduation. "My mission to Honduras gave me the ability to understand how basic communication can mean so much to people in

Displaying the colorful stoles that represent the counties where they did study and service abroad are 2015 graduates, front row from left, Erica Hannon, Hilary Hoover, Deborah Keys, and Moira Langan, second row, Conor Brennan, Christina Tucci, Adrian Whitmoyer, and John Ignatovich.

different cultures," he said.

Emily Halbing '15, a recipient of a bachelor's degree in English and psychology, studied literature and pop culture at Kingston University in London, England, in 2014. The experience provided educational and personal growth. "London is probably the most beautiful city I've ever been to, aesthetically, historically, culturally," she said. "The city provided me with both the privilege and the responsibility to experience as much as I possibly could."

Deborah Keys '15 received a master's degree in OT. Her time in Jamaica in 2013 provided a chance to serve others and develop relationships with people of all backgrounds. "My Misericordia service abroad experience helped me become a better person both personally and professionally because it instilled in me a life dedicated to service with marginalized communities."

Faculty, students travel to Jamaica, Rwanda and Tanzania to share their time and talent. *Pages 22-25.*





## CAMPUS VIEWS

### Misericordia appoints Dr. Brody as VPAA

Charles J. Brody, Ph.D., a native of Nanticoke, Pennsylvania, and most recently an associate dean for academic affairs in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of North Carolina (UNC) Charlotte, has been named vice president of academic affairs. He began his duties July 1.



Dr. Brody

"Dr. Brody is a talented and accomplished scholar, teacher, and administrator," said President Thomas J. Botzman, Ph.D. "He understands the inner workings of a complex university and will ably serve with our exceptional faculty as a champion for the entire academic community."

"Dr. Brody also understands the mission at Misericordia and is prepared to lead us into a successful future as a young university in the Mercy tradition."

Dr. Brody will be the chief academic officer with oversight of academic programs and personnel, and affiliated units such as the Mary Kintz Bevevino Library and the Student Success Center.

Dr. Brody has long been associated with the Religious Sisters of Mercy. He attended Mercy-sponsored elementary and secondary schools in the region, and his sisters, Sister Elizabeth Brody, RSM, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, and Sister Mary Ellen Brody, RSM, St. Louis, Missouri, are Religious Sisters of Mercy.

Dr. Brody holds a BA in sociology from Loyola University of New Orleans, Louisiana, and a Master of Arts in sociology from the University of New Orleans. He earned his Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona.

### Colleges Against Cancer tops Relay for Life goal

The Colleges Against Cancer (CAC) chapter surpassed the overall \$100,000 mark at the 5th annual Relay for Life event on campus by raising nearly \$43,000 in April.

The student-run organization set a goal of \$33,000 when it announced plans for the 2015 event in February. The annual fundraiser for the American Cancer Society has grown incrementally since it raised \$7,000 in 2011. Since then, students have raised \$12,910 in 2012; \$17,699 in 2013; \$30,375.04 in 2014, and \$42,876.62 this year.

"We are extremely pleased with how our campus and regional communities supported us in this worthwhile endeavor," said Elizabeth Pedro, the advisor for the chapter. "Every year we are amazed by the generosity people exhibit in this ongoing battle to defeat cancer. Few

people have not been touched by it, so that is why we continue to work together to raise money for research, and to honor survivors and those we have lost to cancer.

"On behalf of Colleges Against Cancer, I would like to personally thank all of our sponsors and for the University continuing to support the efforts of our students," added Pedro.

CAC chapter officers are Quinn Fohlinger '17, chair; Alexandra Graham '15, and Julie Bogaert '15, co-chairs; Nicole Henderson '15, treasurer, and Kelsey Hollenback '16, secretary.

Relay for Life was held in the Anderson Sports and Health Center. It



The Misericordia University Colleges Against Cancer chapter presents its check for \$42,876.62 to the American Cancer Society after the 5th annual Relay for Life event on campus.

featured 47 teams, 666 participants and 16 cancer survivors. Sponsors included Frontier Communications, Metz Culinary Management,

Coca-Cola, Pizza Bella, Dominos, Bagel Art Bakery, Yellow Cottage Bakery & Deli, Sheetz, Subway and Leggios Italian Restaurant.

### Soulful balladeer, jazz singer perform at Under the Stars Summer Arts Festival

The two-day Under the Stars Summer Arts Festival was successful again, as it welcomed Grammy-winner Marc Cohn for the Starlight Concert on July 11 and award-winning jazz singer and recording artist Rondi Charleston for the Jazz in July concert on July 13 at the Wells Fargo Amphitheater.

Cohn is best known for *Walking in Memphis* and *True Companion*. He burst onto the music scene in 1991 with his self-titled debut album, which solidified his place as one of his generation's most compelling

singer/songwriters. It featured the hit single *Walking in Memphis*, and other memorable songs like *Silver Thunderbird* and *Ghost Train*.

Rolling Stone magazine endorsed his latest release, 2010's *Listening Booth: 1970*, by stating "Cohn is one of rock's most soulful croons – a rich immediately-recognizable tenor that makes these songs his own."

Charleston's work has appeared in film, television and on stage throughout the United States and Europe. Her second album, *Signs of Life*, was released in 2013 and climbed



Marc Cohn performs at the Under the Stars Summer Arts Festival's Starlight Concert.

the Jazz Week charts for 10 straight weeks. Critics have raved that it was impeccably produced, furthering her reputation as an emotionally effective singer. "Utterly delightful ...," the New York Times wrote about her



Rondi Charleston offered the Jazz in July crowd a flawless performance.

album. "She works her way into listeners' hearts ... a joy to hear."

For more information about cultural events at Misericordia University, please call (570) 674-6719 or log on to [www.misericordia.edu/theartsandmore](http://www.misericordia.edu/theartsandmore).



## CAMPUS VIEWS

### Medical director named 'Hero in Surgery'

The American College of Surgeons, Chicago, Illinois, honored Stanley J. Dudrick, M.D., F.A.C.S., medical director of the physician assistant program and recipient of the first endowed chair position at Misericordia, by including him in a series of biographical videos entitled, *Heroes in Surgery: Our Legacy*.



Dr. Dudrick

Dr. Dudrick is known as "The Father of Intravenous Feeding," according to the video. He developed the specialized central venous feeding technique known as hyperalimentation to allow people who cannot eat to be fed through a tube that bypasses their intestines.

To watch the video, please log on to <http://bit.ly/dudrickhero>.

### Dr. Hage selected for Nurse Leadership Program

Brenda Hage, Ph.D., D.N.P., C.R.N.P., professor of nursing and director of the Doctor of Nursing Practice program, has been selected as a fellow for the Duke-Johnson & Johnson Nurse Leadership Program for 2015-16.



Dr. Hage

The one-year certificate program was created to provide an innovative leadership development learning experience for the advanced practice nurse. Fellows will participate in three leadership retreats at Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, throughout the year as well as through distance-based learning activities and a transformational leadership project of their choice.





## CAMPUS VIEWS

### Inaugural Memorial Color Run benefits scholarship fund

The inaugural David A. Evans, Jr. Memorial Color Run raised more than \$3,000 in support of a scholarship fund that was established by the family in his name at Holy Redeemer High School in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

Sponsored by the Student Government Association, more than 150 runners participated in the 5K run as part of the annual Spring Fest Weekend on April 24-26.

The Evans Family established the following criteria for the David A. Evans, Jr., Scholarship Award: Recipient(s) are graduating seniors from Holy Redeemer, enrolling at Misericordia, in good academic standing, able to demonstrate service to the community, Church and school, and committed to academic success.



Memorial run raises money for scholarships.

Five seniors who are members of Evans' 2015 graduating class were awarded \$1,000 scholarships. In subsequent years, the fund will provide financial support to one graduating student from Holy Redeemer.

### Spring break service trips take students to four states

Fifty students and eight chaperones participated in the annual spring break service trips that were coordinated by Campus Ministry in March.



Eighteen students participated in a Habitat for Humanity service in Dickinson, Texas.

City Mission in Schenectady, New York, received 10 students, while an additional 12 MU students volunteered at the Romero Center in Camden, New Jersey. Eighteen students worked with Habitat for Humanity in Dickinson, Texas, and an additional 10 students worked at Community at Visitation in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Each service trip also featured two chaperones.

### Medical imaging major chosen for leadership program

Medical imaging major Allison McIntyre '16 was selected to participate in the American Society of Radiologic Technologists (ASRT) 2015 Student Leadership Development Program.

The daughter of Michael McIntyre and Cathy Canfield received an all-expenses-paid trip to the 2015 ASRT Educational Symposium and Annual Governance and House of Delegates Meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico, from June 25-28.

### New Alumni Commencement Picnic celebrates graduates

Misericordia University's newest alumni participated in a family-style picnic and several fun activities before rehearsal for spring Commencement ceremonies.

Photo by Dan Kimbrough

With more than 16,000 alumni, Misericordia welcomed the latest additions by grilling hot dogs, hamburgers and chicken, and providing other assorted side dishes and beverages under the cover of tents outside the Banks Student Life Center. Students also participated in an interactive photo booth and had caricatures drawn of themselves.



Kristi Seiler '15, left, and Tamara Stubits '15 enjoy the photo booth.

### PA Department of Agriculture recognizes food services

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture said thank you during the spring semester to Misericordia and its food service supplier, Metz Culinary Management, for choosing to use products made and grown in the Keystone State.

The Bureau of Market Development for the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture presented a PA Preferred certificate of appreciation at a program designed to showcase the products.



Misericordia and Metz representatives accept a PA Preferred certificate from the PA Department of Agriculture.

# A HEART OF Mercy

Elementary education alumna bequests \$2.65 million to establish Curtis Family Scholarship Fund

BY MARIANNE TUCKER PUHALLA

Quiet, unassuming and compassionate are among the words used to describe the late Barbara Ann Curtis '63, who earned her bachelor's degree in elementary education at then-College Misericordia in 1963.

Commuting just five miles from her home in Shavertown, Pennsylvania, Curtis was known as a hardworking and enthusiastic student who was inspired by the Sisters of Mercy to be a servant-leader. She went on to earn a master's degree at Seton Hall University, South Orange, New Jersey, and began a 34-year career educating young children in Hightstown, New Jersey.

"I know that it was both her and her sister, Dorothy's, wishes that their estate would go to Misericordia. She believed the University was where she got her start and was responsible for the person she became. She truly believed in passing that along to future generations."

— Frances Ochman, high school classmate

Her family and friends say, although quiet, she was not shy when it came to her three distinct passions in life: sailing – she grew up sailing with her father on their family's boat at Harveys Lake; travelling – she and her younger sister, Dorothy, would explore the world every summer, and Misericordia – she earnestly credited her alma mater with providing her with the foundation and education to accomplish her goals in life and also

become the person she wanted to be.

It became evident upon her sudden passing in 2013 at age 72, the extent of her love for Misericordia. A member of the Heart of Mercy Society, a group of supporters committed to putting Misericordia into their estate plans, she bequeathed a gift of \$2.65 million to Misericordia University to establish the Curtis Family Scholarship Fund. It will provide financial assistance to students from Luzerne County and counties contiguous to Luzerne who show academic success, have financial

need, and enroll in a full-time course of study at Misericordia University.

"Our father inherited funds and established the Curtis Family Fund when we were children," explained Barbara's brother, John Curtis, M.D.,



Barbara Ann Curtis '63

professor emeritus at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. "Barbara and our younger sister, Dorothy, who was an X-ray technologist, lived together in New Jersey and were selfless in that they would drive back and forth helping take care of our parents. All the while, Barbara was trustee of the Curtis Family Fund. I guess you could say she was frugal – she never took any money for herself. She often talked about how she hoped it would provide a way for her to give back to Misericordia."

"Barbara's contribution to Misericordia University is the largest gift ever received from an alumna," said Susan Helwig, vice president for University Advancement. "We are beyond thankful. Her generosity will forever provide life-changing educational opportunities for local students. Her gift is the essence of giving because it will provide others the same opportunity that was given to her by the Sisters of Mercy more than 50 years ago."

Continued on next page

Among the many students who benefit from scholarships established by bequests to Misericordia University is biology student Sabrina Figueroa '16, who is part of a team of researchers conducting bioremediation research.

Pages 10-11.



Senior biology researchers, from left, Corinne Breymeier '16, Old Forge, Pa.; Kelsey Glavich '16, Brown Dale, Pa.; Sabrina Figueroa '16, Centerreach, N.Y., and Dr. Cosima Wiese check on the progress of duckweed plant growth inside the Conviron growth chamber.



# Saving our streams

**Fellowship students and professor research if the duckweed plant can be used to bioremediate polluted waterways**

BY MARIANNE TUCKER PUHALLA

At first glance, the little green sprouts growing inside the Conviron growth chamber in a laboratory at the Hafey-McCormick Science Center might not look very powerful. Yet, the Misericordia University biology researchers are trying to determine how the prolific duckweed plants are affected by several different types of pollutants, and if they can be used as a potential bioremediation tool to clean up water-borne contaminants in waterways.

Biology Professor Cosima B. Wiese, Ph.D., is leading the Misericordia University Summer Research Fellowship team of five biology students: Corinne Breymeier '16, Danielle Eastgate '16, Sabrina Figueroa '16, Kelsey Glavich '16 and Zachary Sabaday '16.

"I began my research in this area by looking at the acidification of water, caused by acid mine drainage into streams throughout Northeastern Pennsylvania, and its impact on

different plants and their physiology," she explains. "The students' projects are isolating the concept by testing how different pollutants, including heavy metals, an herbicide and acidic conditions, impact the duckweed plant, in particular, and its ability to grow and reproduce. Scientists are very interested in duckweed for its possible applications in the areas of bioremediation and biofuels.

