

Misericordia

WINTER 2017

today

UNRAVELING



SLP researchers
study cerebrum
to better understand
communication disorders

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The Board of Trustees presented the Trustee Associates Award to John P. Martin, Ed.D., of Dallas, Pa., in recognition of his leadership in education and outstanding commitment and support of the University at the 2016 Trustee Associates Gala in Sandy and Marlene Insalaco Hall.

The award is given annually to friends of the University who have demonstrated outstanding dedication, service and generous support.

Dr. Martin was recognized for a lifetime of unparalleled leadership and the work he has done to foster and promote education. The Scranton native was one of the founding fathers of West Side Central Catholic High School that opened in 1954 in Kingston, Pa., as the first centralized Catholic school in the Diocese of Scranton.

To view a photo gallery of the gala online, please go to <http://bit.ly/mugala16>.



Trustee Monsignor John Bendik, top left, accepts the award from President Thomas J. Botzman, Ph.D., center, and Christopher L. Borton, chair of the Board of Trustees, on behalf of Dr. Martin, left.



He joined the faculty in 1967, and through 1971 served as an associate professor of education, psychology and philosophy, as well as campus chaplain. He established The Frederick and Sarah Joyce Gerrity Endowed Scholarship.

As a retiree, he has served as an active member of Council Misericordia and played an instrumental role in the development of the Bachelor of Science in Health Care Management, an Expressway accelerated degree program that was launched in 2004.

University dedicates Moffat House, expands Bourger Women with Children Program

Misericordia, the Ruth Matthews Bourger Women with Children Program, the Robert Y. Moffat Family Charitable Trust, and friends held a ribbon cutting ceremony in September to officially

dedicate the Moffat House. The new home enables the two-generational program to house up to 16 mothers and up to 32 children.

A \$450,000 grant for the house was provided by the Moffat Trust of Lackawanna County. The trust is known for generous financial assistance to colleges, educational programming for women and children, and community health programs for at-risk individuals.

The Moffat House is the third home for students in the program.

Christopher L. Borton, chair of the Board of Trustees, at left, presents Yvette Wentland, trustee of the Robert Y. Moffat Family Charitable Trust, with a framed picture of the Moffat House at the official dedication ceremony.



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HONORS

Misericordia Today received
recognition at the 2016 CUPRAP
Conference in Hershey, Pa., in the
spring. Staff writer Marianne Tucker
Puhalla earned a CUPPIE Award
Honorable Mention in the category
of Creative Headline writing for
"Defining Differences," a story on
psychology students studying social norms
on two continents in the Winter 2015 edition.



Have a story to share?
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Misericordia Today



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ON THE COVER

Misericordia University student-faculty researchers are
utilizing the innovative technology, functional Near-Infrared
Spectroscopy, to study changes in oxygenated and
deoxygenated hemoglobin concentrations in the brains
of fluent and non-fluent speakers.





Restoring the arch's grandeur

The beauty of our campus may be understated. Shortly, winter will turn to spring. Although we can appreciate snow as it settles on the famous "murmuring pines" of our alma mater, the flowers and trees of spring are a welcome sight. Spring marks a time of year on campus filled with optimism for the future, as May commencement fast approaches for many soon-to-be graduates.

The beauty of our campus starts at the arch on Lake Street. This architectural feature lets students, families, alumni and guests know that everyone is welcome here. For almost 90 years, it has hovered over the entrance as an inviting symbol of our hospitality.

Weather and Father Time, however, have begun to take their toll on our iconic arch. Water and ice have infiltrated into the architectural terra cotta, decorative brick, and stone elements to cause damage to the embedded steel elements and backup bricks through displaced masonry openings, deteriorated mortar joints, and masonry cracks. The embedded steel and backup bricks provide structural integrity for the mass masonry of the main arch and piers, side pedestrian arches and piers, and associated assemblies.

As soon as funding is in place, Misericordia will undertake a necessary arch restoration project. It will be an investment in our future as we work to preserve our most identifiable landmark for future generations.

Masonry Preservation Services (MPS), Inc., of Bloomsburg, Pa., which specializes in restoring complex masonry buildings and structures, will facilitate the arch restoration project.

Misericordia's historic arch, top and bottom, has been welcoming visitors to campus since the early 1930s. Environmental elements, however, have caused noticeable damage, center, that must be repaired to ensure its structural integrity. Work will begin soon.



The work will begin with the removal of damaged terra cotta from the archway. Making terra cotta is a lengthy process as there are but a few select companies that manufacture it in the United States. The terra cotta replication company will use the original units to create models and molds to create new architectural

terra cotta units that exactly match the original ones. MPS also is working to retain the historic fabric of the archway, so it will only remove damaged terra cotta in this phase. The next step involves MPS ordering matching decorative brick and bluestone.

The project's timeline has not been fully determined. Many variables and coordination issues exist that could accelerate or extend it – the most important being raising the funds needed to make the renovation possible. While fundraising moves forward, MPS will be working to locate and review brick and bluestone matches, and determine the full extent of the concealed masonry deterioration. As we secure funding, MPS will disassemble and rebuild various sections of the arch.

Additional information about fundraising plans will be shared later this spring. If you want to be a part of the effort, please contact Tara Leahy at (570) 674-6354. Updates on the project will be ongoing.

It is important to know that portions of the arch will have to be removed during the investigation process. Our plan is to complete the renovation within one year, but our beloved icon will lose its beauty during that time. Rest assured, it will be restored – with your help. We will keep the timeline for renovation as brief as possible. Your support will make our goal a reality.

President Thomas J. Botzman, Ph.D.



The Brassington family, first row from left, John, Esther, Peter and Richard; second row, Cole, Luke, Dominic, Christian and Sarah pose for a picture after May's commencement ceremony.

Leanne Fino Brassington '91 speaks plainly when expressing her affinity for Misericordia and its founders, the Religious Sisters of Mercy. The soft-spoken Dallas, Pa., native quickly credits the college for providing her extended family with the foundation on which they built everything.

To understand this symbiotic relationship completely, one must go back to where it all began – in downtown Dallas. As a young child, Leanne watched as her father, Dominic Fino, Sr., developed a lasting bond with the order and institution as the proprietor of Fino's Pharmacy.

Back then, Mr. Fino operated a typical neighborhood pharmacy, as he would gladly donate prescriptions and medical supplies to those in need on campus, whether it be Sisters of Mercy or others.

"My dad has always taken care of the Sisters and they have taken care of him," she says. "There is a lot to be said about what the Sisters do."

In turn, Misericordia gave back to the family. Leanne matriculated to Misericordia and earned her degree in interdisciplinary studies, but not without slight detours along the way.

After unknowingly dating her future husband, Richard A. Brassington '88 at Misericordia in 1986, the young couple

went their separate ways as Richard pursued his graduate degree in Operations Research and Statistics at Michigan State University and she withdrew from school.

Eventually, Leanne began anew, married, had a baby girl and then divorced. With it came many unknowns, she says, as she was a single mother without a college degree. The constants throughout her time as a single parent, though, were her family, faith and Sisters of Mercy.

That long-standing relationship with the Sisters blossomed when her daughter's speech was not developing correctly. Sarah Brassington '16 had a hearing problem that affected the development of her speech. A minor operation corrected her hearing, but the young child needed therapy.

For some time, Sister Madelyn Gill, RSM traveled from Mercy Center to Fino's Pharmacy twice a week to provide free therapeutic services to Sarah in the upstairs living quarters of the store. Sister did not accept any monetary compensation.

Today, Sarah is months away from beginning her career at Price Waterhouse in Manhattan, N.Y. She will complete her master's degree in accounting at Temple University in June 2017 after earning her accounting degree from Misericordia in May.

"I attribute my love for public speaking to Sister Madelyn," says Sarah, who received tutoring in math from Sisters Bridget Clarke, RSM and Pat Mundy, RSM while in first grade and her brother, Dominic, spent his summers in elementary school being tutored in math. "I love to get up and talk in front of people. With my speech problem, she always taught me to ask questions and speak my mind."

Sister Madelyn's tutelage also extended to Sarah's mother. At Sister's urging, she returned to school to complete her degree.

In 2000, Richard and Leanne reunited, married in 2002, and had a son, Dominic.

More recently, Richard and Leanne Fino Brassington established the Richard and Leanne Fino Brassington Family Scholarship Fund to benefit a single mother majoring in speech-language pathology who also is the first in her family to attend college.

The familial bond Leanne describes extends to the entire family, as Richard's aunt, Sister Lucia Brassington '57, RSM, encouraged him and her other nephews and niece in Guyana to attend Misericordia. Like Richard, Peter '92, William '93, Jonathan '95 and June '97 each graduated from the institution on the hill, and the men married Misericordia women.

Richard, senior vice president and finance chief actuary, at AIG P.C., also is a former Trustee at Misericordia, serving from 2001-04. His brother, Jonathon, a founding partner of LiquidHub in Philadelphia, Boston and Hyderabad, India, has been a member of the board since 2006.

"My parents sent me there because that is the place they love," Leanne says. "I love that place. That is all I can tell you. That is my Misericordia. These connections do not go away. You get all of the Brassingtons together – our foundation is Misericordia. We have so much in common because we have that as our center. It all goes back to our Catholic faith." [h](#)



CAMPUS VIEWS

University names regional business leaders to BOT

Misericordia University and the Conference for Mercy Higher Education recently elected Jody G. Cordaro, Moscow, Pa., and Harris Cutler, Scranton Pa., to three-year terms on the Board of Trustees.

Mr. Cordaro is president of SCE Environmental Group, Inc. SCE manages environmental remediation projects, large-scale demolition, asbestos abatement, and oil and gas services throughout the United States.



Mr. Cordaro

In the greater community, Mr. Cordaro is the treasurer of Marley's Mission, a nonprofit organization that provides free equine-based therapy to children and their families who have experienced a traumatic event in their lives.

Mr. Cutler is president of Race-West Co. and Philip G. Ball Co., Clarks Summit, Pa. Race-West works with produce growers in order to deliver a wide array of fruits and vegetables to premium receivers in the United States. He also is the president of Sparky's Transportation Corp.



Mr. Cutler

In the community, he serves as vice president of the Jewish Community Center, Scranton; as a board member of the Foundation for the Jewish Elderly in Northeastern Pennsylvania, as an executive board member of the Jewish Home of Eastern Pennsylvania, Scranton, and on the board of directors of the Friends of the Poor, Scranton.

Trustees also recognized the service and leadership of board members Scott Dagenais and William C. Williams who retired from the board after serving from 2007-16.

Campus community, state representatives sign pledge for 'It's On Us' campaign

State awards \$25,400 grant to University to implement strategies on campus

The campus community came together in October to witness President Thomas J. Botzman, Ph.D., and representatives of the offices of Gov. Tom Wolf, state Sen. Lisa Baker, R-20, Lehman Township, and state Rep. Karen Boback, R-117, Harveys Lake, sign the pledge for the *It's On Us* PA initiative that encourages healthy relationships and the prevention of sexual assault.

Launched in 2014, the national initiative is an awareness campaign to help put an end to sexual assault on college campuses. *It's On Us* asks everyone – men and women – to make a personal commitment to be part of the solution. Many colleges and universities throughout the country have joined the discussion and stand strong in the prevention ownership by implementing their own campaigns. Misericordia launched its campaign in April 2016.