"It is an excellent model organism because it grows so easily in the laboratory."

During the paid fellowship, the students spent five-days-a-week for 10 weeks in the lab. Their work on the sprightly aquatic plant is centered

inside the Conviron growth chamber, a newly acquired research tool that maintains a constant temperature of 25-degrees Celsius and has a high intensity light to stimulate plant growth.

Prior to beginning their research, the students had to prepare detailed research proposals in their Junior Seminar course in order to give them a clear sense of what they wanted to accomplish before they stepped into the lab. "We are learning new methodology and applying it to new systems, and all the while developing creative solutions to research roadblocks. For the students, it is a lesson in being exact in a particular way," says Dr. Wiese.

The students learn from applying the scientific process and analyzing their data. A bonus of the fellowship, she says, is how the students learn from each other and learn to work together as a group. All five students are senior biology majors with a chemistry minor, yet their most important common denominator, it seems, is an interest in saving the environment.

"There are a number of us working to re-establish Cougars for Change on campus, a club that promotes environmental consciousness and sustainability. So when Dr. Wiese discussed a research project that could help save our streams, we were all onboard immediately," says Breymeier, the club's president. Breymeier spent the summer of 2014 doing a biomedical science internship with Sanofi Pasteur, the world's largest manufacturer of vaccines, at a production facility in Swiftwater, Pennsylvania. "This summer's research



Danielle Eastgate '16, Palmerton, Pa., and Zachary Sabaday '16, St. Clair, Pa., prepare solutions to be used during duckweed plant research.

single grandmother and has always wanted to help people. "It is one of the things that attracted me to Misericordia – the opportunity to do service. It is all a part of why I want to go into pharmaceutical research. The fact that this project can help clean up streams in the area and make the environment a better place – this is important to me," she adds.

Kelsey Glavich '16, plans on a career in environmental biology. "I've always been into the environment, and wondered about the impact herbicides have on plants. The whole environmental sustainability aspect drew me to this project," Glavich says. "I am learning that research takes a lot of hard work, patience, determination and a passion for what you are doing."

With plans to attend graduate school in applied biology, Danielle Eastgate '16, admits she "fell" into botany after taking a course with Dr. Wiese. "I really enjoyed her passion for plants, and learned about the work she was doing with aquatic plants and acid rain. I come from Palmerton, near where a zinc company caused significant pollution – enough to have the area be deemed a federal government Superfund site. Being able to work on a project that helps the environment is very important to me."

Sabaday has a particular interest in phyto-remediation, and plans to explore his love of ecology and the environment in his spare time. Post graduation, he plans to enroll in MU's Physician Assistant Studies Program.

## A HEART OF MERCY

from page 9

High school classmate Frances Ochman, owner of Ochman Jewelers in Dallas, Pennsylvania, fondly remembers the affinity Barbara had for

her collegiate alma mater. "We both grew up in Shavertown and stayed in touch after high school. Over the years, anytime we would get together, Barbara would always talk about how much she loved Misericordia. I know that it was both her and her sister, Dorothy's, wishes that their estate would go to Misericordia. She believed the University was where she

got her start and was responsible for the person she became. She truly believed in passing that along to future generations."

President Thomas J. Botzman, Ph.D., understands the sacrifices students and their families endure to make a college education possible. "For many, the cost of college is a major obstacle to access, yet it is an

important part of attaining the American Dream. With 98 percent of Misericordia students requiring aid to make that possible, Barbara's gift paves the way for local students to be inspired like she was and to be able to pursue their dreams."

Barbara and Dorothy lived a relatively simple life yet loved to travel. Together, they spanned the

world numerous times on adventures that took them to the Holy Land, China, Europe, across Russia on the Trans Siberian Railroad, and on a backpacking trip to Namibia and Botswana in Eastern Africa. Dorothy passed away in 1995. Barbara, after retirement from teaching, moved to the Meadow Lakes retirement community in East Windsor, New

Jersey, where she remained active until the time of her passing.

"Neither of our parents went to college, and that made her appreciate even more the education she received through the parochial school system and at Misericordia. Whenever she would come to Pennsylvania, she would always stop and visit the campus," Dr. Curtis added.



BY PAUL KRZYWICKI

# Making the world a little brighter

Teacher education students add a splash of color to special-needs school by painting murals in hallways of historic building

HANOVER TWP., Pa. — Historic school buildings hold many important stories and memories. Walking the halls, you can seemingly retrace the steps of countless youngsters who forged their own identities and futures in the very classrooms where the next generation is finding its way today.

The same can be said of Lyndwood Learning Center, a Luzerne Intermediate Unit (LIU) 18 school for special-needs children that opened in the former Lyndwood Elementary School for the 2014-15 school year. Nestled in a quaint residential neighborhood, the LIU leases the building from



the Hanover Area School District in order to provide expanded services to more children with exceptionalities, according to Linda Kline, principal of the learning center.

Children from kindergarten through eighth grade receive classroom instruction in core subjects, like language arts, mathematics and social studies, while also participating in therapeutic sessions that address behavior and other needs through art and music therapy classes, an adaptive gym and more.

Shuttered since 2011, the school remained somewhat of a blank slate throughout most of the school year as the long, winding hallways with 10-foot high ceilings lacked color and decorations. Seeking to breathe new life into an old building and create an identity all its own, the LIU collaborated with the Teacher Education Department at Misericordia University to reinforce the school-wide philosophy of positive behavior – Be Responsible, Be Respectful and Be Safe – while also adding a splash of color.

“When we walked in, we were overwhelmed by the size of the building; those walls are very, very long,” Stephen Broskoske, Ed.D., associate professor of teacher education and Education Club advisor, acknowledges. “Initially, we hoped to do several murals in the main hall.

Teacher education major Melissa Smith ‘18 of New Tripoli, Pa. pays attention to the finer details as she puts the finishing touches on a large beehive in the hallway of Lyndwood Learning Center.



Misericordia University teacher education majors Shannon McBride ‘16, Old Tappan, N.J., left, and Kate Michael ‘16, Hughesville, Pa., paint grass and a large snail as part of a mural project at Lyndwood Learning Center.

“Once we got started and saw that first bee, the momentum kicked in. We were all so satisfied by it that everyone broke up into little groups and we had several art projects going at one time. When we finished, we had completed murals on all the walls downstairs,” Dr. Broskoske says about the six large murals.

With \$160 and a little ingenuity, the Education Club purchased paint and art supplies, and created their own templates using “old technology” – an overhead projector and pencils, according to Dr. Broskoske.

Teacher Education majors Thea Arico ‘18, Rockaway, New Jersey; Joe Gronski ‘16, Phoenixville; Alison Kane ‘16, Montville, New Jersey; Shannon McBride ‘16, Old Tappan, New Jersey; Kate Michael ‘16, Hughesville; Megan Ostrum ‘18, Dallas; Melissa Smith ‘18, New Tripoli, and Jennifer

Spera ‘18, Harveys Lake, along with Dr. Broskoske and Mrs. Kim Broskoske spent about 10 hours over a late spring semester weekend tracing large, colorful murals featuring rainbows, bees, flowers and entire woodland scenes onto the walls with one goal in mind: Smiles.

It goes without saying that a smile is priceless, but this outcome was even more special. “They liked the murals a lot,” Principal Kline says about the reaction of the 52 students and 28 teachers, administrators and support personnel who spend their school days in Lyndwood. “They stood there in awe. They couldn’t believe how fast the murals were painted. It was a great response from everyone.”

Continued on next page





Teacher education majors Jennifer Spera '18, foreground, Megan Ostrum '18, middle, and Melissa Smith '18 volunteered during a spring weekend to add color and life to the hallways of LIU 18's Lyndwood Learning Center.

## Learning the value of color from page 13

The importance of a smile that lights up the face of a special-needs child cannot be measured in most instances. The outward emotion is obvious and satisfying to those who are witnessing the emotion, but perhaps more important is what that expression signifies. While the Misericordia University students did not get to experience the joy of seeing those expressions firsthand, they understood the importance of their volunteerism all along – especially after receiving thank-you notes from the children who inspired the work.

"I think this is a great thing for the school because the walls are so bare," says Spera,

"The Misericordia spirit gets to be channeled through our students in these kinds of projects. This is where we put hands and feet on our charisms ..."

Stephen Broskoske, Ed.D., associate professor



the secretary of the Education Club, as she paints a brightly colored beehive with flowers. "I'm excited to see what the kids have to say because they have no idea we are doing this. I think it is great to give back to the field we are eventually going to be in."

"It's for the children to brighten up their day in here," adds Gronske, as he adds a dose of color to the woodlands mural. "As a teacher, you want to make the students feel good and happy. It feels good to be doing this. I would do it for any school. I think this is going to make a big difference."

The LIU moved into the Lyndwood Learning Center after being housed at St. Joseph's Oblates in Pittston for several years. The demand for services necessitated the need for additional classroom and therapeutic space. Administrators plan to utilize the second floor of the building next year, which will create additional instructional opportunities for special-needs children. The Education Club has pledged to provide its interior decorating skills next academic year.

"The Misericordia spirit gets to be channeled through our students in these kinds of projects," Dr. Broskoske says, explaining the multi-faceted purpose of service in the greater community. "This is where we put hands and feet on our charisms of Mercy, Service, Justice and Hospitality. We make it happen here."

The collaboration with the LIU also connects Misericordia University teacher education students with field experiences and career placement opportunities, and links the department to different needs in the community.

Misericordia and Luzerne Intermediate Unit representatives, kneeling from left, Kate Michael '16 and Shannon McBride '16, standing, Libby Krokus, LIU 18; Dr. Greg Coons, assistant executive director, LIU 18; Dr. Tony Grice, executive director, LIU 18; Stephen Broskoske, Ed.D., associate professor of teacher education and Education Club advisor, and Alison Kane '16 plan a large woodlands mural on the walls of the Lyndwood Learning Center.

Misericordia University recently purchased an Anatomage Virtual Dissection Table to enhance anatomy education for students majoring in the health and medical science fields. Reviewing the innovative technology in a lab in John J. Passan Hall, from left, are Judith Ellis, manager of corporate, government and foundation relations; Dr. Leamur Kahanov, dean of the College of Health Sciences, and President Thomas J. Botzman, Ph.D.

## ENHANCING ANATOMY EDUCATION VIRTUALLY

The College of Health Sciences at Misericordia University recently purchased the innovative Anatomage Virtual Dissection Table to enhance anatomy education for students majoring in the health and medical science fields at the University.

The Anatomage Table is the most technologically advanced anatomy visualization system for anatomy education available today. Many of the top medical schools, as well as health and medical science colleges and universities in the world, have purchased the technology for the betterment of their students.

"The University's investment in this cutting-edge technology ensures that our students are clinically sound and proficient across the many disciplines of our health and medical science programs," said Leamur Kahanov, Ed.D., A.T.C., L.A.T., dean of the College of Health Sciences. "At Misericordia, we constantly strive to incorporate the most current and proven best practices into our academic curricula, as well as the most current technology."

Likened to an oversized iPad or tablet, the table offers a full-sized,

gross human anatomy that students can view by layers (circulatory, endocrine, skeletal, etc.) or by sections (head, torso, feet) with the simple touch of a finger swipe. For example, a student can isolate the head and look inside a virtual brain to see all the components or view just the skeletal or

circulatory system. They can also select from a file of predetermined ailments, such as an aneurysm, for an up-close view.

Students will find data used by the Anatomage Table are highly accurate since they are derived from real-patient scans or cadavers. It is the only system that can display true life-size human gross anatomy, according to the company. The technology also is not limited to laboratory instruction, as it connects to a projector and enables instructors to demonstrate procedural material and also makes lectures more engaging.

Misericordia offers academic programs in medical imaging, nursing, occupational therapy, physical therapy, physician assistant, sonography and speech-language pathology, as well as pre-professional programs such as pre-med and pre-veterinary.

College of Health Sciences

## ARTS FOR ALL

Culture and history new components of enhanced minor in fine arts

The College of Arts and Sciences at Misericordia University is taking an innovative approach to ensure that the fine arts thrive in classrooms across campus. The college will institute an enhanced fine arts minor in the fall that is designed to expand offerings and attract students from across the entire spectrum of academic disciplines who have an interest in art as it pertains to culture and history.

Developed for students majoring in any of Misericordia's 34 academic programs, such as Government, Law and National Security, psychology and biology, the new fine arts minor will be offered with three concentrations – art history, music and culture, and studio art.

"Misericordia is happy

to enhance offerings in the fine arts that offer challenging options for students," says Russ Pottle, Ph.D., dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. "The Fine Arts Department, under the direction of Elisa Korb, Ph.D., J.D., has developed a minor that is intellectually rigorous on both an artistic and philosophical basis. The hope is to interest as many students as possible with a wide range of unique and intellectually stimulating classes linked to a variety of academic areas."

College of Arts and Sciences



Dr. Pottle



Dr. Korb

See Arts, Page 16



"The structure of the minor is much more interdisciplinary, and patterned on programs more commonly seen at the graduate level," says Ryan Weber, Ph.D., assistant professor of fine arts. "Usually arts programs broaden at the upper academic level ... we have inverted that pyramid and are offering a broad range for undergraduate study. Our new minor is not just for people who want to perform and produce art, but for those who want to study art along with their other major areas of interest."



Dr. Weber

The first of the three concentrations is studio art, which will build on an existing schedule of popular classes.

With class offerings that include *Music and Ecology*, to interest biology and science

majors, *Music of the Mind* for psychology students, and *Sacred Sounds: Music & Religion*, for religious studies enthusiasts, the new Music and Culture concentration will address a variety of topics, including gender studies and how countries identify with music.

The Art History concentration offerings will span the centuries from classical, ancient Egyptian and Medieval art to 19th century art and 20th century fashion.

"Art history, by definition, is very multi-disciplinary, and also allows for courses that relate to philosophy, religion and the social sciences," says Dr. Korb. "Our core is rooted in art history, so we are able to build on that tradition, yet take it forward with numerous new and intriguing class offerings."

The department also is planning a scholarly *Word and Music* conference on April 9, 2016, with the theme, *Bodies of Art: Music, Literature and Disability*. The event is being sponsored by the Soyka Fund for the Humanities.

## INSTRESS CELEBRATES MU'S 90TH WITH REDESIGN

Between the 84 pages of the annual Instress Journal of the Arts lie the prose, poetry and artwork of 58 students, faculty and honored guests.

The Department of English has been publishing Instress as a showcase of talent since December 1966. The publication has been printed in various sizes and styles through the years, but it has remained true to Misericordia's theme of using it as a venue for the "artistic and literary imagination to make possible something," according to Matthew C. Nickel, Ph.D., assistant professor of English and faculty advisor.

The 2015 edition – the 49th overall – though, is special admittedly as it was published with the celebration of Misericordia's 90th anniversary in mind. The subtle changes contained therein mark different philosophies in presentation and style, including the change in reference title. Noted Ernest Hemingway scholar, H.R. Stoneback, who gave a special Master Class, lecture and poetry reading on campus in 2014, also penned the special poem, *Dropping Slow* to mark the occasion.

"We reviewed issues for 20 years and preferred the journal title instead of literary magazine," said Dr. Nickel. "Literary magazine seems too much about image and flash. We wanted to

focus on text with images."

That vision led to the 7-by-9½-inch version with added white space for dramatic page design, text that is uniform in size and body font, along with other added design elements that had Dr. Nickel applauding the publication's staff, especially Leah Santucci '16 who designed the publication.

"I thought she did a nice, quality job," said Dr. Nickel. "It's simple; she kept the colors as close to the image as possible. I was impressed by her juxtaposition of the text and themes therein with photography."

Instress Journal of the Arts is published annually in April. Submissions are due by the end of January in order to be considered for the next edition. To read the digital copy, please log on to [www.misericordia.edu/Instress](http://www.misericordia.edu/Instress). Hard copies of the journal can be obtained from Dr. Nickel by contacting him at [mnickel@misericordia.edu](mailto:mnickel@misericordia.edu).

**Matthew Nickel, Ph.D., assistant professor of English, left, is shown with Instress Outstanding Achievement Award winners Kaleigh Killian '16, poetry award winner; Maia Painter '15, artwork award winner; Leah Santucci '16, designer; Scott Bargisen '18, fiction award winner, and Emily Halbing '15, assistant editor.**

Department  
of English

## INSTILLING A LIFELONG LOVE OF WISDOM

The Living Philosophy Project was established in 2012 to encourage students to ask questions, such as "Who am I?" and "Is there purpose to existence?" It also helps them develop professionally and personally through their own philosophical work,

to be changed meaningfully by their own thinking and intellectual discourse, and to synthesize living and academic questions.

In pursuit of this goal, the LPP hopes to foster in students a lifelong love of wisdom and a desire to share this love with others.

Graduating from baby steps to milestones, the LPP hosted its first Eastern Pennsylvania Philosophical Association (EPPA) Conferences on campus in 2014 and 2015. They brought together professors and students from regional colleges and universities to discuss philosophical research. Keynote speaker Irene J. Klaver, Ph.D., director of the Philosophy of Water Project and professor of philosophy at the University of North Texas, was among the highly respected guests at this year's event. She discussed her research on social-political and cultural dimensions of water, including the role of infrastructural features in raising awareness of watershed functions and urban renewal projects around rivers.

"By hosting the EPPA conference, the Living Philosophy Project is able to fulfill its mission to encourage faculty and students to work together on philosophical research and to illuminate philosophical issues as they arise out of the living world of human affairs and concerns," said Mark Painter, Ph.D., professor of philosophy and founder of the LPP. "As undergraduates, our students now have the opportunity to present alongside professional philosophers from across the region. Living philosophy is just that; philosophy

that is lived and practiced, philosophy that arises from and returns to life.

"Our hope is to help students realize that philosophy is more than just the application of methods or concepts, but a way to engage with life and culture, with art, music, mathematics, science, education, literature, history, commerce, medicine, law and religion," he added.

The LPP has hosted four *Food for Thought* forums – open sessions conceived and designed entirely by students to generate discussion on select topics. Two were organized to recognize UNESCO's World Philosophy Day, and two were held to address with topics related to Earth Day.

The next *Food for Thought* session is Thursday, Nov. 19 from 4:30-7 p.m., in observance of World Philosophy Day. The event is free and open to the public.

In an added effort to engage the entire campus community in philosophical discussion, the LPP began hosting an unscripted radio show on Cougar Radio entitled *Diotima's Roundtable*. Named after an ancient Greek female philosopher, the show offers a discussion on different philosophical topics each week. The LPP is taking the show to video this academic year, and plans to videotape and post shows for viewing on an LPP website.

The LPP also sponsors the Sarah Gill Philosophy Colloquia series, an on-going series in which students present their work on a philosophical topic to the campus community, and the Anime Society, a student run cinema study group that examines the ethical and philosophical issues raised in Japanese animation.

Taking their efforts to a national level, the next major step for the LPP is the creation of Misericordia's first online undergraduate journal in

philosophy. *The Journal of Living Philosophy* will be an open source, undergraduate journal hosted online by Scholarly Exchange at the University of Pittsburgh.

This will be a national journal inviting submissions from students at any college or university in the United States, according to Dr. Painter. All submissions will be blind reviewed and accepted on the basis of their scholarly merit, originality and contribution to the on-going exploration of philosophy. The editorial board will consist of professional philosophers from around



the country along with undergraduate students from Misericordia and other colleges and universities.

"This is a first for Misericordia and we're extremely excited about it," Dr. Painter added. "We are currently in the process of working with the University of Pittsburgh to set up the site and inviting scholars and students to join the editorial board of the journal. We expect to go live online by the end of the fall semester with our first issue."

For more information, please contact Dr. Painter at [mpainter@misericordia.edu](mailto:mpainter@misericordia.edu) or go to the Philosophy Department page at [www.misericordia.edu](http://www.misericordia.edu).





Ashley  
Peachey '18

# an **ARMY** WAY of LIFE

Women with Children  
Program welcomes  
first military veteran  
into the program

Ashley Peachey '18 is an "Army brat," by her own admission.

It's an expression she's earned after living in seven states – Alaska, Kentucky, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas and Virginia – and being stationed in four others – Arizona, Colorado, Missouri and Texas, not including her overseas assignment in Iraq, all before the age of 25.

This transient lifestyle is the norm for career military families and their children. As her father, Lt. Col. Scott Peachey, climbed the ranks and received new assignments, she would follow in tow and re-establish a new homestead. It was also a big reason behind her enlistment in the United States Army after high school.

"My father did have an influence because the Army life is all I did know," Peachey acknowledges about her first career choice. "When I graduated from high school, I didn't have any plans for college so I decided to

go into the Army for the GI Bill."

Peachey achieved the rank of sergeant E-5 after almost five years of service and one six-month tour in an active war zone in Iraq. An imagery analyst, she examined and analyzed satellite images and briefed commanders on the results.

Even though she was born in Nesbitt Memorial Hospital in Kingston, Pennsylvania – a mere seven miles from campus, Peachey calls San Antonio, Texas her hometown. There's little recollection of Kingston during her childhood since the family relocated before she turned one – until she returned to Northeastern Pennsylvania as an undergraduate speech-language pathology student at Misericordia University.

A transfer student from Idaho State University where she majored in communication sciences and disorders, Peachey is a single mother attending college with the assistance of the GI Bill – and the Ruth Matthews Bourger Women with Children Program at Misericordia University. Between a Google search and information on the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association website, she found a long-term home for herself and her three-year-old daughter, Eileen, while she pursues her master's degree and second career.

"The school has been a learning curve because it is a smaller University, but the professors are very, very accomplished here," says Peachey, the first veteran to enroll in the Women with Children program. "It's a privilege to have them teach me. They are so approachable, which is nice. The women in the program have really helped me feel comfortable here. With my dad in Hawaii, he's limited in how much he can support me. It's nice to have that safety net here."

The Women with Children Program provides free housing and support for academically qualified, single mothers and their children. The program operates two homes on the lower campus of Lake Street, and provides subsidized child care and workshops that help the mothers enrolled in the program manage academic and familial responsibilities. Since its inception in 2000, graduates have established careers in nursing, education, communications, occupational



Representatives of the Ruth Matthews Bourger Women with Children Program, first row from left, Ashley Peachey '18, Asia Thompson '18 and April Lennon '19; second row, Felicia Glover '18, Katherine Pohlidal, director, and Sister Jean Messaros, RSM, vice president Mission Integration, pose for a picture in early winter.

therapy, social work, medical imaging, psychology, business administration and speech-language pathology.

By resettling in Northeastern Pennsylvania, Peachey's life has seemingly come full circle. It has enabled her to refocus on a promising future in a career field that is in high demand across the country. In the Army National Guard, she is addressed as Sgt. Peachey by her peers, and most recently was accepted into Officer Candidate School. She will be commissioned as an officer after working and training with the unit one weekend a month for a year.

The regimented lifestyle of the Army, combined with the built-in support system of the Women with Children Program have helped Peachey succeed academically as she earned dean's list honors twice and a 4.0 grade point average after her first academic year at Misericordia. That success has her dreaming about her next potential destination with the military: Walter Reed Hospital, which she calls her "ultimate goal."

"The Army is a part of my life and it will always be a part of my life," Peachey says, explaining why she wants to give back to the military. "Whether I can work with veterans or soldiers and their families, I think I just want to be around that culture."

## QUICK INFO

The Ruth Matthews Bourger Women with Children Program at Misericordia University was established in 2000 to provide housing and support for academically qualified, single mothers and their children at two houses owned by the University. The program – one of only eight of its kind in the country – has prepared graduates for rewarding careers in nursing, education, communications, occupational therapy, social work, medical imaging, psychology, business administration and speech-language pathology.

The program has the capacity for 10 families: 10 single mothers with up to two children each. To date, 51 women have participated in the novel program. Although priority is given to women from Luzerne and Lackawanna counties, students from as far away as Utah have graduated from it.

For more information about the program, please log on to [www.misericordia.edu/wwc](http://www.misericordia.edu/wwc) or call Katherine Pohlidal, director of the program, at (570) 674-6728.



*Women with Children graduate opens business to provide services for autistic adults*

# Reaching Beyond Limits

BY PAUL KRZYWICKI



Amy Roccograndi '11, M.S.W., a graduate of the Ruth Matthews Bourger Women with Children Program at Misericordia University, is co-owner of Reaching Beyond Limits, an adult day program for people with intellectual disabilities and autism spectrum disorder.

EDWARDSVILLE, Pa. – It is a worn-out cliché, but for Amy Roccograndi '11, M.S.W., the third time truly was the charm.

A Lake-Lehman High School graduate and single mother, Roccograndi withdrew from Misericordia University twice before taking one class. The stress of juggling 3 ½ part-time jobs, caring for Camryn, now 7, and managing a household was overwhelming enough without adding her higher education dreams into the equation.

One week before classes began again, she was ready to put her college education on the backburner – until she learned about the Ruth Matthews Bourger Women with Children Program at Misericordia University. “The best thing it enabled me to do was reduce my bills. My bills were minimal, so I was able to work part time,” she says. “That enabled me to go to school and be with my daughter as well.

“Before that, I was working too much and not getting to see my daughter. It

was like living month to month, check to check. I was just getting by.”

A lot has changed since those anxious moments in 2009. The charisms of Mercy, Service, Justice and Hospitality became engrained in Roccograndi, as they have for many MU alumni. The tenets have played a role in the altruistic approach she has taken in her daily life, to the career path she eventually chose, and in the joint business venture she opened with her partners, Robyn Ruckle

and Jackie Tona in the Gateway Shopping Center.

“One of the things that did get me here was Misericordia’s charisms,” she acknowledges. “I feel like Misericordia instilled many of their values into me. I always had those values, but being at Misericordia really made me want to live by them.

“Being in the Women with Children program, we were constantly going over the story of the Sisters of Mercy and the charisms. The sisters had an effect on me thousands of miles away (in comparison to where Catherine McAuley founded the order in Dublin, Ireland in 1831 and where Misericordia University stands today).”

Roccograndi earned a Bachelor of Science degree in psychology with a minor in business management and a certificate in adult mental health intervention from Misericordia, but it was her service work that eventually provided her the additional guidance she needed for a rewarding career. The annual mission trip to Jamaica introduced her to one of the more

vulnerable populations in the world at the Mustard Seed Communities. For the first time, she worked with children who had intellectual disabilities (ID) and were on the autism spectrum.

“It was definitely an eye-opening experience – life changing,” she says, about the same mission trip she met her husband, Andrew Roccograndi '12, who earned his undergraduate degree in biology at MU. “It’s not like I grew up thinking I was going to work with this population. I was 25 before I worked with them. Once I started doing TSS (therapeutic staff support) and working with other individuals I knew I found my place.”

That experience led Roccograndi to her first professional job as a TSS worker at Community Counseling in Kingston before enrolling in the Master of Social Work (M.S.W.) program that Misericordia University and Temple University Harrisburg collaborated on at the Back Mountain campus. She earned her M.S.W. from Temple in the spring, shortly after opening Reaching Beyond Limits in March, an adult

training facility for people ages 18-59 with profound autism and ID.

Their main impetus for investing in the new facility was a special client who was being transitioned out of life-skills programs because he was fast approaching his 21st birthday. That “gap in services,” according to Roccograndi, leaves these adults without programming that reinforces and teaches necessary positive behaviors, fine motor skills and life skills, such as brushing teeth, combing hair, folding clothes and more. Without constant instruction, students who have low cognitive abilities regress and, therefore, place additional pressure on other family members.