"Rooted in a strong mission, and grounded in the values of Catherine McCauley and the Sisters of Mercy, Misericordia University is a place where we stand strong with respect for the human person," President Botzman said at the ceremony. "I

welcome you to join me in supporting Misericordia's *It's On Us* campaign and our campus commitment to foster healthy



Men's basketball and tennis student-athlete Alec Rodway '19 of Peckville, Pa., is interviewed by WNEP-TV 16 reporter Matt Petrillo after participating in the pledge ceremony.

relationships, offering support and educating our community on the call to action to end sexual violence."

With audience members raising their right hands, Coleman read the pledge and had participants respond, "I will," before President Botzman, Coleman, Houssock and Yoniski signed it. The

"Rooted in a strong mission, and grounded in the values of Catherine McCauley and the Sisters of Mercy, Misericordia University is a place where we stand strong with respect for the human person."

— President Thomas J. Botzman, Ph.D.



CAMPUS VIEWS



ceremonial signing of the pledge also was done in advance of the Governor's Office launching an awareness campaign. The presentation was streamed live statewide.

Misericordia hosted a public viewing of it on campus with a short presentation by representatives of the Promoting Healthy Relationships Through Education and Empowerment peer educator student organization.

In the spring, more than 400 members of the campus community participated in the University's launch of its own *It's On Us* campaign.

Misericordia was among 36 postsecondary institutions of higher education in Pennsylvania that was awarded nearly \$1 million collectively from the inaugural *It's On Us* PA grant program. The University was awarded \$25,400.

President Thomas J. Botzman signed the *It's On Us* pledge with representatives from state elected offices. His signature shows the commitment of the campus community to the campaign that encourages healthy relationships and the prevention of sexual assault. Posing for a picture with students after signing the pledge, from left, are Ann Houssock, Dallas District Office Manager for Rep. Boback; Cassandra Coleman, director, Northeast Regional Office of the Governor; President Botzman, and Thomas J. Yoniski, Jr., field representative for Sen. Baker.



Cross country and track and field student-athlete Jackie Bamberski '16 of Feasterville, Pa., and other members of the Misericordia University campus community raised their right hands to take the pledge for the *'It's On Us'* campaign with President Thomas J. Botzman, Ph.D., and state officials.

ACE Fellow selects MU for yearlong fellowship

Misericordia University has been selected to host Dale-Elizabeth Pehrsson, a 2016-17 American Council on Education (ACE) fellow, for a yearlong fellowship.

Dr. Pehrsson is a professor and dean of the College of Education and Human Services at Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, Mich. As the chief executive and academic officer, she oversees nearly all aspects of her college's five academic units. The college features 10 educational, service and research centers, and offers undergraduate, graduate and doctoral level programs.



Dr. Pehrsson

She previously served as associate dean and professor in the College of Education at the University of Nevada – Las Vegas, and as a counselor educator at Oregon State University, Corvallis, Ore.; Portland State University, Portland, Ore., and Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas. She also has participated in the Institute for Education Management at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and the Leadership Academy of the State University of New York.

Dr. Pehrsson said she chose Misericordia because it is well recognized for student success that is fostered through engagement in curricular and co-curricular activities, a welcoming community with strong community connections, and a clear mission and purpose that permeates all aspects of campus life. She welcomed the opportunity to work with President Botzman, who is nationally recognized for his mentorship and leadership in higher education.

MEDIA RECOGNIZE MU'S ACADEMICS, VALUE AND SERVICE

U.S. News gives MU 'Best Value' designation

Misericordia is ranked 44th out of 143 colleges and universities in the top tier of the Best Regional Universities North category of U.S. News & World Report's 2017 edition of Best Colleges, which includes institutions of higher education in the northern United States that offer master's degrees and some doctoral programs.

The annual report also named Misericordia a *Best Value* institution of higher education, as it ranked 25th in the Best Regional Universities North category.

The University has climbed 23 places in the overall rankings since 2007.

"We are grateful for the national recognition that comes with these ranking services," said President Thomas J. Botzman, Ph.D. "Misericordia has a time-tested mission of providing rigorous academics and the personal attention students need to succeed in life and in their careers, while also instilling in them a sense of service to those who have been marginalized in society.

"Through our many volunteer efforts, study abroad programs, and challenging academic majors, our community works diligently to foster intellectual curiosity, critical thinking and respect for people in an environment where all are welcome."

Washington Monthly says MU provides 'Best Bang for the Buck'

The University has improved 125 places in three years, and now is ranked among the top 24 percent of all master's degree-granting institutions of higher education in the country by Washington Monthly magazine in a survey that stresses community service and social mobility of students.

The University is ranked 154th overall among 634 other colleges and universities in the nation that were recognized in the 2016 *National Universities – Masters* category. The rankings are based on the institution's contribution to the public good.

In a separate *Best Bang for the Buck* listing, Washington Monthly ranked Misericordia 96th overall among master's degree granting colleges and universities in the nation, a ranking up 126 places from 2015. The ranking recognizes "colleges in America that do the best job of helping nonwealthy students attain marketable degrees at affordable prices," according to the magazine.

Misericordia receives accolades from Princeton Review



Misericordia University has been recognized as one of the top colleges and universities in the northeastern United States, according to The Princeton Review, a nationally known education services company.

The University is one of 228 institutions of higher education The Princeton Review has recommended in its *Best in the Northeast* section of its website feature, *2017 Best Colleges Region by Region* that posted Aug. 29, 2016.

The colleges are selected for the list based on their "excellent academics"

and the results of a survey of students by The Princeton Review on their campus experiences as well as how they rated various aspects of their college life, according to the website.

The Princeton Review editors made their selections based on data the company collected from its survey of 143,000 students at several hundred colleges in each region regarding 84 questions about their school's academics, administration, student body, and themselves.

Misericordia named to MONEY Magazine's 'Best Colleges' list

Misericordia was named to MONEY Magazine's 2016-17 Best Colleges list, the second highest ranked college or university in Luzerne and Lackawanna counties. MU earned a ranking of 366 out of the 705 schools listed, climbing 117 places in the ranking since 2015.

American CTA gives Misericordia top core grade in NEPA

The American Council of Trustees and Alumni survey, *What Will They Learn?*, awarded Misericordia a B letter grade, the highest of four-year public and private colleges and universities in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

The study evaluated core requirements of more than 1,100 institutions in the United States and "graded on whether each requires the courses that provide preparation in the essential areas of the liberal arts." **h**



Mercy Hall

Research shows promise for patients with dementia, A-fib

The faculty-student research team of Kathleen Scaler Scott, Ph.D., C.C.C.-S.L.P., associate professor of speech-language pathology (SLP); James Siberski, M.S., C.M.C., CRmT, assistant professor and coordinator of geriatric care management; Ruixia Yan, Ph.D., associate professor of SLP, and Sarah Tokach '16, M.S., C.F.-S.L.P., had their research paper, *Could Anticoagulants Improve Communication in Dementia? A Case Study*, published in the November/December issue of Today's Geriatric Medicine.

In the single-subject case study, researchers studied an 86-year-old female resident of a skilled nursing



Faculty members, from left, James Siberski, Kathleen Scaler Scott and Ruixia Yan collaborated with Sarah Tokach '16 on the research and article.

facility who has a diagnosis of vascular dementia. They interviewed family members, and reviewed medical records and home movies before administration of blood thinners and

afterward. The team's research is the first to analyze conversations of a patient with dementia following blood thinners.

Their findings support previous research that found a link between those with A-fib and dementia symptoms when anticoagulation was not at the appropriate level. The team hopes to inform physicians to consider ruling out A-fib as a possible contributing factor to cognitive decline.

The research shows timely and effective medical management of A-fib holds promise for improving cognitive and communication symptoms of patients diagnosed with dementia. [h](#)

First-year students volunteer for annual Orientation Days of Service

More than 500 members of the Misericordia University campus community fanned out across the Back Mountain to do volunteer work as part of the annual Orientation Days of Service for first-year students in August.

Organized through Campus Ministry, volunteers tackled various projects at 11 locations throughout the region, including Camp Orchard Hill, Blue Chip Farms, Lands at Hillside Farms and the Luzerne County Fairgrounds. About 325 first-year students volunteered

Saturday, Aug. 27, while an estimated 105 student-athletes participated in the day of service on Sunday, Aug. 28. The first-year students were accompanied by 90 orientation leaders, as well as staff and faculty volunteers.

The program is part of a four-day orientation that familiarizes the new students with campus and their new community. The students were divided into groups and worked in two-and-a-half-hour shifts in the morning and afternoon. [h](#)



First-year students, from left, Brooke Moyle '20, Phillipsburg, N.J., and Kristina Russell '19, Forest Hill, Md., give puppies a bath at Blue Chip Farms Animal Rescue.

Student's logo chosen for bicentennial celebration

The Dallas Township Board of Supervisors chose a logo designed by Caitlin Meehan '16, who received her Bachelor of Arts degree in communications during the annual spring commencement ceremony in May. The logo will be used during the planning and celebration of the community's bicentennial event in 2017.

The Board of Supervisors sponsored the contest seeking entries for logo design from members of the community and other interested parties. At its July

meeting, board members officially selected the winning logo.

Meehan's winning logo depicts a blue family tree with the wording, "Township of Dallas," at its base and the years of incorporation for the Back Mountain community, 1817-2017, immediately above it. The logo also incorporates people in the middle of the body and branches of the tree, while also adding a mortar board, and a shovel and hoe to the left and right of it.



"The logo depicts the past, present and future of Dallas Township by incorporating education, family and manufacturing in the form of a family tree," Meehan said. "The blue coloring is a reminder of the education systems that reside in Dallas Township."

Meehan created the logo initially as a project through the Misericordia University club, Service by Design, which is sponsored by the Department of Mass Communications and Design.

The Dallas Days Bicentennial Celebration kicks off in April. It will feature events and celebrations through December 2017. [h](#)

Sister Jean Messaros '73, RSM, celebrated her 50th Jubilee as a Religious Sister of Mercy on Friday, Sept. 23, 2016.

Scholarship funding

Those wishing to contribute to the Sister Jean Messaros '73 Scholarship for Women with Children can do so online at <http://misericordia.edu/jubilee> or by contacting Desiree Voitek, assistant director of development, at (570) 674 8027 or dvoitek@misericordia.edu.

ONE WOMAN'S MISSION

University celebrates 50th Jubilee of Sister Jean Messaros, RSM

BY MARIANNE TUCKER PUHALLA

She may best be known for creating Misericordia University's two-generational program that helps student mothers and their children put a life of poverty behind them and earn a degree in a supportive collegiate environment.

Yet when you look closer at the career of Sister Jean Messaros '73, RSM, as she celebrates her 50th Jubilee as a Religious Sister of Mercy, it is easy to see she has touched the lives of many if not all of the more than 11,000 students who have passed through the arch during her time on campus.

As dean of students, vice president of student affairs and most recently, vice president for mission integration, nearly every facet of student life has fallen under her careful tutelage – including all areas of co-curricular student services from athletics to Campus Ministry.

Behind the quiet voice, sly sense of humor, and ever-present Mercy cross, there is a force of nature that has helped shape Misericordia into the nationally recognized institution it is today.

At a time when the country faces unprecedented division following a contentious presidential campaign, she finds herself in a role of helping

the campus come together, move forward and address racism, nonviolence, immigration, Earth sustainability and the rights of women and children – areas identified as the Critical Concerns of the Sisters of Mercy.

"For Sister Jean, it will always be about the students – and how to improve their experience at Misericordia," says Kathleen "Kit" Foley, vice president of student life, who as former dean of students, was a member of Sister Jean's staff for more than 20 years. "Even before taking on the role of mission integration, Sister Jean always challenged her staff to live the values of the Sisters of Mercy for the betterment of the campus community. She is the epitome of what it means to be student centered and carry out the Mercy mission."

In true fashion, there will be few people prouder than Sister Jean when five students of the Ruth Matthews Bourger Women with Children Program gather to celebrate at the May 2017 commencement ceremony. She founded the program in the spirit of Catherine McAuley in 2000 to help end the cycle of poverty for single mothers and their children. Graduating five students in one year is a record for the program and brings the total number to 26 women who have earned bachelor's degrees while living with their children on campus.



Sister Jean '73 has been a large part of the campus community for 32 years. Through the years, from top to bottom, she has appeared at athletic events; accepted a check establishing an endowed scholarship in her name, and been a role model and friend to children and students enrolled in the Bourger Women with Children Program.

Sister Jean says she is energized by how the program has flourished since the first residence, Rosary Hall, was donated by the Sisters of Mercy to start the program. With the addition of the Moffat House in 2016, the program can now accommodate 16 women and as many as 32 children in

Continued on next page

ONE WOMAN'S MISSION

from page 11

three residence halls. She credits an incredible staff over the years for helping to make it happen.

To celebrate Sister Jean's 50th Jubilee, the University hosted a reception on Sept. 23, 2016. Held specifically during Mercy Week, which recognizes the founding of Misericordia by the Sisters of Mercy on Sept. 24, 1924, the festivities included remarks by colleagues, friends and family, and the presentation of a ceremonial check to establish an endowment for the Sister Jean Messaros '73 Scholarship for Women with Children. Of the fund's recent balance of more than \$29,000 – \$11,743 was raised from donations at the Jubilee.

"The scholarship means so much to me. It is something I have always wanted and it will do so much to ease the financial burden for future students in the program," she says. "I never imagined when I entered religious life where the path would take me ... and that my work would be so fulfilling."

Over the 50 years, her mission has been wide ranging. Sister Jean joined the Sisters of Mercy in 1966 and underwent her religious training at Mercy Center, earning a bachelor's degree in education from Misericordia. She went on to earn a master's degree in counseling from Shippensburg University. She began her career teaching middle school students in the Harrisburg region.

She joined the Misericordia staff as assistant to the dean of students in 1975, stepping away to take on a leadership role for the Dallas Mercy Community in 1980. She returned to Misericordia as assistant dean of students in 1990 and subsequently became dean of students prior to taking on the mantle of vice president of student affairs in 2006.

Always one to immerse herself in campus life, she has been a fixture over the years serving sausage and pancakes

“ I never imagined when I entered religious life where the path would take me ... and that my life would be so fulfilling. ”

— Sister Jean Messaros '73

to students at the annual Midnight Breakfast, driving the golf cart to lead Homecoming Parades, and shouting encouragement from the stands at countless athletic events.

Having experienced the transition from an all-girls college to a co-ed university, she is particularly proud of the addition of more than 20 varsity sports during her time in student activities – especially the launch of the football team.

Appointed to her current role of vice president for mission integration in 2013, she is responsible for the Catholic identity and Mercy mission of the University, and helping the campus maintain its Mercy traditions. Her efforts include bringing




Sisters of Mercy, above, celebrate Sister Jean's Jubilee, and, at left, Christine Somers, director of Campus Ministry, and Rev. Jim Elko bless Founders Circle during the University's 90th anniversary celebration.

Tibetan monks to campus to create a sand mandala in 2015 – a project that attracted hundreds of visitors and provided a unique spiritual experience for the local community.

In addition to numerous community awards, Sister Jean holds the Sister of Mercy Award, presented by the Misericordia University Alumni Association in 2009. Given from time to time, the award recognizes a Sister of Mercy for exceptional service to the University and sustained professional achievements.

The Branchdale, Pa., native has witnessed numerous changes in the religious order over five decades of service, and is looking ahead to the next chapter in its history as the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas reconfigures its leadership structure. "We are facing the next big change – expected in 2020, when the six regions of the Institute become one under a single leadership team," she says. "It is not like it was when I was young, and men and women were encouraged to enter religious life. We just don't have the number of sisters to carry out the work that faces us. Centralized leadership will help us be more fiscally responsible and carry on the mission as one unit."

Sister Jean's efforts to perpetuate the Mercy mission at Misericordia include expanding mission orientation for staff and faculty and spearheading support of the Sisters' critical concerns through academic programming, service projects and outreach to the community.

"Sister Jean has always used the history of Misericordia to help us understand the mission, and learn from it as we look to the future," adds Amy M. Lahart, dean of students, and a member of the Misericordia staff since 1992. "Never afraid of change, she has helped lead us to where we are today as a University and is guiding us forward within the Mercy traditions." 

PAYING IT FORWARD AT NYU

Bourger Women with Children graduate hopes to provide other underrepresented students with the same type of support she received on campus

BY MARIANNE TUCKER PUHALLA

Maria Williamson '14

HISTORY

Alumna Maria Williamson '14 will have plenty of experience to draw from when she presents at a student affairs conference at New York University (NYU) in New York City in February. Her topic: Engaging Student Mothers on Campus. Williamson is well versed in the subject, having earned a bachelor's degree in history while a student in the Ruth Matthews Bourger Women with Children Program at Misericordia University.

Originally from Indianapolis, Ind., Williamson first decided to continue her education in 2009 when her place of employment closed its doors – a consequence of America's economic recession. After experiencing abuse and financial hardship, she recognized that she needed to earn a degree to gain economic and emotional stability for herself and her two-year-old daughter, Amaya. Looking to find better opportunities, she moved the two of them to Florida, where she earned her Associates in Arts degree – but felt that wasn't enough.

Her daughter, Amaya, was four years old when Maria found and was accepted into the Bourger Program at Misericordia, one of eight of its kind in the country that offers housing and support to mothers and their children while they earn their bachelor's degree. For the family, the two-generational program is definitely working.

Today, nine-year-old Amaya is earning straight A's in her fourth grade class in Clifton, N.J., and Maria is pursuing her master's degree in higher

education and student affairs in the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development at NYU. She takes classes at night while working full time as the coordinator of pre-college programs in the Office of Undergraduate Admissions at Stevens Institute of Technology, Hoboken, N.J., where she also serves on the diversity committee. In true Misericordia style,



Maria Williamson '14, an alumna of the Ruth Matthews Bourger Women with Children Program, is a graduate student in the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development at New York University.

she is on a mission to create access for underrepresented students in higher education, and address issues of diversity, inclusion and multicultural affairs on college campuses.

"I would love nothing more than to facilitate a women with children program on other college campuses," says the 27-year-old. "It is most important to me for single mothers to understand the resources that are available to them. Not only did I have resources and support in raising my daughter on campus, but I was challenged to push myself

academically. I see students in my graduate classes struggle to write a scholarly paper because they did not have the guidance I had and the education and preparation I received at Misericordia."

As an undergraduate student at Misericordia, Williamson received an award for outstanding achievement in history and was inducted into the Alpha Sigma Lambda National Honor Society for adult students.

As a graduate student, Williamson was nominated by her peers to a coveted position on the executive board for the Association of Student Affairs Professionals at NYU as the part-time and alumni relations chair. She just recorded her second 4.0 semester, earning her a place on the dean's list as well. After graduating,

Williamson plans to continue her research and advocacy for student mothers and her work in the areas of diversity and inclusion. Ten years from now, she hopes to be directing a women with children program herself, to provide support and mentorship to single mothers – coming full circle from her own humble beginnings. [h](#)

FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM GROWS IN POPULARITY, BREADTH OF RESEARCH

The 2016 Misericordia University Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship Program mapped historic Pittston, examined Schwann cell lines, measured social participation improvement in children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder, and much more.

More importantly, though, it engaged 39 students and 19 faculty mentors in complex scientific and scholarly research in traditional laboratories on campus, and at various locations in the field. Furthermore, the program provides fellows with opportunities to grow by collaborating with other students, faculty and outside scholars. Critical thinking and independent learning skills are developed further as they explore beyond their current boundaries while seeking to develop new knowledge using innovative technology and methodology.

The popularity of the program has continued to grow since it was established in 2014. During that year, the Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship Program consisted of 12 students and eight faculty members engaged in eight unique projects with overall expenditures of \$38,000. It more than doubled in size in 2015, as 27 students and 13 faculty collaborated on 13 unique projects. The budget for the second year was \$126,000.

In 2016, 39 students and 19 faculty members worked on 25 distinctive projects that had a budget of \$192,000. "From a student's perspective, it makes sense to develop a close working relationship with a faculty mentor because that bond encourages students to stretch their boundaries," said President Thomas J. Botzman, who – as an undergraduate student – also engaged in research on novel silane coupling agents for polymer composites at Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio.

Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship Program

"These types of relationships encourage retention both at the University level and in the specific field of inquiry. As a University, we both transmit knowledge and create knowledge. Our fellowship program is another method to ensure we are successful," added President Botzman.

Fellowship program participants came together for one evening in October for the Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship Poster Presentation in Sandy and Marlene Insalaco Hall. The annual program is a precursor for many of the fellows presenting their oral and poster presentations at state and national conferences.

The following students and faculty mentors collaborated on research and scholarly work in 2016:

■ Angela Asirvatham, Ph.D., associate professor of biology, and students, Atasha Rehrig '18 and Michael Blazaskie '18: *Expression of AKAP 95, Krox-20, and Cyclin D3 in Immortalized Schwann Cell Lines*.

Dr. Asirvatham, and students, Rehrig and Blazaskie: *Expression of AKAP 150, Calcineurin and Phosphodiesterase 7A in Immortalized Schwann Cell Lines*.

■ Jennifer Black, Ph.D., assistant professor of history and government, and students, Laura Baut '19, Mike Boutanos '18, Gaetano Buonsante '19, Stefany Krasson '19, Briana Scorey '19 and Michael Shott '19: *Mapping Pittston's Past*.

■ Lori Charney, O.T.D., O.T.R./L., assistant professor of occupational therapy, and students, Lauren Apgar '17 and Amanda Salak '17: *Measuring Social Participation Improvement in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder*.

■ Grace Chen, Ph.D., assistant professor of biology, and student Olivia Katulka '19: *Exploration and Comparison of Digital Game-Based Learning in Biology*

at the College Level.

Dr. Chen and student, Bailey Waltman '19: *Play and Learn at the Same Time: Using PaGamO, a Digital Game-Based Learning Software, in the Course Essential Biology*.

■ Larry Corpus, Ph.D., assistant professor of biology, and student, Alivia Womelsdorf '17: *The Distribution of Blackfly Larvae (Diptera: Simuliidae) from Trout Brook, Northeastern Pennsylvania*.

■ Frank DiPino, Ph.D., professor of biology, and student, Andrew Phillips '17: *Liquid Biopsy Protein Biomarkers in Prostate Cancer*.