“Just knowing him, I wasn’t happy with the options that were out there. I’m working with him all this time,” she says, “and he wakes up on his 21st birthday and he’s got nothing. That’s alarming.”

Reaching Beyond Limits fills the gap when these special needs students are no longer eligible for programming that is provided by school districts and intermediate units. The business’ structured programs take clients into the field, like the Fine Arts Fiesta on Public Square in Wilkes-Barre or the mall to practice social and community skills. On site, they write their name, address and phone number, and learn other skills necessary for everyday life.

“When I needed help the most, Misericordia was there to help me. Once I got that help from Misericordia, I knew I wanted to dedicate my life to those who needed that help or

assistance as well,” Roccograndi, 30, says. “That’s where I feel the autism and ID populations come into play, because I feel they are one of the most vulnerable populations.”

In the meantime, Roccograndi remembers how she got to be a successful business owner, wife and proud mother. The effusive praise she offers for the program is not half-baked as she quickly credits it with enabling her to realize her dream of earning a college education and also giving back to her community.

“Misericordia has my heart, it really does,” she says, as her voice cracks and tears quickly form in her eyes. “I’m very passionate about the



Amy Roccograndi '11 poses for a picture with her daughter, Camryn, and husband, Andrew '12.

Women with Children program and the people who gave to it. It really is the gift that keeps on giving.

“It gave to me and so much to my daughter. It got her talking about college at a very young age.”

## Reaching Beyond Limits

To contact Reaching Beyond Limits, please call (570) 763-5026 or e-mail [info@reachingbeyondlimits.com](mailto:info@reachingbeyondlimits.com) or log on to [www.reachingbeyondlimits.com](http://www.reachingbeyondlimits.com).



## Physical therapy professor leads efforts in Rwanda to expand PT services



# A way of life

BY PAUL KRZYWICKI

People in Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica and Suriname know Maureen Romanow Pascal, P.T., D.P.T., N.C.S., associate professor of physical therapy at Misericordia University, for her level of service to others.

"I definitely get a lot out of doing it, too," Dr. Pascal says about her repeated volunteer efforts internationally and in her own community of Northeastern Pennsylvania. "I think that's the biggest reason why I continue to go back. I feel we are so fortunate here that we have a responsibility to help where we can. For some people, it is easier than others. I am a pretty laid back person, and I am willing to deal with some uncertainty and last minute changes. I find it easy to travel."

That is one of the reasons she answered an e-mail blast seeking volunteers to work with Health Volunteers Overseas, a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit, in the central African country of Rwanda from April 9 to May 24. She volunteered to be the lead teacher, along with one American physical therapist and two co-teachers from Rwanda, for the Leadership Institute for Rwandan Physical Therapists, as part of the Advancement of Rwandan Rehabilitation Services Project. The program, underwritten by a joint grant from USAID and Health Volunteers Overseas, taught advocacy, leadership and clinical skills to 34 Rwandan physiotherapists so they can increase the quality of life for those who have physical challenges and improve the overall health of the recovering nation.

The additional sharing of her time and talent – Dr. Pascal began another

service trip in Guyana on May 31st shortly after returning from Rwanda – also comports well with the long-standing mission and Catholic social teachings of the Sisters of Mercy and Misericordia, according to Sister Jean Messaros, RSM, vice president for Mission Integration.

"Our faculty and students have gone beyond our borders and have given of themselves by engaging in meaningful service to people in different parts of the world," Sister Messaros says, while also referencing the paper, *Our Enduring Concerns*, by Helen Marie

Burns, RSM. The paper speaks to Mercy Higher Education's preferential option of promoting and serving the underserved in society, while also being committed to teaching all students about their social responsibilities to those with less in society. "They have lived and served as examples of who we are: Mercy, Misericordia and Compassionate Heart."



Rwandan physiotherapists from the first cohort pose for a picture after completing one of their classes at the University of Rwanda College of Medicine and Health Sciences in Kigali.

Twenty-one years after civil war and genocide left about 800,000 people dead in a span of 100 days in 1994, Rwandans of all ethnicities continue to rebuild their 10,000-square mile country of some 10.6 million people, according to the Encyclopedia of the Nations. With median per capita income of \$1,538, according to the 2015 Index of Economic Freedom, it is obvious that the nation's economy, infrastructure, health care system and more remain a work in progress.

The main goal of the Leadership Institute for Rwandan Physical Therapists was advocacy, so more people – from political leaders and doctors to insurance executives and common citizens – could understand the vital role physical therapists play in the health care system and how proper therapy can improve quality of life issues for people with serious disabilities or for those who need traditional rehabilitation due to a broken arm or injured muscle, for example.

"I get a lot of satisfaction and joy from being able to share with somebody and be with somebody," says Dr. Pascal, a professor for 15 years at Misericordia. "I always learn a lot from them as well. When I look at a lot of the self-advocacy in Rwanda, I think how there are very few PTs in America who think of doing that type of work."

"I'm always so amazed how some people do so much with so little," she adds.

Two cohorts of Rwandan physiotherapists received training from Dr. Pascal at the University of Rwanda College of Medicine and Health Sciences in Kigali for three weekends of eight-hour instruction on Fridays and Saturdays. During lecture sessions, they discussed leadership, leadership styles, professional goals, professional associations, patient documentation and more. Together, they developed 13 projects that will illustrate the need and build the case for more therapists in community clinics and hospitals, and build awareness of physiotherapy services in the general community, especially for families with handicapped children.

"Therapists who were identified as leaders in their field were brought

together for training in management styles and ways in which the profession can move forward," says Linda James, project director for the Advancement of Rwandan Rehabilitation Services Project through Health Volunteers Overseas. "Together, they brainstormed ideas for projects to address needs within Rwanda and set about developing proposals for the projects."

Projects include a campaign to increase physical activity among the Rwandan population to reduce hypertension, diabetes, heart disease and obesity, a program for inclusive education for students with disabilities, the development of a website as a resource tool for health care providers and the general public, and public awareness campaigns. The Rwandan government employs most of the therapists in a country with a therapist-patient ratio of 1-to-50,000, according to Dr. Pascal.

"It was a great chance for them (the Rwandan physiotherapists) to share information with each other," says Dr. Pascal, who noted the difficulty people have traversing the country due to its mountainous nature and poor transportation network. "The university (of Rwanda) made a strong commitment to support the projects. They are going to get a lot of support from the university. That is going to be their first line of help."

During the week, Dr. Pascal conducted clinical visits to Rutongo, Kinihira, Nyamata and Kiziguro hospitals and about 16 other facilities where she met with department heads or entire physical therapy departments to discuss how they utilize their undersized staffs and, in turn, teach them how to advocate for additional personnel and equipment.

At the hospitals, it was apparent how far the national health care system has to go before it can properly serve the public and its many needs, according to Dr. Pascal. Kinihira Hospital, for example, virtually was inaccessible to anyone with a physical disability or without an all-terrain vehicle. Perched atop a mountainside, the relatively new



Dr. Pascal



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# Gaining Global Health PERSPECTIVES

Misericordia and Wilkes collaborate on a community health program in Tanzania

BY PAUL KRZYWICKI

Cynthia Glawe Mailloux, Ph.D., R.N., C.N.E., professor and chairperson of the Department of Nursing at Misericordia University, will be the first to admit she is very pragmatic when it comes to grasping and discerning the complexities of global health care.

Her theory is simple in as much as it is altruistic, as she believes in having students experience health from a global perspective as a means for them to develop a perspective on the disparities that exist in the world today. That's one of the reasons she engaged with students in an academic study abroad program in community health with Wilkes University.

"I think it is important for the students to understand the globalization of health care and to see how and why the focus on the

Millennium Development Goals is so important in developing countries," says Dr. Mailloux, who has also participated in a service trip to Guyana. "These types of programs are a great learning experience for the students and it helps them to achieve an appreciation and



Dr. Mailloux



Dr. Winkler

compassion for individuals globally."

The Millennium Development Goals and Beyond 2015 program was adopted by the United Nations in agreement with countries around the world. It identified eight goals that

range from halving extreme poverty to stopping the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Four students and two faculty members from the universities participated in the three-credit course, *Global Engagement in Tanzania*, from May 22 to June 7 in Karagwe, Tanzania. The community-based learning opportunity engaged them in service and the culture of Africa, while also enabling them to participate in community health initiatives.

"Collaboration in global learning initiatives is extremely important," says Linda Winkler, Ph.D., M.P.H., professor of anthropology at Wilkes who founded the program in Tanzania in 2002. "When two institutions work together to create a multidisciplinary team, we learn from each other as well as pool our resources and our expertise, thereby offering our students and participants a rich mosaic of experience and opportunities."

"It is very important for professionals like Dr. Pascal to share their time and knowledge with their colleagues abroad," adds James, who also participated in the institute. "So many professionals are working in isolated regions where they may be the only health care provider for miles. Contact with professionals from the United States allows them to continue to develop and improve their skills in patient care and it provides them with the professional collaboration that is so important to maintain their interest and excitement in their field."

## Blog

Maureen Romanow Pascal, P.T., D.P.T., N.C.S., associate professor of physical therapy at Misericordia University, blogged about her experiences in Rwanda. Please log on to <http://mpascalmu.tumblr.com> to read more about her experiences.

Students participate in intense OT immersion during mission to Jamaica; unique collaboration to include other universities in future

# Planting the seeds of GLOBAL CONCERN



BY MARIANNE TUCKER PUHALLA

All you have to do is ask, and occupational therapy (OT) Professor Joseph Cipriani, Ed.D., O.T.R./L., will talk at length about a first-of-its-kind OT collaboration in Jamaica, and how far beyond his expectations students went during a specially designed service-learning trip in May.



Students Maria Weidemoyer '16 and Amanda Casem '16, left, introduce a Jamaican child to the sensory stimulation mat. Deirdre Stevens '17, center, shares a hug and smiles with a girl during a visit to Jerusalem!, a Mustard Seed home in Spanish Town, Jamaica. Through the simple gesture of holding hands, Mary Boyle '17 makes a connection with a wheelchair-bound child at my Father's House in Kingston, Jamaica.

It was not a typical mission trip. Upper-level OT students had to apply and be accepted into a three-credit class that Dr. Cipriani designed specifically around the one-week trip. Most importantly, Dr. Cipriani did a pre-assessment visit to the region early in the semester and made contact with caregivers at the Mustard Seed Communities, an organization that operates homes for severely disabled children and adults across Jamaica and around the world.

"What made this trip different was we took the opportunity to ask the caregivers in Jamaica what we could

do to help, and developed plans of action to address particular issues involving specific residents and groups of residents even before we left," says Dr. Cipriani. "It was very collaborative, and designed to address long-term needs and provide training based on our students' clinical and theoretical knowledge."

From a pool of 25 applicants, the students selected included John Ignatovich '15, Amanda Casem '16, Kristi Cianfichi '16, Jamie Opela '16,



Maria Weidemoyer '16, Kerrie Hall '17, Deirdre Stevens '17 and Mary Boyle '17. Assistant Professor Jennifer Dessoie, O.T.D.,

O.T.R./L., accompanied the group as a specialist in pediatric OT.

While in class, the students studied Jamaica, examining among other things, the culture, dialects, family structure and health care needs of the country, where there are only 12 certified OTs to provide services to 3 million residents.

The students spent time during the later weeks designing and creating equipment and therapy aids to take with them based on Dr. Cipriani's observations. One in particular, a sensory stimulation mat created by Casem and Cianfichi, was designed to help severely

disabled children with limited movement feel sensations – such as touching a rope and seeing themselves in a mirror. Weidemoyer created a V-shaped sensory box to help give children access to sensory stimulation while being securely supported by staff in an upright position.

Upon arriving in Jamaica, the students experienced an intensive interaction with therapy assistants and the large number of severely disabled children that are cared for in the Mustard Seed homes. The learning was eye opening, as it offered unparalleled clinical experiences and planted in them the seeds of how they can help address global health care needs, one patient at a time.

"This experience showed our students that there is more to OT than new-century equipment," says Dr. Dessoie. "These children are severely disabled and have no iPads or fancy wheelchairs – what they need is help with feeding and the other very basic skills of daily life. Our students needed to go back to the fundamentals of basic therapy and be creative in their approach."

The students went beyond expectations in accepting the challenge. "Working at the Mustard Seed Communities was such an incredible experience," says Casem. "Not only did we work with some amazing kids, but we presented an in-service for the staff, educated them on some therapeutic techniques, and brought and made some equipment that they don't have access to. As the first of hopefully many annual trips of our OT department to Mustard Seed, I believe we got the ball rolling to really

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# ALUMNI NEWS

For more information about alumni events and news, visit the MU website: [misericordia.edu/alumni](http://misericordia.edu/alumni)



Mary Ellen Gulotti '87

Hello, my name is Mary Ellen Gulotti '87. This is my second term as president of your Alumni Board. I am honored to return. As your board president, I am on campus a few times a year. Each time I drive through the arch on Lake Street, I still have that same feeling of wonder as I did when I first drove through as a first-year student. Numerous changes have occurred since that time, but the students of today are the same caring and enthusiastic individuals as the students in the 80's. They wear the charisms on their sleeves.

I am proposing three challenges to alumni. The first is to come back to campus. Call and arrange a guided tour. To those of you who have not been on campus for the last 10 to 15 years or more, be prepared to be surprised. If you do not take a tour, come back to campus for a tailgate and football game. Homecoming is always bursting with excitement.

The second challenge goes out to all Alumni to make a gift to the Misericordia Fund (formerly the Annual Fund) or to a scholarship fund. Many of today's students, like many of you, are scholarship recipients. As you well know, donations to scholarships help keep our students in school. For example, the Joan Krause Emergency Fund helps a student or students who encounter some type of financial emergency. This fund may assist a student with books, housing or any form of financial emergency.

The third challenge is to serve as an Alumni volunteer at one or even several events. Many opportunities are available. You can serve as a Commencement marshal, attend a college fair in your area or serve pizza during finals at our Alumni Pie. You are our ambassadors.

Please contact me via CougarConnect or Facebook if there is anything I can do for you while I am serving the next three years.

Misericordia Proud,

Mary Ellen Gulotti

## CLASS NOTES

Stay in touch with friends and classmates by posting updates about your career, family and other noteworthy accomplishments on [cougarconnect.misericordia.edu](http://cougarconnect.misericordia.edu) or [facebook.com/MisericordiaAlum](https://www.facebook.com/MisericordiaAlum). Please submit *Class Notes* to [alumni@misericordia.edu](mailto:alumni@misericordia.edu).

### 1964

**Sondra Begliomini Charney '64** and her husband, Patrick, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 29, 2014. Sondra is retired after 24 years of teaching in the former St. Mary's Assumption School, Pittston, Pennsylvania. They are the proud parents of three children and have 10 grandchildren and two step-grandchildren.

**Marianne Wilpizewski Strong '64** has had her 42nd short story published in the June 2015 issue of The Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine. *The Breaker* is set at what was the last standing coal-processing building in Ashley, Pennsylvania. In the story, a ghost-like figure haunts the breaker and provides the clue for solving the decades-old murder of a foreman who was hated by the breaker boys for his cruelty.

### 1968

**Dr. Susan F. Sordoni, M.D., '68** was elected to The Commonwealth Medical College Board of Trustees. "It is an honor and an exceptional opportunity to serve as a trustee," she said. "It is important to realize the value of this institution's presence in our region." Dr. Sordoni earned a Bachelor of Science degree in biology.

**Dr. Maureen Louise Boshier, F.A.C.H.E., R.N., '68** was presented the President's Award by Excelsior College, Albany, New York, in July for her work as editor-in-chief of Nursing in the 21st Century: A Mobile Journal (N21). She was also inducted into Delta Sigma, the honor society for public health.

### 1969

**Mary Marzen Sampson '69**, recently retired from the Evesham Township School District after 40 years as a string teacher and orchestra director in the public schools of Pennsylvania and New Jersey. She will continue her position as the organist/choirmaster of Trinity Church, Oxford in Philadelphia.

#### Alumni Award nominations

Every year the MU Alumni Association honors outstanding individuals whose career accomplishments, professional achievements and volunteer services have contributed to the success and reputation of Misericordia University. If you or a fellow graduate is worthy of such an award, please log on to [CougarConnect.misericordia.edu/alumniawards](http://CougarConnect.misericordia.edu/alumniawards), and fill out the online nomination form.

Help recognize Misericordia's best by making a nomination today! For more information, please contact the Alumni, Community and Donor Relations Office by calling (570) 674-6764 or via e-mail at [alumni@misericordia.edu](mailto:alumni@misericordia.edu).

### 1971

**Dr. Maryanne Stevens, RSM, Ph.D., '71** received the Chief Executive Leadership Award at the Council of Advancement and Support of Education District VI Conference. Dr. Stevens has been president of the College of Saint Mary, Omaha, Nebraska since 1996. She earned her Bachelor of Science in mathematics.

### 1977

**Attorney Judith G. Price, Esq., '77** of Dougherty, Leventhal, and Price, LLP was the honoree at the 15th annual Black and Blue Ball that benefits the Muscular Dystrophy Association. "I'm so honored to be named," she said. "It's overwhelming and humbling to be chosen by such an outstanding organization." The award recognizes an individual connected with MDA's mission and supports the community at-large, according to the MDA. Attorney Price earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in history.

### 1985

**Mrs. Sue Kline Kluger '85** was one of four individuals to receive the Donchess Distinguished Service Award from

Wyoming Seminary. The award is the highest honor bestowed by the Board of Trustees associated with the school. It expresses appreciation for the life and example, sacrifices and devotion of those who are honored.

**Paula Smolko '85** and David G. West chose Blue Lagoon Island for their Aug. 3, 2013 wedding. Paula is a registered medical technologist in the laboratory at Regional Hospital of Scranton, Pennsylvania. The couple, who took a wedding trip to Paradise Island, Bahamas, resides in Peckville.

### 1986

**Edward Lyons '86** has been named senior vice president of Coverys Speciality, a new excess and surplus lines underwriting company of Coverly in Boston, Mass. He previously spent 12 years at Arch Insurance where he was the assistant vice president of underwriting in health care facilities and programs area. He earned a Bachelor of Science in business administration.

### 1988

**Elaine Lee '88** was named posthumously as Woman of the Year for 2015 by the Tunkhannock Business and Professional Women. She was the executive director of Interfaith Friends in Tunkhannock. At MU, she earned a Bachelor of Science in social work.

### 1993

**Catherine Poillon Lovecchio '93, R.N., Ph.D.**, received the CASE Professor of the Year for outstanding performance as a faculty member by the University of Scranton, Scranton, Pennsylvania.



Misericordia University honored the academic accomplishments of four valedictorians for the Class of 2015 at the University's 89th annual Commencement on May 16. The honorees, first row from left, are Nicole Marie Smith '15, Farmingdale, N.J., and Jillian Marie Balberchak '15, West Pittston, Pa.; second row, Elisabeth Anne Karmondy '15, Colorado Springs, Colo., and Sarah Margaret Nelson '15, Morris Plains, N.J.

### 2001

**Carol Weidlich Lipperini '01** and her husband, Dan, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 22, 2014. Carol recently retired as the director of facilities management from Maternal and Family Health Services, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, after 33 years of service.

### 2002

**Maria Waselus Davenport '02**, son, Matthew, wears his MU bib with pride. [Register your child today for the Legacy Program at cougarconnect.misericordia.edu/legacy](http://cougarconnect.misericordia.edu/legacy).



### 2003

**Jessica Ann Kaminski '03** and Matthew Allen Funk were united in the sacrament of

#### Misericordia Proud!

Misericordia Proud! is an alumni referral program that affords the applicant a waiver of the standard \$25 application fee and a one-time \$500 alumni grant that will be applied to first-semester tuition. For more information and a referral card, please log on to [misericordia.edu/MUProud](http://misericordia.edu/MUProud).

marriage on July 19, 2014. Jessica is employed as a reading intervention specialist by the Crestwood School District. Following a honeymoon to the Bahamas and Orlando, Florida, the couple resides in Larksville, Pennsylvania, with their puppy, Hershey.

### 2004

**Michelle Lynn Goff '04** and her husband, Carter Alan Kopczynskie, were united in marriage on Sept. 19, 2014. Michelle is employed by Mid-Atlantic Youth Services as a teacher.

**Matt Rogers '04**, a Kingston, Pennsylvania, native, had his dream of being a songwriter come true. He co-wrote country singer Randy Houser's new single, *We Went*. The song is skyrocketing to the top of the charts and radio play lists. Living in Nashville, Tennessee, for almost 10 years, he has worked a variety of jobs while pursuing his love of music. He is currently employed by ole Music, a giant in the music industry. Rogers also has had other songs he wrote or co-wrote appear on various country artists' albums.

**Rachel Shutt '08** and **Scott Napkori '04** were united in marriage on June 21, 2014. Rachel is employed by Allied Skilled

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Nursing Center, Scranton, Pennsylvania, and Scott is employed by the Wilkes-Barre Area School District at GAR High School as a history teacher. The couple cruised to Bermuda in August for their honeymoon. They reside in Mountain Top.

**Tiffany Wiernusz '04** has been appointed coordinator of career development for the Insalaco Center for Career Development at Misericordia. She earned a Bachelor of Science in business administration with a concentration in management.

## 2005

**Christina Stango Hutchins**

**'05** and her husband, Richard, welcomed twin boys, Benjamin Michael and Oliver Daniel, on Dec. 23, 2014 in Brooklyn, New York.



**Leann Ickes '05** was named the Member of Engagement Supervisor at the Wilkes-Barre Family YMCA, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania.

## 2006

**Nick Williams '06** and his wife, Susan, welcomed a daughter on Oct. 6, 2014.

**Heather Bednarski Soska '06** and **Matt Soska '06** welcomed their daughter, Lucia Rose, on Dec. 11, 2014.

**Maria Galante '06** welcomed her daughter, Daphne, on Nov. 14, 2014.

**Jamie Chernowsky Karmon '06** welcomed her son, Parker Gabriel Wiepa, on Dec. 14, 2014.

**Kira Weaver '06** and Sean Crawford were united in marriage on the beach of the

Grand Hotel in Cape May, New Jersey, on July 12, 2014. Kira has been accepted for residency in emergency medicine at the Lehigh Valley Hospital Network in Allentown, Pennsylvania, and is also a paramedic with the Valley Regional Fire and Rescue Co. Following a reception at the Grand Hotel ballroom, the couple honeymooned in Stone Harbor, New Jersey. They now reside in Drums, Pennsylvania.

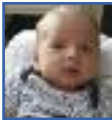
**Lindsey M. Riddell '06** has been named community outreach coordinator at Misericordia. She earned her bachelor's degree in psychology with certificates in addiction's counseling and child welfare services.

## 2007



**Krystal Bernardyn '07** and Brian Finneran were married in a double ring ceremony on April 12, 2014. Krystal is employed at the Lehigh Valley Hospital in Hazleton, Pennsylvania. The couple honeymooned in the Riviera Maya, Mexico, and now reside in Mahanoy City.

**Matt Hornak '07** and his wife, **Erica '09**, welcomed their son, Monroe, on Feb. 28, 2015. He joins big brother, Logan.



**Leslie Kelly '07** married Tom Reid on May 2, 2015.

**Joelle Rhayem '07** and Jonathan Lauchner were married May 18, 2013. The couple honeymooned in Roatan, Honduras.

**Jaime Runnels Heintzelman '07** was promoted by Altitude Marketing to production and operations manager

after previously serving as manager of public relations and social media. She is responsible for a variety of human resources, project management and accounting operations. Heintzelman received a Bachelor of Arts in communications.

## 2008

**Natalie Bedio '08** and Christopher Allebach were married Sept. 28, 2014 at Ironstone Ranch, Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania. The couple honeymooned on the islands of Maui and Kauai.

**Kelly Dougherty Feinauer**

**'08** and her husband, Justin Feinauer, welcomed their son, Wyatt Charles Feinauer, on Aug. 1, 2014.



**Mary Jo Seamon Kluger '08** and her husband, Timothy, welcomed their son, Samuel, on March 1, 2013.

**Jacob Garner '08** and his wife, Jessica, welcomed their son, Samuel Atticus Garner, on July 13, 2014.



**Kaitlyn Mary Jones '08** and Jesse Van Orden were married Aug. 22, 2014. Kaitlyn is employed in the CAT scan department by Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center, Plains Township, Pennsylvania. The couple honeymooned in St. Lucia and Inner Harbor, Maryland. They reside in Springbrook Twp.

**Alison Rose Odell '08** and Donald David Hudzinski, Jr. were married Aug. 6, 2014. Alison is employed as a high school learning support teacher by Pleasant Valley School District. The couple honeymooned in Walt Disney World, Florida. They reside in Dupont, Pennsylvania, with their dog, Darby.

**Erik X. Raj '08** has earned his Ph.D. in communication sciences and disorders from Wayne State University, a top-ranked research institution in Detroit, Michigan.

## 2009

**Tashara Teart Sheperis '09** and her husband, Christopher, welcomed their daughter, Delaney, on Aug. 8, 2014.

**Danielle Evans '09** and Frank Dominick were married May 25, 2014.

**1941**  
**Aurelia E. Gebler "Geb" Cunningham**  
January 10, 2015

**Elizabeth Keller Farrell**  
February 17, 2015

**1942**  
**Sister Mercylle Grzeszkiewicz, OSB**  
March 20, 2015

**1943**  
**Mary Ellen Schiff Hagen**  
January 25, 2015

**Helen Marie Marr**  
March 11, 2015

**1945**  
**Jean Buckley Reilly**  
February 15, 2015

**Helen Kelly Gelslechter**  
May 18, 2015

**1946**  
**Joan Forgash Fladd**  
January 5, 2015

**Elizabeth "Bettie" Sullivan**  
February 18, 2015

**Sister Jo Marie Kaczanowski, RSM**  
April 18, 2015

**1947**  
**Loretta Petro Jeker**  
April 15, 2014

**1949**  
**Elizabeth McAndrew Kearns**  
January 24, 2015

**Loretta Patak Hartford**  
May 3, 2015

**Mary Kozel Panaway**  
June 2, 2015

**1950**  
**Patricia Mae Wilson**  
March 24, 2014

**Elizabeth Guiney Fenton**  
June 20, 2014

**1951**  
**Patricia Donlin Arbour**  
February 28, 2015

**1953**  
**Anne M. Templeton**  
March 19, 2015

**1956**  
**Mary Louise Davis Mital**  
May 13, 2015

**Sister Joachim Ryan, RSM**  
April 10, 2015

**1958**  
**Ann Downs**  
January 21, 2015

**Sister Mary Theresa Glynn, RSM**  
March 5, 2015  
**Genevieve "Jean" Michalek**  
April 16, 2015

**1959**  
**Sister Mary Katrien Ward, RSM**  
March 16, 2015

**1960**  
**Sister Mary Davida Morgan, RSM**  
February 15, 2015

**Mary Jane Stull**  
May 22, 2015

**1965**  
**Margaret Quinn McGarry**  
April 29, 2014

**Sister Ruth Marie Johnson, RSM**  
June 14, 2015

**1968**  
**Jeanne A. Fitzgerald Funke**  
April 10, 2015

**1969**  
**Ellen Dudascik Chopyak**  
March 8, 2015

**Joan Ann Shea**  
May 22, 2015

**1970**  
**Ann P. Michaels**  
March 9, 2015

**1973**  
**Esther Ellen Flannery**  
March 24, 2015

**1974**  
**Bonita Piegari Herrmann**  
April 8, 2015

**1976**  
**Joseph J. Beeunas**  
May 13, 2015

**1988**  
**Janet Bibler Williams**  
March 13, 2015

**1991**  
**Lisa Beigle DeAngelis**  
February 18, 2015

**2010**  
**Susan M. Manning Kubrick**  
April 1, 2015

**Angela Kasa '09** and **James Salitis, Jr. '04** welcomed their son on March 30, 2015.

## 2010



**Rachel Selert Witner '10** and her husband, Jeremy, welcomed their daughter, Cassidy Rose, on Sept. 12, 2014. Cassidy joins big brother, Kaden.