Dr. DiPino and student, Trinity Sprague '17: *Purification and Sequencing of the Human PAK2 Gene*.

■ Okla Elliott, Ph.D., assistant professor of English, and students, Nicole Grassi '18 and Taylor Rupp '16: *Holocaust and Comparative Genocide Pedagogy*.

■ Anna Fedor, Ph.D., assistant professor of chemistry and biochemistry, and student, Victoria Bednar '18: *Extraction of Green Tea Polyphenols by Sonication and the Inhibitory Effects on Digestive Enzymes*.

Dr. Fedor and student, Thomas Scott '17: *Supercritical CO2 Extraction of Polyphenols from Green Tea and the Inhibitory Effects on Pepsin*.

■ Jessica Kisenwether '07, Ph.D., assistant professor of speech-language pathology (SLP), and student, Jessica Dougherty '17: *What's the Consensus?: A Survey of Evaluation Methods Used by Professionals in the Area of Voice Disorders*.

■ Beth Haas, Ph.D., assistant professor of chemistry and biochemistry, and student, Leonard Watson '19: *Modeling Single Protein Diffusion on Bacterial Membranes*.



Participants in the Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship Program presented their research and scholarly work at the annual Poster Presentation Program during the fall semester. Participating in the program, first row from left, are Grace Chen, Ph.D.; Victoria Bednar '18, Nicole Grassi '18, Taylor Rupp '16, Stefany Krasson '19, Karlee Naylor '18, Grace Emmett '17, Charles Saladino, Ph.D., and Olivia Katulka '19; second row, Beth Haas, Ph.D.; Jennifer Black, Ph.D.; Angela Asirvatham, Ph.D.; Thomas Scott '17, Laura Baut '19, Kyle

Pelkey '18, Alexandra Irr '18, Briana Scorey '19, and Andrew Phillips '17; third row, Alicia Nordstrom, Ph.D.; Anna Fedor, Ph.D.; Larry Corpus, Ph.D.; Wilton Remigio, M.S., M.P.T., D.Sc.; Lori Charney, O.T.D., O.T.R./L.; Lauren Apgar '17, Michael Boutanos '18, Gaetano Buonsante '19, Atasha Rehrig '18 and Bailey Waltman '19; fourth row, Frank DiPino, Ph.D.; Jeffrey Stephens, Ph.D.; Okla Elliott, Ph.D.; Dave Chacke '17, Trinity Sprague '17, Michael Blazaskie '18, Shawn Dziepak '17, Alivia Womelsdorf '17, Andrea Nale '17, and Michael Shott '19.

■ Alicia Nordstrom, Ph.D., professor of psychology, and student, David Chacke '17: *You or the World? The Locus of Control's Influence on Academic Achievement in College Students.*

Dr. Nordstrom and student, Alec Kellish '17: *Spirituality/Religion, Coping Strategies and Perceived Stress in Graduate Students.*

Dr. Nordstrom and student, Karlee Naylor '18: *The Effect of Fear of*

biochemistry, and student, Shawn Dziepak '17: *A Unique Approach that Utilizes Luminometry to Study the Antioxidant Properties of Glutathione.*


■ Kathleen Scaler Scott, Ph.D., C.C.C.-S.L.P., associate professor of SLP, and students, Alexandra Irr '18 and Andrea Veneziale '17: *Conversation Analysis: Determining the Function of Word Final Disfluencies.*

Grace Emmett '17 and Andrea Nale '17: *Atomic Force Microscopy: Probing Between Biology and Physics.*

■ Christopher Stevens, Ph.D., assistant professor of history and government, and students, Ray Ellis '17, Sam Johnson '17 and Michael Podskoch '17: *Image Theory and Strategic Relation in the former Soviet Space: The Cases of Estonia and Latvia.*

■ Cari Tellis, Ph.D., C.C.C.-S.L.P., associate professor of SLP, and students, Allison McCallister '17 and Danielle Spagnuolo '18: *Using Functional Near Infrared Spectroscopy to Assess Cerebral Hemoglobin Changes Following Voice Training.*

■ Glen Tellis, Ph.D., C.C.C.-S.L.P., professor of SLP, and students, Cara Imbalzano '20, Abriel McCann '17, Kyle Pelkey '18 and D'manda Price '18: *Using fNIRS to Detect Hemoglobin Concentration Changes in the Cerebral Cortex of Typically Fluent Speakers.*

Dr. Tellis and student, D'manda Price '18: *Optical Measures to Determine Hemoglobin Concentration During Delayed Auditory Feedback Use.* 

“As a University, we both transmit knowledge and create knowledge. Our fellowship program is another method to ensure we are successful.”

— Thomas J. Botzman, Ph.D., President

Failure, Psychological Distress, and Quality of Life on Procrastination and Perfectionism in Graduate Students.

■ David Perkins, Ph.D., assistant professor of mathematics, and students, Michael Gottstein '17 and Tara Koskulitz '18: *KAMI and Collapsing Graphs.*

■ Charles Saladino, Ph.D., associate professor of chemistry and

■ Wilton Remigio, M.S., M.P.T., D.Sc., assistant professor of physical therapy, and students, Bridget Boyle '16 and Nicole Palanza '17: *A New Thermally Mediated Cardiac Reflex: Can Thermal Cutaneous Application to Skin Send Instant Messages to the Heart?*

■ Jeffrey Stephens, Ph.D., assistant professor of physics, and students,

**Service trip to
therapeutic riding
center inspires
Misericordia
University students**

Life Lessons



NICHOLSON, Pa. – For at least 30 minutes every week, 10-year-old Aiden Holman gets to be active like other youngsters his age and goes horseback riding at Oak Leaf Therapeutic Horsemanship Center, a picturesque 72-acre

farm in the Endless Mountains of northeastern Pennsylvania.

With sunlight streaming through the barn doors on this chilly October Saturday, Holman makes his way around the ring on his favorite horse, Dazzle, under the direction of the center's owner,

BY
MARIANNE
TUCKER PUHALLA



Loretta Dragon, R.N. An occasional smile peeks through as Holman concentrates hard to maintain his balance as the horse walks a cautious serpentine pattern within the barn.

Holman's rides are extra special, as he has been blind since developing a



Visit bit.ly/muservicefall16 to see more photographs of the service trip.



Misericordia University students witnessed the specialized benefits of therapeutic horseback riding for special needs children during their fall break service trip to Oak Leaf Therapeutic Horsemanship Center. Volunteers, from left are, Kiley Morrison '18, '21, Newport, Pa.; Emily DiGirolamo '17, Ottsville, Pa.; Cassy Silveri '19, Plains Pa.; Hailey Inge '19, '21, Ledgewood, N.J.; Lindsey Riddell, community outreach coordinator; Kaili Higgins '18, Vestal, N.Y.; Emily Ousouljoglou '17, Bridgewater, N.J.; Mary Shaw '17, Sayre, Pa.; Giovana Augustine '18, Shavertown, Pa.; and Shawn Dziepak '17, Bordentown, N.J.

brain tumor at age 5. In addition, he has limited motor skills on his left side after suffering a stroke during the surgery to remove the tumor. This day, a gutsy Holman took control of the reins for the first time in three months of lessons – bringing tears to the eyes of his grandmother, Cheryl Holmes of nearby Factoryville. Watching with her was a group of Misericordia University students who gave up their fall break with family and friends to volunteer their service at the center.

The Oak Leaf Center provides equine therapy to about 30 riders every week under the careful guidance of Dragon, a cardiac nurse and a Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International certified instructor, who is trained to provide equine-assisted activities and therapies for people with special needs. She combines her medical knowledge and a lifetime of horse savvy to design each riding experience to best meet the needs of the rider. Among her current clients, the challenges range from blindness, autism and stroke to anger management and epilepsy.

The Oak Leaf Center relies on the assistance of volunteers, and the nine Misericordia students, accompanied by Lindsey Riddell, community outreach coordinator, spent four days serving as side walkers for the riders, and helping Dragon and her staff feed and care for the horses, and maintain the barn. Representing a wide variety of majors, including business administration, sport management, social work, education, occupational therapy and physical therapy, the students were not sure what to expect, yet came away with an emotional lesson in what it means to overcome a disability and think outside the box when treating those with special needs.

Their up-close look helped them understand the benefits of the unique therapy — and specifically, how the

horses' gentle, rhythmic movements help clients with a variety of motor and communication skills.

"Seeing the joy on the faces of the children who have faced so many challenges in their short lives is something I will hold near and dear to my heart for a very long time," says Haley Inge '19, '20, a business

"As an occupational therapy student, this experience reminded me that every child or adult that I work with is going to be different."

- Kaili Higgins '18

administration major in the pre-Doctor of Physical Therapy Program. "We had the opportunity of witnessing this amazing young boy named Aiden actually guide the horse that he was riding for the first time — in an arena that he couldn't see. I was in complete awe of this young man, and I will always remember the impact that he had on me in the 30 minutes that he was in his lesson."

Kiley Morrison '18, '21, a sport management major in the pre-Doctor of Physical Therapy Program, was equally touched by the experience. "To help during Aiden's lesson, we were stationed at special points around the ring and called out the letters posted at each spot as he passed them. I was amazed when he was able to predict the next letter, mapping out the ring in his mind," Morrison explains. "It was amazing to hear how the clients are able to improve not only their riding, but their overall physical and mental abilities. It made it clear to me that in the field of physical therapy, you do not need to limit yourself to an office setting and can incorporate things like equine

Continued on next page



For information on the Oak Leaf Therapeutic Horsemanship Center in Nicholson, please go to the website www.oakleafthc.org or call (570) 945-3922.



Misericordia University student Emily DiGirolamo '17, a speech-language pathology major from Ottsville, Pa., left, serves as a side walker during a therapeutic horse riding lesson for 10-year-old Aiden Holman and his favorite horse, Dazzle. Helping guide Dazzle is Oak Leaf staff member Paige Spencer.



Life Lessons

from page 17

therapy to receive tremendous benefits for your patient."

Speech-language pathology major Emily DiGirolamo '17 agrees: "I am learning that it is a holistic approach that not only helps with physical issues, but with social skills as well. I was lucky to be able to walk with Aiden and see him guide his horse for the first time. It is amazing how quickly people learn around horses."

Early and special education major Giovana Augustine '18 cannot wait to incorporate the teaching techniques she witnessed at the farm when she gets into the classroom. "Loretta taught us that because she works with so many horses and clients, she really has to know each one — from the way they walk to their different anxiety levels — so that she can match them appropriately in an environment where it is safe and positive, and they can learn to the best of their ability," she says. "At the center, I was able to help encourage and support children to do something they love and are passionate about even though they might do it a little bit differently than the next person. It was an amazing experience, one that I will take with me forever."

Fellow early and special education major Mary Shaw '17 was similarly impacted by her experience. "This was an eye-opening, inspiring, and incredible experience. I plan on using what I learned to better understand the difficulties some of my students may have and how to adapt to work with them," Shaw says. "On the first day, I was able to interact with an older sister of one of the clients, while her sister was riding. She talked to me about school, horses and riding. Next, I was able to see her ride. She did an amazing job and everyone clapped for her when she got done. I just saw this big smile on her face. To hear her talking about what she wanted to do while riding, then seeing her do it and how happy it made her, was just amazing to me."

Many of the Misericordia students had never been on a horse nor were familiar with riding. Dragon gave


each one a chance to ride a horse in order to get a feel for what the clients were experiencing.

"Until I saw and rode a few of the horses, I didn't fully understand when Loretta would say that each horse is different and has a different personality," says Kaili Higgins '18, an occupational therapy major.

Higgins spent part of her Saturday helping guide Aria Nedkov, a smiling second grader with autism, around the ring on her favorite horse, Simba. "Once I saw how each horse handled each child differently, it suddenly clicked for me," Higgins says. "As an occupational therapy student, this experience reminded me that every child or adult that I work with is going to be different — what works for one may not work for another. As a result, we (as therapists) have to be patient and sometimes take a different path in order to positively influence that person's life."

Nedkov was non-verbal when she started the lessons four years ago, and through a variety of therapies and support from her family, now speaks in full sentences. She chatted with Higgins throughout her lesson about how much she loves horses and how she lost four teeth.

"This farm has been in my family for five generations," says Dragon, who earned her nursing license in 1990 and works part-time as a cardiac nurse. "I grew up with horses and knew I wanted to do more than just board them. I first saw a therapeutic riding program in 2005, and built a specialized barn here in 2008 to start the therapeutic lessons.

"Volunteers are our bloodline — without them it would be very tough on my staff to keep up with all that needs to be done," Dragon adds. "The Misericordia group is a terrific bunch. I love having college students. Being here opens their eyes, and teaches them that you need to think outside the box, no matter what your major is. There will always be people in our society that need special help. They see what can be accomplished with these special needs children and horses, and it becomes a tool that stays with them for the rest of their lives." 



Misericordia University student Kaili Higgins '18, an occupational therapy major from Vestal, N.Y., left, shares a smile with Aria Nedkov, a second grader with autism, shown during a ride on her favorite horse, Simba, at Oak Leaf Therapeutic Horsemanship Center in Nicholson, Pa.



For more information about service opportunities for students at Misericordia University, please contact Lindsey Riddell in the Community Outreach Office at (570) 674-8041 or go online to www.misericordia.edu/CampusMinistry and click on the Service to Others link.



AOTA appoints Dr. McLaughlin to Roster of Fellows

Ellen McLaughlin, Ed.D., O.T.R./L., B.C.P., associate professor of occupational therapy (OT) at Misericordia, will be appointed to the American Occupational Therapy Association's (AOTA) Roster of Fellows at the annual Awards and Recognitions Ceremony during the spring AOTA Conference & Expo in Philadelphia, Pa.



Dr. McLaughlin

The AOTA Roster of Fellows recognizes members of AOTA who have used their knowledge and expertise to make a significant contribution to the continuing education and

professional development of members of the association. The inscription on the award will recognize Dr. McLaughlin for being a "passionate educator, expert consultant and devoted mentor."

Dr. McLaughlin is the director of the doctoral program in OT, having joined the program as an assistant professor in 1990. During her career at Misericordia, she has served as associate division chair of health sciences, chair of the Department of OT and interim dean of the College of Health Sciences.

She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees in OT from Misericordia, and a doctorate in learning, cognition and development from Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N.J. She also received a certificate in interdisciplinary infant studies and is board certified in pediatrics by AOTA.

She served as the chair of the Accreditation Council for OT Education (ACOTE) from 2012-15. She is an ACOTE emeriti team mentor, serving as the chair for mentoring new evaluators. A member of AOTA since 1986, Dr. McLaughlin also has served on the accreditation council and on its Commission on Education.

IMPROVING THE SENSORY SYSTEM

Occupational therapy alumna studies interoception and impact it has on individuals with autism

BY GEOFF RUSHTON

Most of us grew up learning that humans have five senses, but scientists have shown there are more. There is our ability to feel our muscles and joints and our sense of movement. And then there is interoception.

"That's your ability to feel the inside of your body – to feel your stomach, your intestines, your heart rate, air hunger when you hold your breath, muscle tension," explains Kelly Mahler, M.S., O.T.R./L., '02, a graduate of Misericordia University's five-year master's degree program in occupational therapy. "It helps us feel so many different things inside the body."

Mahler, a pediatric occupational therapist in Hershey, Pa., studies interoception and its impact on individuals with autism. She recently delivered a keynote address on the subject to the American Occupational Therapy Association Specialty Conference on Autism and she is the author of "Interoception: The Eighth Sensory System."

She says that interoception is important to our emotional experience. For example, when your heart is beating fast and you feel shaky, you know you are feeling nervous.

"We have a lot to learn in regards to interoception and autism, but what some of the research is showing is that a lot of people with autism have difficulty with interoception," Mahler says. "They have a really hard time being able to monitor their emotions. Obviously you need to feel your building anger and building anxiety because that's when you want to use strategy to help you feel calm again. People with autism have a hard time feeling these internal signals and using them to put themselves in a calm and comfortable space."

Challenges with this sensory system create physical issues as well. It can impact an individuals' ability to sense when they need to go to the bathroom or are hungry or thirsty. Mahler's research focuses on the specific correlations between autism and interoception and developing strategy to improve the sensory system.

"I work with some clients who can go all day long without taking a sip of

Kelly Mahler,
M.S., O.T.R./L.,
'02

.....
OCCUPATIONAL
THERAPY

CELEBRATE WITH US: OT AT 100

The profession of occupational therapy is celebrating its 100th birthday. The Misericordia University Department of Occupational also is participating in the national observation by hosting a "100 Years of OT" reception for alumni at Tir Na Nog at 1600 Arch St., Philadelphia, Pa., on Saturday, April 1 at 7 p.m. The reception follows the annual American Occupational Therapy Association Conference and Expo.

To make a reservation, please call Jennifer Dessoie, O.T.D., O.T.R./L., assistant professor of occupational therapy, at (570) 674-6494.

water or eating because they don't feel that urge," Mahler says. "They don't feel those internal signals. It can have a really drastic impact on their health and well-being."

Mahler is currently working on two research projects related to interoception and autism. With physicians from Penn State Hershey Medical Center, she is measuring what differences exist in the sensory system for individuals with autism. Mahler also is working with graduate students from Elizabethtown College's occupational therapy program to develop interventions and specific protocols for improving interoception in children with autism.

Over the course of her 14-year career, Mahler has become an expert in her field on occupational therapy and autism. Her books have focused on building friendship skills, hygiene and related behaviors and how children with high-functioning Autism Spectrum Disorder or ASD relate to the world through their senses.

"I'm just so passionate about working with people with autism and improving their lives, it's become easy," Mahler says. "It's been a lot of hard work to get to the point where I'm at. Writing a book requires many, many hours. It's because of my passion and that's because I've been inspired by a lot of amazing colleagues."

After working in schools as an occupational therapist for another organization, she founded Mahler Autism Services in Hershey to provide support to school-aged children and young adults with ASD. Mahler contracts directly with schools and provides individual occupational therapy, social skill groups, consultation for school districts and presentations on a number of topics.

With Mahler Autism Services, she sees 40-50 clients a week individually and in groups. The company grew out of work she began more than a

decade ago with several colleagues starting an organization called "Destination Friendship."

"We provide fun opportunities in the community for people with autism," she says of the organization, which was eventually brought under the umbrella of Mahler Autism. "Our main purpose is to provide fun and also provide opportunities to meet other people and hopefully form friendships, which can be really challenging a lot of times for a lot of clients."

Mahler knew she wanted to focus on pediatrics while she was studying occupational therapy at Misericordia.

But it wasn't until she met her first client with high-functioning autism that she knew where her career would take her.

"I still remember it clear as day. That just sealed the deal," Mahler says. "I found him to be such a great person and I think he ignited my passion the moment he walked into my treatment room. He was like 'Can you help me?' and 'I said I'll try

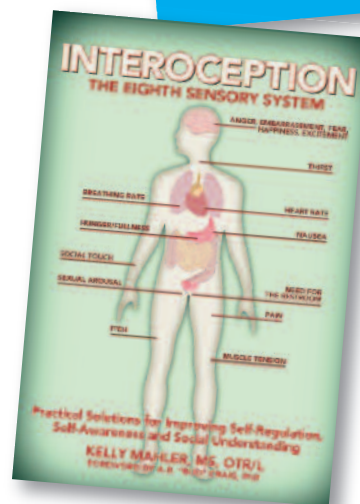
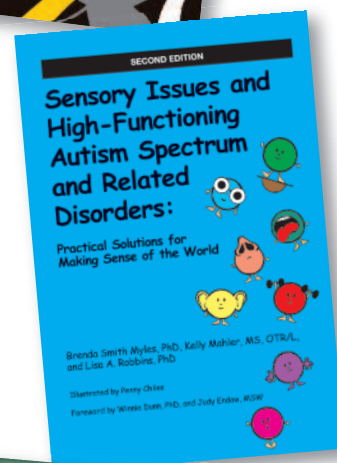
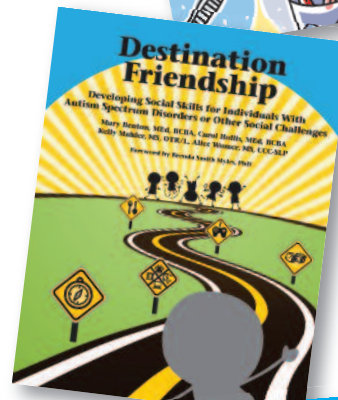
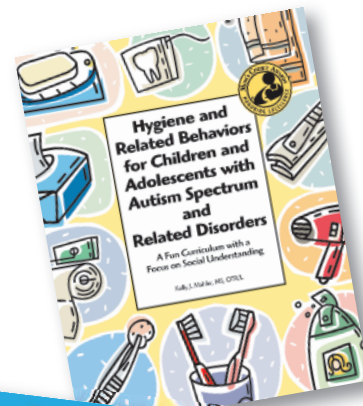
my best.' Back then we knew very little about high functioning autism."

Misericordia gave her the best possible education for entering the field, she says. The program gave students a well-rounded view of occupational therapy at a time when the profession had become "mechanical."

She explains that when she started working in school systems, she was surprised to see so much focus in occupational therapy solely on handwriting, when she had learned there was so much more to consider and work on.

"Our professors at Misericordia really maintained the roots of OT," she says. "They instilled so much mental health into our curriculum and I really feel like that inspired me to stay true to the roots of occupational therapy. It was so global and more holistic and staying true to the profession. I wouldn't have traded it for anything. It is an amazing program." **h**

Kelly Mahler '02 has written the following books:



MURoar9.24

One day of giving leads to a lifetime of opportunities for students

As roars go, this one was pretty impressive. The Office of Alumni Engagement quickly rallied around a challenge issued by alumna Helen T. O'Brien '68 to secure 924 gifts from donors, including alumni, students, parents, faculty, staff and the community at-large by midnight Sept. 24, 2016 for the inaugural Giving Day. At stake was a \$25,000 endowed scholarship that she would establish to support service trips abroad.



O'Brien '68

Thanks to the Misericordia community coming together, the University's first service scholarship will be named the F.J. O'Brien Family Campus Ministry Servant Leadership Scholarship in honor and memory of Ms. O'Brien's paternal grandparents, Francis J. and Bridget Carney O'Brien.