**Katherine Lucenti '10** and John Pierson were married June 28, 2014.

**Bethany Daron '10** and Jesse Francis were united in marriage on July 5, 2014. Bethany is employed by Geisinger Health System as a registered diagnostic medical sonographer. Following the wedding, the couple honeymooned in Jamaica. They reside in Dallas, Pennsylvania.

**Deanna Lombardi '10** and **Albert Lyons III '10** welcomed a daughter on April 20, 2015.

**Kerri McKeown '10** and her husband, Mark, welcomed their son on April 15, 2015.

**Joseph G. Donahue '10** was named corporate relations coordinator for the Insalaco Center for Career Development at Misericordia. He earned his MBA from MU.

## 2011

**Stevie Lynn Dorbad '11** and Samuel Calabrese were united in marriage on Aug. 16, 2014. Stevie is employed as a physical therapist by PRO Rehabilitation. The couple honeymooned in Ocean City, Maryland.

**Greg Vossler '11** was named the North Eastern Athletic Conference (NEAC) Women's Swimming Coach of the Year. In his second season at Cedar Crest College, he led the NCAA Division II school to a dual record of 5-5 and a third-place finish at the NEAC Championships.

## 2012

**Jeffrey Brayton Kreidler '12** and Desiree Marie Boris were married on Oct. 26, 2013.

**Brian Tupper '12** and Chelsey Coslett were united in holy matrimony on Oct. 11, 2014. Brian is employed as a classification analyst by Guard Insurance Group, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. The couple honeymooned in Playa del Carmen, Mexico. They reside in Wilkes-Barre.

**Kathleen Mangan Fey '12** was named executive director of the Pennsylvania Credit Union Foundation. She holds a

Bachelor of Science in business administration.

## 2013

**Dayna Richter '13** and Theodore Ehlers were married Jan. 10, 2015.



**James Sapak Jr. '13** and his wife, Paula, welcomed their son, Nolan, on Nov. 16, 2014. He joins big brother, Warren.

**Megan Kryger '13** and Nicholas Morrissey welcomed their daughter on Jan. 20, 2015. Kristin Eden '13 and her husband, Jeremy, welcomed twin girls, Paxton and Piper, on Feb. 25, 2015.

**Ethan Eichhorst '13** was named head coach of the Mahanoy Area boys' basketball team. At MU, he was the Freedom Conference Player of the Year in 2011-12 and was named d3hoops.com All-Region, NABC All-District, D-III News All-American, ECAC South All-Star, and played in Reese's D-III national All-Star game. He finished with 1,476 career points and sixth in career rebounds. Eichhorst earned his M.S. in occupational therapy and is the clinical coordinator for Lehigh Valley Health Network in Coaldale, Pennsylvania.



**50 Years:** The Class of 1964 celebrated their golden anniversary at 2014's Alumni Weekend festivities.



# 2015 SPRING COMMENCEMENT

May 16

More Spring Commencement memories can be found at [Bit.ly/mugradmay15](http://Bit.ly/mugradmay15) and [Bit.ly/muundergradmay15](http://Bit.ly/muundergradmay15)



**Maintain your Misericordia friendships for a lifetime by registering on CougarConnect**

For more information, contact the Office of Alumni Relations at: [alumni@misericordia.edu](mailto:alumni@misericordia.edu) or visit: [cougarconnect.misericordia.edu](http://cougarconnect.misericordia.edu)

**Alumni Volunteer Program:** Contact Alumni Relations at (570) 674-6768 to be an admissions, alumni/development or career services volunteer.



# 2015 ALUMNI WEEKEND

May 29-31



More MU Alumni Weekend Memories can be found at <http://bit.ly/muaw15>



# MU PRESENTS INAUGURAL HONORARY ALUMNA AWARD

BY MARIANNE TUCKER PUHALLA

Andrea Payne

HONORARY ALUMNA AWARD

Misericordia University has been such an important thread in the life of Andrea Payne that she often has held family celebrations on campus. Her affiliation runs deep. The wife of the late David M. Payne, professor emeritus and former dean of admissions, Mrs. Payne is proud to say that their five children grew up on campus, and all graduated from Misericordia: Allison Payne '83; David M. Payne, Jr., '85, Ellen McLaughlin '86, Ed.D., O.T.R./L.; Susan Payne '87; Catherine Payne '88. Dr. McLaughlin serves as a valued faculty member and director of the Occupational Therapy doctoral program. In 2006, son David presented the Academic Convocation address and received an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree.

The MU connection already continues well into the next generation – two of the Payne's eight grandchildren attend or have attended Misericordia in the speech-language pathology program, Brianna McLaughlin '12 and Sarah Payne '18.

She may have been the only one surprised when the Misericordia University Alumni Association decided to honor Mrs. Payne with its inaugural Honorary Alumna Award. The award honors individuals who are not graduates of Misericordia University yet have made significant contributions toward its welfare, reputation or prestige and have shown lifelong devotion and demonstrated loyalty. The award is given only when the Alumni Association wishes to honor an exceptional person.

Mary Ellen Gullotti '87, incoming president of the Alumni Association Board of Directors, presented Mrs. Payne with a medallion during Misericordia's 89th Commencement graduate degree ceremony on May 16.

Mrs. Payne's history began at Misericordia in 1967 when David joined the Department of English faculty. With five children under the age of seven in tow, she remembers being warmly welcomed by the Sisters of Mercy as soon as they arrived on campus. When the Agnes Flood devastated their Wilkes-Barre home in 1972, the college's president, Sister Miriam Teresa O'Donnell, RSM, offered them a house to live in on Lake Street. Mrs. Payne says she was overwhelmed by this kindness and knew then that Misericordia would always be home.

As Professor Payne moved through the ranks as chair of the Department of English, chair of the humanities division, director of admissions, and dean of admissions and financial aid, the students on the intimate campus knew the family well and the Payne household became the place where

students felt welcome and would go to visit, ask advice, babysit the children or simply "help out or hang out."

A stalwart supporter of the Mercy community, she and her husband worked closely with Monsignor John Bendik, then-campus chaplain, to establish pre-Cana classes for the Diocese of Scranton, which were held on campus for several years. Mrs. Payne participated in the plans for the reorganization of the Mercy Associates Program in 1989-90 and became one of its first members.

Working with the Sisters of Mercy, she helped organize the first Mothers on a Mission (M.O.M.) Walk at the Catherine McAuley House in the early 1990s and encouraged support of the Adopt-a-Family Program. In



Members of the Payne family gathered to celebrate when Andrea Payne was presented with the inaugural Honorary Alumna Award by the Misericordia University Alumni Association. Posing for a family photo, first row from left, are Brianna McLaughlin '12, Andrea Payne, Susan Payne '87; and Catherine Payne '88; second row, Ellen McLaughlin '86, Ed.D., O.T.R./L., and David M. Payne, Jr., '85.

2012, Mrs. Payne was named the Woman of the Year by the Sisters of Mercy and honored at their annual Mercy Golf Classic, which benefits the Catherine McAuley Center and its ministries.

Professor and Mrs. Payne showed their gratitude toward Misericordia by establishing a scholarship in 1982 in the name of her parents, Walter and Catherine Janasie. A second scholarship in Professor Payne's memory was established after his death in 2004, recognizing his 37 years of service to Misericordia, and his love for the school and its students.

## EMPOWERING CHILDREN

Alumna gives juvenile victims a voice and an advocate as a forensic interviewer

Shannon Joyce '14

BY CHARLOTTE JACOBSON  
CITIZENS' VOICE  
STAFF WRITER

WILKES-BARRE, Pa. – Choosing a career path was easy for Avoca native Shannon Joyce '14 – she always wanted to help children.

But as a forensic interviewer at the Luzerne County Child Advocacy Center, she said she does more than help them. She empowers them.

Child advocacy centers across the nation see an average of 300 children each per year, including victims of sexual or physical abuse, and sometimes both. There are currently over 800 centers nationwide, with the mission of having a center in every county. The primary goal for the centers is to create an easier process for abused children to speak about their abuse.

Before these facilities existed, children reporting abuse could end up telling their story to multiple people leading up to trial, including police and prosecutors, Joyce said. During this extensive process, many cases would fall through because the victims would tire of reliving the experience.

"When children used to report that abuse was happening, whether it be physical, sexual, any type of abuse ... it could be up to 10 people that child would have to tell their story to, over and over and over again," said Joyce. "My director says it the best: imagine the most traumatic thing that has ever happened to you and having to talk about it again and again. You get worn out. You don't want to do it anymore."

Joyce, 23, attended Misericordia University with the intention of becoming a teacher. An experience there set her on a different course.

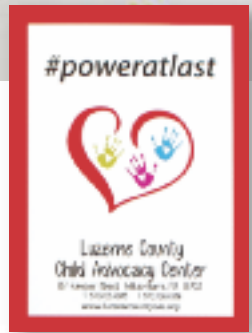
When Tropical Storm Lee hit Northeast Pennsylvania in 2011 and the area was flooded, the University housed displaced families for a night. Joyce was among the student volunteers that helped to make their stay more comfortable by taking care of pets, playing games with children and being a listening ear for the families.

Continued on page 34

Shannon Joyce '14

GOVERNMENT, LAW  
AND NATIONAL  
SECURITY





## EMPOWERING CHILDREN

Continued from page 33

"We got to hang out with the kids, we got to hang out with the families and help them go through the struggle of being evacuated," Joyce said. "I loved it."

After the flood, she changed her major to Government, Law and National Security with the idea of working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Due to lack of local jobs with this organization, she took the job at the center.

As a forensic interviewer, Joyce said she is forced to accept that although she cannot fix every problem, she is helping. She said it is satisfying seeing abusive people being put behind bars and knowing that she had a little part in moving the case against them forward.

## Put at ease

The National Child Advocacy Center, located in Huntsville, Alabama, first came to fruition in 1985 under former district attorney Robert Cramer. His idea was to create an organization to facilitate a more effective system to help child abuse victims, according to the center's website.

In 2010, Geisinger transformed a large, old home on Hanover Street in Wilkes-Barre into the county's Child Advocacy Center, with office space and a medical examination room. Its interior is adorned with dark wood paneling and an ornate stained-glass window near the staircase, as well as many colorfully painted rooms scattered with children's toys. Joyce said because the center is much like a

home, children and their families are immediately put at ease.

At the facility, Joyce is the only person in the room with the victim. The interview is broadcast in a separate room for law enforcement, representatives from the district attorney's office, Children and Youth employees and other people the child may view as intimidating.

Joyce spent three months of observational training at child advocacy centers in Luzerne, Montgomery and Bradford counties, as well as at the University of Scranton, Scranton, Pennsylvania, before working as a forensic interviewer full-time. She ended her training with a week at the National Child Advocacy Center in September (2014).

Through observational training, Joyce was able to learn different methods of speaking with, rather than at, children. She said each forensic interviewer she observed had his or her own way of getting to the core of the issues.

"It's all about child empowerment in that room," Joyce said. "It's their room."

Much of her training surrounded the concept of building a rapport with the

“But for every kid that does come through, there’s another dozen kids that won’t speak up or that are too afraid to speak up.”

—Shannon Joyce '14

children and coaxing them into telling their story, without forcing the information out.

Joyce's training in Alabama was more systematic, she said. Interviewers there use a "funneling" method to ask the children questions about their lives, who they like to hang out with, who they do not like to hang out with. This line of questioning brings up people and topics that children may want to avoid, giving the interviewer an idea of who hurt the child. Joyce said she gives children room to avoid the topic by talking about something else, but will eventually come back to the topic and press further.

In Alabama, she worked with a volunteer child to have her first try at interviewing in order to better prepare for the job.

"It's hard to hear a five-year-old tell you that somebody did something horrific to their

body," Joyce said. "But they're strong enough to tell you what happened. Training really helped ... not to desensitize yourself, but you have to understand you're doing your job to help this child."

Joyce said her degree in Government, Law and National Security helped her have a better understanding of the criminal justice system, and being a forensic interviewer has allowed her to use this knowledge in a hands-on environment.

She has interviewed more than 175 children since she began working at the center in October.

"You can see the difference between when they walk in and when they leave," Joyce said. "It's like a weight has been lifted off their shoulders."

## Neutral facility

Luzerne County District Attorney Stefanie Salavantis said child advocacy centers in the state used to be run through the district attorney's office. The Luzerne County center became a nonprofit organization to avoid complications with prosecution.

"When I came into office, I was talking to many district attorneys in the state and one of the biggest issues they foresaw was when the child advocacy centers were run through the DA's office it wasn't considered a neutral facility," Salavantis said. "We learned from other counties that it would be best for the child advocacy center to be a standalone."

Salavantis said the number of children has at least doubled since the center gained nonprofit status. The center has also been able to apply for grants for which it was previously ineligible.