The campus' pulse raced as volunteers from Students Today, Alumni Forever, a new initiative on campus dedicated to raising awareness of and overseeing student philanthropy, and others manned Giving Day Headquarters in Sandy and Marlene Insalaco Hall. Students sketched and colored an image of the historic archway and a thermometer goal chart to track gifts.

Other volunteers manned phones and welcomed alumni, students and friends to Giving Day Headquarters where they

answered questions and handed out numerous "Because You Give, I Can ..." cards that enabled students and other donors to share their heart-felt messages of what giving means to them. Students also called donors to thank them for their gift and tell them what it means to students and the University.

In the end, 1,008 donors participated by calling in their pledges or giving online, including 120 first-time donors.

Gifts made during the MURoar924 campaign support the Misericordia Fund, which provides support tailored to the meet the highest priority needs of students during the academic year, including financial assistance for students, instructional and academic support, student services, institutional support, and the physical plant. The MURoar924 campaign also featured the Glow Big or Glow Home 5K Run/Walk on Sept. 23 that benefitted the Misericordia Fund.

Giving Day coincides with the anniversary of Misericordia's founding by the Religious Sisters of Mercy on Sept. 24, 1924. To make a donation to the second annual day of giving, please log on to www.MURoar924.com or contact Lauren Gorney, assistant director of alumni engagement, at (570) 674-6228 or at lgorney@misericordia.edu.

FAST FACTS

In the 10 a.m. hour on Friday, Sept. 23 the University received a gift every **2.5 minutes**.

Total donors: **1,008**

First time donors: **120**

Service hours: **195,396** (2014 15)

Students Performing Service: **2,877**

Volunteers for Giving Day: **80**

Glow Run: **200 participants**

We asked students what gifts to GIVING DAY mean to them. These are some of their responses:

"Because You Give, I Can ... fulfill my dream of becoming an occupational therapist."

– Shelby Abraham '21, Nanuet, N.Y.

"Because You Give, I Can ... continue giving to others as a future SLP (speech-language pathologist)."

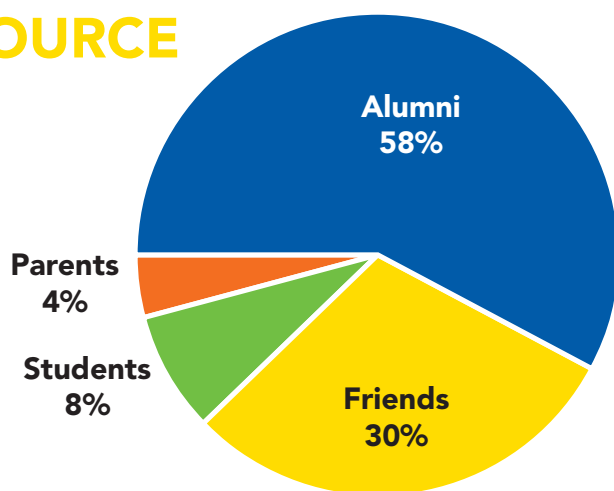
– Riley McKee '18, '19, Southampton, Pa.

"Because You Give, I Can ... go to the best school and become an OT (occupational therapist)."

– Olivia Johnson '20, Jamison, Pa.



SUPPORT SOURCE



FAMILY AFFAIR

The Krasson family has deep roots at Misericordia. Joe is a carpenter in the Department of Building and Grounds, while his wife and two daughters are students. His wife, Becky Krasson '19, is working toward her Master of Science degree in education as a reading specialist, while daughter, Emilee '18, is majoring in health care management and marketing, and Stefany '19 is a history and pre-law major.

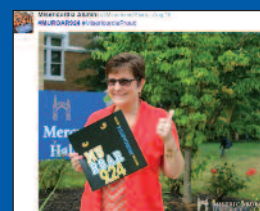
The family used MURoar924 Giving Day as a forum to express their thanks to the institution. "As an employee of Misericordia University, my family and I are profoundly grateful for the opportunities the University has provided for us," Joe Krasson said. "Our donation is simply an expression of our gratitude."



The Krasson family, from left, Emilee '18, Stefany '19, Joe and Becky '19 showed their appreciation to Misericordia by making a donation in their family's name to the inaugural campaign.

GOING SOCIAL

Follow the campaign's progress on Twitter by using the hashtag **#MURoar924** or visit **MUROAR924.com**.



TEAMS BEHIND THE DREAM

Alumni Social Class Agents
Class Officers and Class of 2017
Students Today, Alumni Forever
University Advancement
Cheerleading team
Dance ensemble
Women's lacrosse team
Helen T. O'Brien '68
Strive Multisport

UNDERSTANDING THE POWER OF PERSEVERANCE

Occupational therapy alumna's efforts aid pre-term infants with feeding challenges

BY GEOFF RUSHTON

Carissa Peppard Snelling, M.S., O.T.R./L., B.C.P., '05

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

For Carissa Peppard Snelling, M.S., O.T.R./L., B.C.P., '05, perseverance and a constant exploration of new ideas pays off – not just for her, but for the infants and children she has spent her career helping.

Snelling, a graduate of Misericordia University's five-year occupational therapy master's degree program, led the effort to bring a new, high-tech device that's helping pre-term infants with feeding challenges learn how to suck from a bottle or breast to Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Hospital's Pediatric Unit in Bethlehem, Pa.

Her work makes Good Shepherd the only rehab facility on the East Coast to use the FDA-approved NTrainer® System. "You realize how much development goes on in utero and children who do come into the world prematurely don't have that opportunity to really develop the reflexes and skills they need for bottle drinking," Snelling says.

For babies born prematurely without the readiness to take liquid by mouth, the first method for developing the sucking ability would normally be to use a pacifier or gloved finger to apply pressure to the tongue and stimulate what is called a non-nutritive suck.

The NTrainer is more advanced and strategic. A pacifier is connected to tubing that runs to a computer system. As the baby mouths or sucks on the pacifier, the computer records data and measures the strength and rhythm of the suck. It creates a graph

that therapists can analyze and use to develop a treatment plan.

At the same time, as the baby is receiving food via a tube inserted through the nose or stomach, a compressor sends a puff of air to the pacifier to inflate it at a rhythm and intensity that mimics sucking on a bottle or breast.

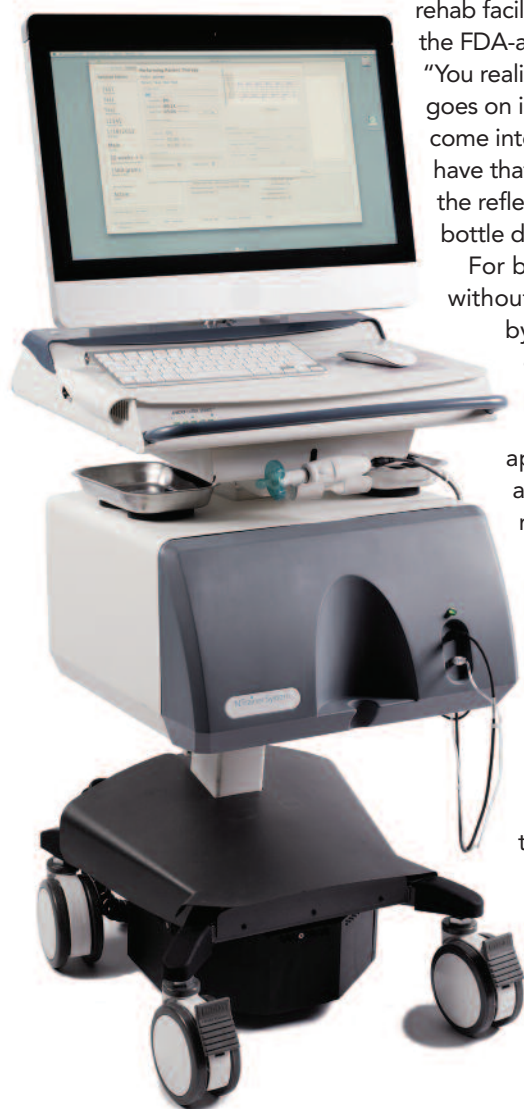
"With that patterning, you're teaching an infant how to develop that sucking skill," Snelling explains. "In time we transition the infant off of the NTrainer and on to a bottle or breast. We're seeing they're able to use that skill in order to accept formula or breast milk."

Snelling spent the past four years working to bring the NTrainer to Good Shepherd. The inpatient pediatric unit there is fairly new at just seven years old, and while administrators were interested in it, they were initially unsure if the technology and its high price tag would be viable.

"Good Shepherd prides itself as an organization on having leading-edge technology," Snelling says. "After several years of being open and showing we do take preterm infants who are not ready to go home yet, they recognized that need and accepted my request. It took persistence and patience, but just always knowing this was the right fit for not only Good Shepherd as an organization but also the children we were serving."

Snelling has been at the leading edge of helping infants and children overcome challenges throughout her career. She specialized in pediatrics during her time at Misericordia and is now one of only five occupational therapists in Pennsylvania recognized as having a board certification in pediatrics by the American Occupational Therapy Association, an achievement that requires years of experience and an extensive portfolio to demonstrate a high level of expertise. Now, Snelling serves as a reviewer for the panel that makes the decisions.

Her interest in working with children came early and inspired her to pursue occupational therapy. She was a nanny for a young girl



Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Hospital's Pediatric Unit is the only hospital on the East Coast to utilize the NTrainer® System.

living with cerebral palsy who received early intervention therapy.

"She would have an OT come to her house and I would watch, and I was fascinated in how the OT would adapt a paintbrush or a marker so the little girl I was watching could do those things," Snelling recalls. "After asking a lot of questions and observing different areas of OT, I always kept coming back to children."

After graduating, Snelling did early intervention therapy in homes with children from birth through 3 with developmental delays, via a government-funded program administered by Easter Seals of Eastern Pennsylvania. She said she put 90,000 miles on her car in the first year covering a five-county area. But it was an experience that formed the rest of her career.

"So much of what I do in the hospital setting is based on my early intervention work, having that grounded philosophy that it doesn't matter what successes the child has in the hospital. It matters what's happening in their homes," she says.

Snelling went on to join Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Hospital in its then newly created Pediatric Unit. There she became one of the founders of the Inpatient Feeding Program, where she led the charge to bring in the NTrainer System.

"When Good Shepherd hired me, I had a niche in that area and I made it my personal goal and professional goal to really develop a well-recognized, high level of clinical excellence program for infants, toddlers and children with feeding challenges," she says.

The program is an integrated team model with a pediatrician, rehab doctor, therapists, a case manager, nurses, dietician, a family counselor, and a chaplain all involved. Through her work in early intervention, she recognized how often she needed the expertise of others to address feeding issues.

It was important, she said, to have many people of different backgrounds

to bring their knowledge to addressing feeding issues. "When you look at a feeding challenge for a child, you have to serve as a detective to understand what went awry and what's causing them not to eat," Snelling says. "No one person can make all those observations by themselves nor can they have all the insight into what's going on. They have to work together

and though the program only accepted 50 students at the time, it worked out as she had hoped. "It's such a wonderful place and obviously the reputation in the OT field for Misericordia is just top notch," she says. "I received financial assistance, a scholarship and everything fell into place."

Misericordia became a place of growth – academically, spiritually,



An infant uses the NTrainer® System. Carissa Peppard Snelling (inset).

as a collaborative to paint this picture of what is going on."