The next step for the Luzerne County center is to hire a full-time nurse practitioner to conduct medical exams in the on-site examination room, cutting yet another appointment the victims have to face.

"They're an essential part of prosecution when it comes to child abuse," Salavantis

said. "It's important that people know we're here in the community and we're doing everything possible for these children that are being abused."

Child advocacy centers across the nation are trying to get the word out about empowering children to speak about abuse. In April, which is nationally recognized as Child Abuse Prevention and Sexual Assault Awareness month, the center launched a hashtag campaign geared toward encouraging children to speak up, as well as congratulating those who already have. They also stuck pinwheels in their front lawn as a representation of each child that comes through the center.

"That's 72 kids we've already had come through (this year as of March)," Joyce said. "But for every kid that does come through, there's another dozen kids that won't speak up or that are too afraid to speak up."

With further encouragement and resources, Joyce said she hopes that one day the dozens of unspoken kids will decrease to zero.

*The Citizens' Voice newspaper in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, gave permission to Misericordia Today magazine to reprint this article, which was published in the edition of March 15, 2015.*

## SUPPORT

To support the efforts of the nonprofit Luzerne County Child Advocacy Center, please contact the organization at: (570) 208-2895, [info@luzernecountycac.org](mailto:info@luzernecountycac.org), [www.luzernecountycac.org](http://www.luzernecountycac.org) or write the director at 187 Hanover St., Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702.

Shannon Joyce '14 is a forensic interviewer at the Luzerne County Child Advocacy Center.



## MU ALUMNAE

Three Misericordia University alumnae work at the Luzerne County Child Advocacy Center in Wilkes-Barre:

Shannon Peduto Hernandez '03, '06, executive director, Bachelor of Science degree in elementary education and a Master of Science in curriculum and instruction; Stacey Sudul '01, nurse practitioner, Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree and graduate degree from Bloomsburg University, Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania; Shannon Joyce '14, child forensic interviewer, Bachelor of Arts degree in Government, Law and National Security.



# FORMULA FOR FAMILY SUCCESS

Brother-sister duo open physical therapy and sports rehab center in New Jersey

James Van Dien '07

Paige Van Dien '11

PHYSICAL THERAPY

For some siblings, opening a business together may seem fraught with potential challenges, of conflicts arising in their professional lives that impact their personal lives. For physical therapists and Misericordia University graduates James '07 and Paige Van Dien '11, taking a chance to fulfill their goals together was well worth it.

"I feel like it's easy for us to make decisions together," Paige says. "We usually agree on most things. We can trust each other, which is a big thing."

"Paige and I have always gotten along," James adds. "We're a lot alike in many aspects – playing sports and personality-wise. We just took that chance that it should carry over with work."

After graduating with master's degrees in physical therapy from Misericordia – James in 2007 and Paige in 2011 – they both worked as therapists in practices around North Jersey. Both came to realize they shared a specific vision for a physical therapy practice and patient care.

So in January of 2013, the brother and sister opened Maximum Performance Physical Therapy & Sports Rehabilitation in a new 4,000-square-foot facility in their hometown of North Arlington, New Jersey. There they are both co-owners and the practicing physical therapists.

"We worked separately in a handful of clinics in the area," James says. "There was a lot of competition in the area. In time, we wanted to make a lot of changes. There were

things I didn't like and she didn't like about where we worked; whether it was there wasn't enough one-on-one care or it became too corporate or the therapist didn't have a lot of say. The only way to change that, we decided, was to open our own practice."

A focus on one-on-one care is what the Van Diens feel sets them apart. It's a value instilled in part by their educations at Misericordia.

"I loved that the school and the University were smaller," James says. "It seemed like you got a lot more one-on-one. The teachers knew who you were. You definitely build relationships with the teachers. When it came to building your skills there was no question they would stay after hours to help you, to guide you. That really helped develop us as therapists."

James was the first of the pair to embark on a physical therapy career. He started as an undergraduate biology major on a track scholarship at DeSales University near Allentown, Pennsylvania, but an injury sidelined him and led to his work as an aid in a physical therapy office back home over the summer. "That's when I fell in love with physical therapy and decided to pursue it," he says.

He began researching physical therapy programs and discovered the strong reputation and small class sizes at Misericordia. He also was impressed by the reputation of Professor Susan Barker, P.T., Ph.D., who had recently become program chair.

The younger Paige jokes, "I just wanted to follow him wherever he went." But in reality she forged her own path. An internship with a physical therapy practice during her senior

When it came to building your skills there was no question they (faculty) would stay after hours to help you, to guide you. That really helped develop us as therapists.

—James Van Dien '07

year in high school led her to discover a passion for the career as well. James' positive experience in the program motivated her to check out Misericordia.

"James obviously was already there in the PT program and he was happy with it," she says. "Like James, I liked that the program was a little smaller. I felt I would get a better education and get to know the teachers a

little more on a personal level, if I needed extra assistance in my studies. And again the reputation for the program was good. It definitely played a role in my choosing of the school that he was happy with it."

After working in the field, the Van Diens knew that in each other they had the right partners to start their own practice. But there were still challenges to overcome. The first of those was developing clientele. Again valuing one-on-one relationships, they went door-to-door at area doctors' offices to start a cycle of physician referrals and positive patient experiences.

"You could hire someone to do it, but we wanted the doctors to meet us, who are going to be doing the work on their patients. Some were willing to open the door and listen to what we had to say, explaining why we would be different from everyone else and asking them just to give us a chance," James says. "If they aren't happy don't send to us again, but if they are happy please keep referring. Once we get people through the door, we start to build a following. People learn the difference between us and some other companies in the area. Now they're coming to us for something different, or sending their husband or wife."

In turn, Paige explains, the patients report their positive experiences back to their doctors, who are then inclined to continue referring patients to Maximum Performance.

The business aspects of the practice also presented challenges. Though they had some experience with business operations from previous positions, neither had much experience in running a business and working directly with insurers on payment. "For us it was really a risk and learning experience," James says. "We figured we might make mistakes, but that's how you learn."

They also benefited from hiring an office manager, Doreen Kelichner, who had administrative experience with orthopedic doctors and physical therapy practices. "She's our work mother and she holds down the fort," James says.

Both also agree that starting a small practice, one where they are the only

therapists on staff, requires total commitment. Running your own business, Paige says, doesn't mean taking vacation time whenever you feel like it – or at all for the first several years.

"It's our business and our reputation and we want to keep providing the right care," James adds.

The Van Diens also advise that physical therapists interested in starting their own practice should focus on what they are passionate about. "Stand apart from the competition," James says. "People need a reason to come to you."



Physical therapy program graduates James '07 and Paige Van Dien '11 established their own business, Maximum Performance Physical Therapy & Sports Rehabilitation, in North Arlington, N.J., in 2013.



# HEALTH INFORMATICS REVOLUTIONIZES PATIENT CARE

## Certificate, master's degree programs enable graduates to become health care leaders

As technology makes possible a dramatic change in all aspects of health care, a growing new workforce is needed to master the complex data that has the ability to improve care delivery, patient experience and system management.

At Misericordia, Michael J. Smith, M.H.Sc., M.S., is leading the charge to prepare students to become these new health care leaders through the Health Care Informatics graduate program in the College of Professional Studies and Social Sciences.

"Health informatics I would classify as a constant, ever-evolving specialization," says Smith, who serves as program chair and worked in multiple data management and informatics roles across the health care industry prior to coming to MU in 2013. "It links information technology and health care communications and health care to improve the quality and safety of patient care. It helps create better outcomes. It's not a technology degree. It looks at everything."

### Health Care Informatics

By the year 2022, careers in the fields of health information are predicted to grow rapidly, with the number of positions increasing by 22 percent from 10 years earlier – double the expected average increase for all careers, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Combined with

a similar expected rise for health care administrator positions that will increasingly rely on data analysis and usage, the need for informatics specialists becomes clearer.

Health informatics offers a multitude of career options, including chief medical information officer, informatics consultant, nurse informaticist, biomedical informaticist and health information technology project and product manager, to name a few.

Misericordia's 36-credit master's degree program in health informatics launched in 2012, and an 18-credit certificate program began in 2013. Both are delivered entirely online, a key feature for the typical student in the program, who is a working or

Michael J. Smith, M.H.Sc., M.S., is the pro-rata program director/faculty of the Health Care Informatics Program.

experienced health care professional seeking to advance his or her career in a health informatics role.

"We have a great program delivered 100-percent online that our students can come from any part of the country and take it," Smith explains. "The benefit for the student is the ability to take a class, do the course work, and learn a specific topic at the pace of their own time that they see fit. You have someone on West Coast time and they aren't scrambling to meet our timeslot. At Misericordia, our learning management system provides lectures they can take part in, and we can do a live one or we can do a recorded one."

The program prepares students for informatics application across the health care industry. Starting with study of the business of health informatics, the program then focuses on such areas as modeling health care processes and information, information systems and system analysis and design. It includes a course on project management, which Smith notes is a critical skill needed for health informatics. Students also study standards and best practices, ethical and public policy issues and information governance. Whether pursuing an academic or professional track, the program includes a significant research component as well.

"The research component of this program is outstanding," says Teresa Younkin '14, a health informatics consultant and a member of the master's degree program's first graduating class. "Understanding systems designs is another key component. You don't necessarily need to be a programmer. You need to understand how data flows and the mechanics behind data capture and data governance."

Students conclude their program with a professional contribution that finds them putting their studies into practice in a hands-on experience. This is conducted remotely as well, and students can arrange their own professional contribution or get assistance from program faculty.

# HCI DATA DRIVES GOOD HEALTH CARE DECISIONS

The seeds of Teresa Younkin's '14 career path were sown during a most difficult time.

When Younkin's husband David, a military veteran, was diagnosed with terminal brain cancer in 2001, they made a decision to participate in a then-new health information exchange,

allowing his medical information to be shared securely across health systems. That was critical to having a significant impact on his quantity and quality of life, as the couple moved around the country for treatment.

"The ability to not have to carry medical records across the country when we moved was phenomenal," Younkin says. "We really benefited from that ability to exchange data. On a personal level, I'm very passionate about it. We had a very positive experience using health IT, and so that has really driven me to really go deep and broad in the field to make something positive come out of something not so great."

It wasn't until after her husband's death in 2006 that she began to learn in detail about electronic health records and health care IT. An entrepreneur for much of her career with an accounting degree from Colorado State, she committed her professional life to using health technology to empower patients and providers. In 2009, she started the Danville, Pa.-based EHR Explained, a health care technology consultancy.

When Misericordia launched its master's program in health care informatics in 2012, Younkin recognized the importance of the field to the future of health care. In 2014, she was a member of the program's first graduating class.

"I wanted to be more involved with knowing how data changes and the ability to gather data, to interpret it and to turn it into useful information,"

Younkin says. "I was really looking to make some significant changes, to try to affect health care and make the largest impact I could."

At the time, EHR Explained was working on a national initiative grant that required any program she entered to have flexibility. Misericordia's program, which is conducted entirely online, was created with students like her in mind – mid-career health professionals who realized the need to incorporate informatics.

"Data drives decision-making, data drives population health initiatives, improvements to patient care," she says. "It has a direct impact on the 'triple aim' – better patient care at a lower cost across populations. We need good data, and that means you need to be able to capture data in the right way in the right format at the right time with the right people."

To effect change, she says, analysis needs to go beyond merely collecting high volumes of data.

"One of the reasons informatics has grown and really broadened beyond clinical informatics is because the industry itself ... has started to understand even though we have access to a lot of big data it's the small data that makes or breaks organizations."

At any given time, the number of projects Younkin is working on as a consultant can vary based on their size and scope. She has worked on a wide variety of initiatives for health systems and public agencies in Pennsylvania and across the country. She's delivered

programs for long-term care, developed an electronic health record app and served as product manager for the first personal health record tied to the health information exchange. Younkin often finds herself on the ground floor of building innovations.

She also speaks nationally about the importance of engaging patients to understand their own health data.

Learning health care informatics and holding a master's degree in the field has been a key to moving her career toward the future.

"We're at a point in the world where you can dream it and build it, and that's exactly what people are doing right now," she says. "Informatics is developing new nuances in health care

Teresa Younkin '14



and broadening the field of health care. It's just a great time to be in health care, and having the informatics background and designation really opens doors.

"I absolutely love what I do and I love the field."



## Busacca named Player of the Year in Freedom

Led by Freedom Conference Player of the Year Joe Busacca '15, the Misericordia University men's basketball team captured its second Freedom Conference championship in four years. A senior guard, Busacca led the Cougars to a 21-7 record and their second NCAA Tournament appearance.

The Cougars won 12 of their final 14 regular season games, including an eight-game winning streak, to capture the top seed in the Freedom. Busacca was a first-team All-Region selection and honorable mention All-American after finishing fourth in the Freedom in scoring with 15.7 points per game.

Senior Steve Ware '15 joined Busacca on the All-Freedom team.

## Track & field teams sweep MAC championships

The Misericordia University women's track & field team pulled off a sweep in 2015 as the Cougars captured the Middle Atlantic Conference (MAC) Indoor and Outdoor championships.

Head Coach Chris Wadas '05 was named MAC Coach of the Year at both championships, while Bethany Killmon '17, '18 was named the Female Outdoor Track Athlete of the Year.

Bianca Bolton '16 won indoor MAC titles at 3000m and 5000m, and Amy Viti '15, '16 won the 400m run. Sarah Ostroski '17 and Sarah Wigg '16, '18 were MAC champions in the long jump and weight throw, respectively.

Viti went on to become Misericordia's third track & field All-American with a fifth-place finish at 800m at the NCAA Division III Championships.