Snelling was a therapy supervisor, overseeing 14 therapists and ensuring the highest quality of care for children. She recently presented a workshop on pediatric feeding disorders at the American Occupational Therapy Association's annual conference in Chicago, Ill. In September, she transitioned to a new role as community liaison, providing outreach to health care providers and organizations focused on children's health.

And that enthusiasm was fostered at Misericordia. She came to the school the child of a single mom, Kiki Peppard. The family did not have much money and her guidance counselor, a Misericordia graduate, at Pleasant Valley High School in Broadheadsville, Pa., encouraged her to check out the intimate school.

It was the only college she applied to,

socially and emotionally – for Snelling. She got involved with the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) program to receive the sacrament of confirmation. And she was challenged in the classroom.

She was most enthusiastic about pediatrics. Professor and pediatric coordinator Lalit Shah, Ed., O.T.R./L., she said, could be a tough instructor, but she came to realize it was to make his students the best in their field.

"He definitely pushes his students past the point of competency toward excellence," Snelling says. "I cursed him under my breath constantly, his tests were impossible. But now when I think about it, he wanted us to be equivalent to him as a peer in a professional environment. It was only to promote the field of OT and advance pediatrics to be recognized as such high quality. I appreciate that and it taught me perseverance." [h](#)

TACKLING THE WORD GAP

Alumna in national competition to address issue that affects children's development

BY GEOFF RUSHTON

In the first three years of life, babies in low-income families hear about 30 million fewer words than those in high-income families. It's called the "word gap" and it is a critical issue for child development.

Aimee Tucci Ketchum, O.T.R./L., C.N.M.I., '95, a Misericordia alumna with a Bachelor of Science degree in occupational therapy, is working to close that gap – and she's deep into a national challenge to find the solution. "Babies' brains develop 85 percent of their full potential in those first three years," Ketchum explains. "These children are starting school behind their peers. They are falling behind in literacy and they never catch up."

**Aimee Tucci
Ketchum, O.T.R./L.,
C.N.M.I., '95**

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Ketchum has advanced to the third and final round of The Word Gap Challenge, a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services competition to educate parents about the importance of talking to their babies. It began in March, when the challenge was launched and Ketchum submitted her proposal to create a mobile app,

combining her occupational therapy and technological skills. Ketchum's Word Gap App proposal was among the 10 selected to advance to the next phase.

The founder of Aimee's Babies, a child development company, she found herself up against teams from universities and national organizations. Where many already had their product created, she was starting from scratch. Over the next six months, she got to work with the \$10,000 she was awarded to create and pilot test it. The app uses more than 200 videos that demonstrate positive interactions between parents and babies.

"I thought this could be a really great way to use video modeling, which has proven efficacy in demonstrating how to speak to a child, not only including more words in their day but also using positive language," she says.

Advancing to the second phase was at first a daunting experience. On monthly conference calls for the competitors, she found each team introducing five to 10 members. "Then it would get to Aimee's Babies and 'Hi, it's me, Aimee,'" she says.

In September, the teams presented their work to a panel of judges and at a demo day in Washington, D.C. At the end of the day, Ketchum's app advanced to the third round

along with four others. She was awarded \$25,000 to further develop the app and get it into as many hands as possible. Ketchum also is using part of that to award scholarships to high school juniors and seniors who write essays about how their parents avoided the word gap.

In March, the final winner will be selected to receive \$100,000 and be the official project to be marketed by the U.S. Department of Health for addressing the word gap. Ketchum's app, which is now available in the iTunes App Store and Google Play store, is already being used by the Lancaster Community Action Program, more than 1,000 day cares in Pennsylvania and the Yale School of Medicine Child Development Center.

Ketchum has worked directly with parents for feedback and found they have become more confident in their parenting after using the app, and have increased the words their children hear. "It really creates an increased awareness for parents of how important it is to be talking and interacting with their child all day long," says Ketchum. She encourages anyone with a child under the age of 5 who is interested in helping test the app, which was officially launched at the Zero to Three Convention in New Orleans, La., in December, to contact her at aimeek@ptd.net.

Also a pediatric occupational therapist for Heart of Lancaster Outpatient Therapy Center in Lancaster, Pa., what has helped set Ketchum apart is her experience as an occupational therapist. She works everyday with the target population, seeing firsthand what works. Perhaps most importantly, she recognized not just what parents need to do for their children, but also what they must do for themselves.

"I'm the only one that included in my project a component of managing stress, emphasizing that these low-income parents are under a tremendous amount of stress and they have to take care of themselves before they can take care of their child," she says. "I really looked at the whole person, and a pretty significant part of my app is devoted to nurturing the parents."

That includes a database of resources available online for parents, from dealing with post-partum depression to applying for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to how to ask for help from friends and families.

In her role as an occupational therapist, Ketchum was working with a young father and suggested he read to his baby. He told her that was the mom's job. "A light bulb went off and I realized I needed to get a role model for these young men," she says.

So Ketchum set about researching NFL teams in the northeast. She identified New England Patriots defensive back Patrick Chung, who has a young child of his own, has a children's charity and grew up in a house with two musicians for parents. After convincing the team's community liaison to give Chung her proposal, he immediately accepted. The app opens with a video clip of Chung.

"I have Patrick... doing a video clip saying, 'I read and sing to my baby every day. It's great for him. If I can do it, anyone can do it,'" Ketchum explains.

The app, available in English and Spanish, also features eight original children's songs written by Ketchum and more than 100 nursery rhymes, and it sends text notifications to remind parents to talk to their babies throughout the day. It uses a point system to encourage users, who get points for watching videos, trying new things and posting the types of interactions they've had on social media. Those points can be redeemed for Aimee's Babies products like DVDs and other apps.

Developing an app wasn't a new experience for her. Aimee's Babies already offers eight apps, each available through the iTunes App Store with links on aimeesbabies.com. They include apps for baby exercises, vision, newborn, three-month, six-month and 12-month development, and two for baby massage.

Aimee's Babies first began while Ketchum was working as an occupational therapist in a NICU. She found that parents taking their babies home may have been too overwhelmed to take in the information she provided them. So she made a basic video they could take home with exercises to do with their babies. She began sharing that with colleagues, one of whom showed it to a publisher who wanted to buy it.

Ketchum revamped it and sold it. Several years later she bought the rights back and began making more DVDs from there. Combining her previous experience working with school-age children with developmental delays as well as her work with infants and toddlers, Aimee's Babies now offers apps, DVDs and CDs, in addition to her website, that address a range of issues in child development.

Ketchum said her Misericordia experience continues to help her today. She cites the education of and relationships formed with faculty. "I had great professors at Misericordia," says Ketchum, who is pursuing her doctorate in occupational therapy. "Dr. Ellen McLaughlin, who I still keep in touch with, has been very influential, really helping me and supporting me."

And an extracurricular activity still gives her reassurance. When Ketchum decided she wanted to pursue occupational therapy, she

was a student at Susquehanna University, where she was involved in the theater club. She was disappointed when she transferred to Misericordia and found there wasn't one. So she started one herself.

"I draw on that because it was such a big undertaking," says Ketchum, who is proud to see how the Misericordia Players has grown and has come back to see performances. "There have been times in life when I've taken something on and thought, 'well, that theater club turned out pretty good'." **h**

“I really looked at the whole person, and a pretty significant part of my app is devoted to nurturing the parents.”

— Aimee Tucci Ketchum, O.T.R./L., C.N.M.I., '95



Aimee Tucci Ketchum, O.T.R./L., C.N.M.I., '95 has advanced to the third and final round of The Word Gap Challenge.

ALUMNI NEWS

For more information about alumni events and news, visit the MU website: misericordia.edu/alumni



Mary Ellen
Gulotti '87

Honoring one of our own

A few years ago, the Alumni Association Board of Directors voted to bestow the status of honorary alumni to certain individuals who embody the charisms of Mercy, Service, Justice and Hospitality, and who have been longtime friends of Misericordia and the Religious Sisters of Mercy.

In 2015, the University inducted its first honorary alumnus Andrea Payne, the wife of our beloved Professor David Payne.

I am proud to say the board will honor Dr. Louis Maganzin, Ph.D. on Saturday, May 20 by presenting him with the



Dr. Maganzin

Honorary Alumnus Award at the spring graduate commencement ceremony at 10 a.m. in the Anderson Sports and Health Center.

The award honors individuals who are not graduates of Misericordia, but have made significant contributions toward its welfare, reputation or prestige, and have shown lifelong devotion and demonstrated loyalty.

Alumni who attended Misericordia between the late 1960s and late 1990s were fortunate to have Dr. Maganzin for U.S. History. Consider this your early invitation to see Dr. Maganzin receive his Honorary Alumni status.

Seating is limited for commencement ceremonies, so please reserve your ticket in advance by contacting the Office of Alumni, Community and Donor Relations at (570) 674 6764 or by e mailing Lailani Augustine at laugusti@misericordia.edu.

Mary Ellen Gulotti

Mary Ellen Gulotti '87

CLASS NOTES

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

1964

Marianne Wilpizewski Strong '64

published two more mystery short stories. In September 2016, she published, *Louisa and the Silver Buckle*, in The Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine. It is the first in a new series set in Cape May and based on Louisa May Alcott's own mystery stories. Marianne's 40th mystery story, *The Second Storm*, appears in an anthology of mystery stories entitled *Storm Warning*, published by Wildside Press, 2016.

1966

Mary Alice Blaum Endler '66

and her husband, Edward (Ned) Endler, Wilkes-Barre, Pa., celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Aug. 6, 2016. They have three children and six grandchildren. Mary Alice is a retired fourth grade teacher at St. Nicholas-St. Mary School, Wilkes-Barre. The couple renewed their wedding vows at a private Mass at St. Nicholas Chapel performed by Monsignor Joseph Rauscher. Following Mass, a family dinner was given in their honor by their children at the Westmoreland Club, Wilkes-Barre.



Ann Kane Hayes '66 and her husband, Jack, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on Sept. 3, 2016. The couple

Conversation with President Botzman

Alumni, Community and Donor Relations is holding *Conversation with the President* on Wednesday, March 22 at 7:30 p.m. The live, interactive phone conference with President Thomas J. Botzman, Ph.D., is an opportunity for alumni and friends to remain current on developments at Misericordia. Alumni and friends can opt into the event when they receive a robocall the week of the event. Those who choose to participate also will receive a call to remind them the day of the conference. For more information, please call (570) 674-6764.

was married at Holy Name of Jesus Church, Swoyersville, Pa., on Sept. 3, 1966. They are parents of four daughters, Margaret Ann, Molly, Bridget, and Kathleen.

1986

Frank Michael '86 has been named senior vice president of program development at the National Defense Industrial Association in Washington, D.C. The former commanding officer of the USS Boxer (LHD 4), Frank also has served in recent years as a Chief of Naval

SAVE THE DATE!

ALUMNI WEEKEND 2017 JUNE 2-4

Register online: cougarconnect.misericordia.edu/aw17



Operations Fellow in the Chief of Naval Operations Strategic Studies Group, and chief of the Strategy and Policy Division of Navy Staff (N513) in the Pentagon. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree in nursing. In 2012, Misericordia awarded him a Doctorate of Humane Letters degree.