She also was recognized as the NCAA's Elite 89 award winner

for the highest cumulative grade point average at the championships. A junior speech-language pathology major, Viti carries a 4.0 GPA.

Viti and her teammates Kelty Fairchild '17, Katie Fairchild '17, '18 and Melanie Fry '18, '20 finished 12th in the 4x400m relay at the NCAA Championships.

During the outdoor season, Killmon won the 3000m Steeplechase at the MAC's, while Viti won at 400m. Bolton won at 1500m and Wigg won the discus. Viti, Kelty Fairchild, Katie Fairchild and Fry won the 4x400m relay. Viti also qualified for the NCAA Championships at 400m.

## Mahoney, Busacca named Wendy's Athletes of the Year

Megan Mahoney '15 and Joe Busacca '15 were named the 2014-15 Misericordia University Wendy's Athletes of the Year.

A women's soccer standout, Mahoney was a second-team National Soccer Coach's Association of America All-American (NSCAA) and the Offensive Player of the Year in the Freedom Conference and Eastern College Athletics Conference (ECAC) South Region. She was first-team All-Freedom, All-ECAC South and NSCAA All-Region after leading the team in goals (21), assists (14) and points (56). She set school single-season records for points and assists and finished second in career assists (33) and fourth in career points (109) in just two seasons. Misericordia won its third consecutive Freedom Conference championship and advanced to the NCAA Sweet 16.

Busacca, a senior point guard, was the men's basketball team MVP and the Freedom Conference Player of the Year. He was named first-team National Association of Basketball Coaches (NABC) All-Region, second-team All-ECAC and D-III News honorable mention All-America. Busacca finished with 1,171 career points. He was named MVP of the Freedom Conference championships after leading the Cougars to their second league title in four years.

The Wendy's Misericordia Athlete of the Month program is in its 16th year. It is sponsored by Quality Served Fast, the Dallas-area Wendy's franchise.

## Egbert records 300th career win

In eight seasons as head baseball coach at Misericordia University, Pete Egbert and the Cougars have become synonymous with winning. In addition to claiming five consecutive Freedom Conference championships (2011-2015), Egbert picked up his 300th career victory midway through the 2015 campaign with a 6-5 win in the first game of a doubleheader with Wilkes University.

Entering the 2008 season, Egbert had 91 wins under his belt when he arrived at Misericordia where the Cougars had won nine games in the previous two seasons combined. The Cougars showed immediate improvement under

Egbert, winning 15 games in 2008 as Egbert was named Coach of the Year in the Pennsylvania Athletic Conference. MU captured 22 and 21 wins the next two seasons, their first years in the Freedom Conference.

Egbert and the Cougars were just getting warmed up.

MU started a string of five consecutive 30-win seasons in 2011, which included their first Freedom title and another Coach of the Year honor for Egbert. The team accomplished that feat while playing just one game on campus



Egbert

throughout the season. In 2012, again playing their home games at an off-campus site, the team set a school record with 36 wins and captured another Freedom title.

The team moved to its new home in 2013, as they christened Tambur Field where

they continued their winning ways with another Freedom championship and a new school record of 39 victories. The Cougars won 31 games in both 2014 and 2015, while capturing two more Freedom titles and improving Egbert's career record to 316-214-2.

## Mahoney, Thomas – scholar athletes

Megan Mahoney '15 and Brad Thomas '15, '17 were named the recipients of the Misericordia University/ECAC Robbins Scholar-Athlete of the Year Award.

Mahoney carried a 4.0 grade point average in professional studies. She was the Freedom Conference and ECAC South Offensive Soccer Player of the Year and a second-team All-American. She was 18th in the nation with 56 points and tied for 20th with 21 goals, while setting school single-season records in both categories and finished tied for 11th in the nation with 14 assists. Mahoney had at least one point in 16 of 23 games played while averaging 2.43 points per game. Misericordia finished 19-3-1 and advanced to the NCAA Sweet 16 for the third consecutive year.

Thomas, a senior, maintains a 3.65 GPA in the Doctor of Physical Therapy program. He was a six-time first-team All-MAC honoree, including MAC runner-up finishes in the 100 back and 100 free. He set a school record in the 100 free, and was part of a school record in the 400-free relay while leading the Cougars to a second place finish at the MAC championships.

## Vogeli, Academic AA, Pitcher of the Year

Baseball standout Cory Vogeli '16 enjoyed tremendous success on the diamond and in the classroom. He was named Freedom Conference Pitcher of the Year and was selected to the Capital One Academic All-America team. A junior secondary education/math major, Vogeli maintains a 3.99 grade point average.

He earned d3baseball.com All-Region honors and was an honorable mention All-American. Vogeli finished 8-0 with a 1.14 earned run average and 63 strikeouts in 63 innings pitched.

## Winter/spring MAC academic honor roll

MU placed 139 student-athletes on the MAC Academic Honor Roll during the winter and spring semesters, including 56 during the winter season and 83 in the spring. MU's contingent was the third-highest of the 17 MAC institutions during both periods.

To be eligible for the MAC Academic Honor Roll, a student-athlete must be

at least a sophomore and maintain a minimum grade point of average of 3.20.

## Winter-spring MAC All-Academic team

Misericordia had 18 student-athletes named to the MAC All-Academic team in their respective sports. The team is chosen by sports information directors from the 17 MAC institutions. The appointment recognizes academic achievement and athletics success.

Honorees included – Women's Indoor Track & Field: Bianca Bolton '16; Bethany Killmon '17, '18; Amy Viti '15, '17, and Sarah Wigg '16, '18; Men's Indoor Track & Field: Cory Poepperling '16; Women's Basketball: Lauren Smicherko '14, '16; Men's Swimming: Chris Panagacos '15; Thomas Scott '17 and Brad Thomas '15, '17; Women's Swimming: Dani Blass '16, '17; Women's Outdoor Track & Field: Amy Viti '15, '16; Bethany Killmon '17, '18, and Sarah Ostroski '17; Softball: Megan Hardy '15, '16; Baseball: Cory Vogeli '16, and Chris Boroch '16, '18; Men's Lacrosse: Patrick Kellish '17, '19, and Andrew Reynolds '15, '17.

To submit a nomination for the 2016 Hall of Fame class, please log on to <http://athletics.misericordia.edu/hofnom>. 2015 inductees will be recognized Oct. 2 during Homecoming Weekend. They will be members of the 13th induction class.

Freedom Conference Player of the Year Joe Busacca '15 drives down court during the 2014-15 season.





## FACULTY & STAFF NOTEBOOK

The following faculty members were recognized for excellence in scholarship, teaching and service to the campus and community at the 89th annual Commencement ceremony on May 16:

**Amanda M. Caleb, Ph.D.**, assistant professor of English, Pauly and Sidney Friedman Excellence in Service Award; **Stevan L. Davies, Ph.D.**, professor of religious studies, Louis and Barbara Alesi Excellence in Scholarship Award, and **Dawn M. Evans, O.T.D., O.T.R./L.**, assistant professor of occupational therapy, Judge Max and Tillie Rosenn Excellence in Teaching Award.

**Stanley J. Dudrick, M.D., F.A.C.S.**, medical director of the physician assistant program, presented the keynote address for the Morio Kasai Lecture at the 30th Annual Meeting of the Japanese Society of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition in Osaka, Japan.

**Elaine Halsey, Ed.D., R.T.(R)(QM)**, professor and chair of the Department of Medical Imaging, was appointed by

the American Society of Radiologic Technologists to serve one year on the Committee on R.T. Advocacy, Region 8 Subcommittee. Dr. Halsey's term began July 1.

**Leamor Kahanov, Ed.D., A.T.C., L.A.T.**, dean of the College of Health Sciences, had three research articles published in the American Journal of Sport Medicine and Athletic Training Education Journal. Dr. Kahanov collaborated with several colleagues.

**Cynthia Glawe Mailloux, Ph.D., R.N., C.N.E.**, professor and chairperson of the Department of Nursing, was selected as an American Association of Colleges of Nursing Wharton Fellow supported by the Jonas Scholars Center of Nursing.

**Mari King, Ed.D., R.T.(R)**, professor, and **Paula Pate-Schloder, M.S., R.T.(R)(CV)(CT)**, associate professor, both of medical imaging, were inducted as fellows by the Association of Educators in Imaging and Radiologic

Sciences at the 2015 Annual Meeting in San Antonio, Texas in July.

**Larry Pellegrini, B.A.**, director of Corporate, Government and Foundation Relations, completed the two-week Institute for Management and Leadership in Education program at the Harvard University Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, Massachusetts, in June.

The following faculty members were awarded tenure and promotion: **Kathleen Scaler Scott, Ph.D., C.C.C.-S.L.P.**, promoted to associate professor, speech-language pathology and tenured; **Melanie Shepherd, Ph.D.**, promoted to associate professor, philosophy and tenured, and **Charles Saladino, Jr., Ph.D.**, was promoted to professor of chemistry and biochemistry.

Emeritus status was granted to **Stevan L. Davies, Ph.D.**, professor of religious studies; **Betty Porzuczek**, assistant professor of fine arts, and **Michael Moran, P.T., D.P.T., Sc.D.**, professor of physical therapy.

## GLOBAL CONCERN from page 25

make a difference and change the kids' lives for the better. Even though we were faced with such limited resources, I learned how to be more adaptable. Learning skills through experiences like this will help me for the rest of my life as a future OT," Casem adds

Ignatovich, the only graduate on the trip, was equally impacted by the people. "My experience in Jamaica was humbling. I learned how the basic necessities in life, such as sharing a smile with a young boy, could be so important for quality of life. As an OT, this experience helped me to understand that I can really build a rapport with anyone. It doesn't matter

the culture or religion of the person ... we are all human beings. I look forward to finding ways to improve the quality of life with any patient I work with."

Weidemoyer says that one of the hardest parts of the trip was recognizing that their time in Jamaica was temporary and their work may not be continued after they left. "This was their everyday life, and we weren't about to completely change it after only one week," she says. "Even with this in mind, every smile we put on the face of a child was worth the anxiety, fear, excitement, sadness, and hard work that we endured before, during, and after the trip. Our professional lives are now changed forever. We now know that our practice area as OTs does not only lie within the

borders of the United States – we are proud globally practicing OTs, and we can't turn back now."

The efforts in Jamaica will soon involve additional universities. It is an opportunity to be a part of a unique educational collaboration that Dr. Cipriani said was previously unheard of on the island nation. Skype sessions involving OT students and faculty at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan; Georgia Regents University, Augusta, Georgia, and Misericordia have been held. The plan is to have each university adopt two specific Mustard Seed homes in Jamaica and visit each one annually with the hope to improve the continuity of education of the Mustard Seed staff and care of residents.

## SACRED ART

Tibetan monks from Gaden Shartse Phukhang Monastery to present lectures, musical program and sand mandala

Misericordia will host Tibetan monks from the Gaden Shartse Phukhang Monastery in India during the week of Oct. 5-9. The purpose of the visit is to share the monks' culture, as well as practices and paths to inner peace and compassion. The public is invited to the events, which include two lectures, a musical program, and the creation of a sand mandala.

The painting of the mandala, with finely colored sand, ranks as one of the most unique and exquisite

geometric shapes and a multitude of ancient spiritual symbols. It is used as a tool for re-consecrating the earth and its inhabitants.

Upon completion of the mandala, the monks will purposely destroy the magnificent work of art. According to spokesperson Lobsang Wangchuk, the Buddha's last words were "All things are impermanent, work out your salvation with diligence." In upholding the principle that life is transient, the monks will sweep up the mandala and place the sand in a nearby body of water as an offering to purify the surrounding environment and to bless the area with positive energies.

"In both its creation and destruction, the mandala is a reminder of the impermanence of everything and how, because everything is temporary, every moment counts," Wangchuk adds.

The tentative schedule begins Monday, Oct. 5 at 10 a.m. with an opening ceremony and the start of the sand mandala in the Friedman Art Gallery. The closing ceremony for the project will be Friday, Oct. 9, at 1 p.m. in the art gallery.

For more information about the program, please go to [www.misericordia.edu/theartsandmore](http://www.misericordia.edu/theartsandmore) or call (570) 674-6719.



Tibetan monks will create a sand mandala at MU.

traditions of Tantric Buddhism. In Tibetan, this art is called *dul-tson-kyil-khor*, which literally means "mandala of colored powders." Millions of grains of sand are painstakingly laid into place on a flat platform over the week. Following traditional iconography, the sand-painted mandala includes



Photo by Lukas Beck

## Vienna Boys Choir to ring in the holiday with Christmas concert

It is hard to imagine a more spirited way to ring in the holiday than with the angelic voices of the famed Vienna Boys Choir, which will perform a concert of beloved Christmas songs from across the ages at Misericordia University's Lemmond Theater in Walsh Hall on Thursday, Dec. 3 at 7:30 p.m.

Founded in the late 1400s by Emperor Maximilian I as the Vienna Chapel Imperial, the original choir was comprised of boys from different parts of the Holy Roman Empire who sang for imperial court, at Mass, concerts and on state occasions.

More than 500 years later, the tradition lives on with 100 choristers from 30 different nations between the ages of 10 and 14 divided into four touring groups that give more than 300 performances a year throughout Europe, Asia, Australia and the Americas.

The concert will include a variety of sacred and secular Christmas songs and holiday favorites, and offers a mix of choral and solo pieces representing countries from around the world.

Tickets will be available exclusively from the Misericordia University Cultural Box Office. For ticket information, go online to [www.misericordia.edu/theartsandmore](http://www.misericordia.edu/theartsandmore) or call (570) 674-6719.

SAVE THE DATE!



**HOMECOMING WEEKEND 2015**  
**OCTOBER 2-4**

Register online: [Cougarconnect.misericordia.edu/homecoming15](http://Cougarconnect.misericordia.edu/homecoming15)