1987

Cynthia Russo, R.N., B.S.N., C.R.N.A., C.L.N.C., E.J.D. '87 was published in the *Worldwide Leaders in Healthcare* as a new member of the International Nurses Association. Cynthia is a certified registered nurse and anesthetist working at Wilkes-Barre General Hospital with more than 29 years of experience. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in nursing.

1994

Barbara Toczko Maculloch '94, has been promoted to president of Pennsylvania Banking of Community Bank Systems, Inc. She was recently recognized by *Happenings Magazine* in a special section about successful women in finance. She previously received the 2007 Leadership Wilkes-Barre Distinguished Alumni Award, and was recognized in 2015 as one of the Top 25 Women in Business. She received a degree in business administration.

1995

Bryan R. Most '95 has been named vice president of global logistics and global sourcing for Walmart Stores, Inc. He has been with Walmart for more than 15 years and has led a variety of high performing teams in supply chain, global transportation, and global procurement logistics. Bryan received his degree in business administration.

1996

James Shrimp '96, employment law partner with High Swartz LLP, presented a CLE entitled, *FLSA Overtime Regulations – What You Need to Know* at Exude, Inc., on June 27, 2016. Jim counsels and represents businesses in employment and commercial disputes, including employment discrimination, wage and hour, and restrictive covenants.



1998



Kevin Poplawski '98 and his wife, Elizabeth, welcomed their second daughter, Hailey, on July 22, 2016. She joins her big sister, Emily.

Bobbi J. Barends '98 was named vice president and campus director for Delaware Technical Community College's Jack F. Owens Campus in Georgetown, Del. She joined Delaware Tech in 2007 as department chair in the occupational therapy assistant department. Since then, she has served as assistant dean of instruction, acting assistant to the campus director and dean of instruction. Bobbi earned her master's degree in OT.

1999

Angela Kobylarz '99 and John Sullivan were married April 8, 2016 at Edgewood by Sand Springs in Drums, Pa. The couple honeymooned in the Smokey Mountains in Tennessee and reside in Nanticoke, Pa. Angela is employed as an occupational therapist and director of rehabilitation for HealthPro Rehabilitation, Harveys Lake, Pa.



Michael Zimmerman '99 received the "Citation of Distinction" from the Wyoming Valley Interfaith Council at the annual award luncheon. The award is conferred annually upon individuals who are recognized as leaders within the community for exemplifying the ideals of human dignity, compassion, and friendship for all people. Zimmerman is the chief executive officer of the Family Service Association of Northeastern Pennsylvania. He earned his Master of Science degree in Organizational Management.

2004

Michael Krauson '04, '10 and his wife, Dr. Mary Blair Long, welcomed their second son, Jacob Anthony, on Dec. 27, 2015. He joins big brother, Zackary.



Lauren Zaremski Murphy '04 and her husband, Ben, welcomed their son, Declan, on June 20, 2016. He joins big sister, Bianca.



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 \$1,000 alumni grant that will be applied to first-semester tuition. For more information, please log on to misericordia.edu/MUProud.

2005

Joel Stepanchick '05 and **Ann Evans Stepanchick '05** welcomed their first baby boy, Jonah Scott, on June 27, 2016.



Jennifer Frusciante '05 and Steven Bale were married July 2, 2016. Jennifer is a teacher at the Wyoming Valley West Middle School. The couple honeymooned in Disney World and reside in Edwardsville, Pa.

2006

Stephanie Wasmanski '06 and her husband, Jason, welcomed their son on May 2, 2016.

Mary Otlowski '06 and Luca Rispoli were united in marriage on May 30, 2015.

Nicole DeLucia Nemic '06 and her husband, John, welcomed their daughter on March 27, 2016.

2007

Jamie Havard Moska '07 and **Peter Moska, Jr. '07** welcomed their daughter, Emmi, on March 29, 2016. She joins big sister, Alivia.



Relive winter commencement by looking through the special photo album at bit.ly/mudec16

Continued on next page

Continued from last page

Meaghan Fadden '07 and Jason Alfano were married Sept. 12, 2015.

Stephanie Crunkleton '07 and Patrick Isenock were married July 12, 2014. Stephanie is a 5th grade teacher at Maugansville Elementary School. The couple honeymooned in St. Lucia and they now reside in Frederick, Md.



Krystal Bernardyn Finneran '07 and her husband, Brian, welcomed their son, Daxton John, on Dec. 4, 2016.

2008

Nicole Smith '08 and John Yenser chose Bear Creek Mountain Resort as the setting for their Aug. 15, 2015 wedding. Nicole is employed as a physical therapist at Good Shepherd Rehabilitation in Allentown, Pa. The couple lives in Breinigsville, Pa.

Leah Steele '08 and Joseph Holmberg were married Oct. 23, 2015. Leah is employed by Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital as a clinical head nurse. Following a honeymoon to Europe, the couple resides in Harrisburg, Pa.



2009

Megan Delaney Patterson '09, '11 and her husband, Michael, welcomed their daughter, Delaney, on June 1, 2016. She joins big brother, Brennan.

2010

Ashlee Leonard Berry '10, '13 and **Kelly Berry '10** welcomed their son, Joseph, on Sept. 2015.



Maura Musial Hopkins '10 and **Matthew Hopkins '09** welcomed their son, Gavin Matthew, on August 11, 2015.

John Giampietro '10, '13 and Samantha Baloga welcomed their daughter on April 10, 2016.

2011

Cara Nolan '11 and her husband, John, welcomed their daughter on June 17, 2016.



Terrence Murgallis '16, represented the 6th annual Winter Commencement class as valedictorian. He completed the five-year Master of Science degree program in speech-language pathology in August. During his academic career, he achieved a 4.0 grade point average, presented his research at national and international conferences, and treated clients in the department's Speech-Language and Hearing Center in John J. Passan Hall. He is a speech-language pathologist with the Cecil County Public Schools in Elkton, Md.

Alison Mazonkey '11 and **Kyle Everett '11** were married Oct. 25, 2014.

Erica Acosta '11 welcomed her daughter, Elena Victoria, on June 10, 2016.



Danielle Cino '11 and her husband, Jeremiah Taylor, were married Sept. 19, 2015.

Michael Labagh '11 and Kristen O'Brien were united in marriage on June 19, 2015. The couple moved to Denver, Colo., shortly after to start their adventure together.

2012

Rachel Schultes Baker '12 and her husband, Charles, were married June 21, 2014. They welcomed their son, Jackson Robert Baker, on Oct. 15, 2015. Rachel is working towards her MBA through the online program at Misericordia University.



Thomas Redenski '12, '15 and his wife, Theresa, welcomed their daughter, Ellianna, on July 12, 2016.

Nicholas Lauri '12 and his wife, Sara, welcomed their son on May 11, 2016.

2013

Melissa Oliveri Macario '13 and her husband, Anthony, welcomed their son, Dominic, on April 11, 2016. He joins big brother, Angelo.

Chad Seltzer '13 and his wife, Melanie, welcomed their son on May 4, 2016.

Courtenay McDonough '13 and her husband, Paul, welcomed their daughter on Feb. 26, 2016.

Jacqueline Mae Novick '13 and Michael Anthony Cefalo were married Aug. 20, 2016. Jacqueline is employed as a center operations director at Concentra Medical Center in Wilkes-Barre, Pa. The couple honeymooned in Punta Cana. They reside in Exeter, Pa.

Amanda Searfoss '13 and Scott Poplawski were married on August 1, 2015. Amanda is employed by the Wilkes-Barre Area School District as a fourth grade elementary teacher. The couple spent their honeymoon in Riviera Maya, Mexico. They reside in Kingston with their two dogs, Shea and Lola.

2014

Kenslie Kerestes '14 and Sean Mulhern were married Aug. 22, 2015. Kenslie is employed by HealthSouth as a speech-language pathologist at the Rehabilitation Hospital of Tinton Falls and at Monmouth Medical Center. Following a honeymoon to St. Martin, the couple resides at their home in Tinton Falls, N.J.

Chelsey Converse '14 and Greg Korhonen were married June 11, 2016 at Hideaway Hills in Kresgeville, Pa. Many



Look for your friends and family in this special homecoming photo album at bit.ly/muhomecoming16



1943

Kathleen Wintermute Phipps
Nov. 22, 2016

1945

Elizabeth "Betty" Brown Ziegler
Sept. 15, 2016

1946

Lena Chiocco Scavone
Aug. 2, 2016

1949

Therese Beirne Spezzano
Aug. 22, 2016

1950

Angela Melotti Ryder
Feb. 1, 2016

Rose Marie Sweeney
Oct. 13, 2016

1951

Dr. Rosemarie Serino Savelli, J.D.
July 21, 2016

1952

Mary Jule Purcell McCarthy
Aug. 8, 2016

1954

Mary Lou Padden Knorr
Sept. 13, 2016

1955

Gertrude Smocharski Murphy
Oct. 24, 2016

1956

Audrey Kilcoyne Byerly
Sept. 18, 2016

Doris Emma Benish Sorick
Oct. 19, 2016

1959

Clara Helen Golen Crosson
Feb. 14, 2016

Lois Gavigan DeGennaro
Sept. 25, 2016

1962

Sister Joan Marie Broderick, RSM
July 27, 2016

1963

Jacqueline Carol Dobroski Ezdebski
July 29, 2016

1965

Attorney Veronica Bolonis
Steadle Kisailus
Sept. 20, 2016

1967

Mary Ann Yesalitis Chacko
Oct. 16, 2016

1968

Helen Lorraine Chimschic Hosey
Sept. 3, 2016

Brigid Murray O'Connor
Sept. 15, 2016

Bettsi Eileen Jaeger
Nov. 15, 2016

1969

Arlene Ruth McCabe
Aug. 26, 2016

Sister Regina Kiel, RSM
Dec. 13, 2016

1970

Dorothy Brozuskus Tribus
Aug. 4, 2016

1977

Nancy Price
June 22, 2016

Helen Brady Frank Fayen
Sept. 6, 2016

1982

Patricia Ann Cummings
Oct. 7, 2016

1983

Dorothy Gloman Craig
June 23, 2016

1985

Daria Sembrat
Oct. 12, 2016

1995

Mark Rogers
Sept. 28, 2016

1996

Kathleen Louise Sikora
April 6, 2016

of their friends and fellow Misericordia alumni were present at the wedding.

Jacqueline Ivy Wheatley '14 and Daniel Gerard Horn were married Aug. 29, 2015 at St. Nicholas Church, Wilkes-Barre, Pa. Jacqueline is a registered nurse at General Hospital, where she works in the obstetrics department. Following a honeymoon to Eden Roc Cap Cana, Dominican Republic, and Jade Mountain, St. Lucia, the couple resides in Kingston, Pa.

Arthur Dowell '14 has been named assistant sports editor at the Lewistown Sentinel, Lewistown, Pa. He earned his Bachelor of Arts in communications.

2015

Olivia Blandina '15 welcomed a son, Paul Lauer, on May 6, 2016.

Alysha Micklo '15 and her husband, Joshua, welcomed their first daughter, Melanie Ann, on June 10, 2016.

Katherine Murphy '15 and Nicholas Sassani were married June 13, 2015 in Apalachin, N.Y. Katherine graduated with her master's degree in occupational therapy, and is practicing pediatric OT. The couple resides in North Carolina.



Alumni and friends served as marshals at the 6th annual Winter Commencement Ceremony on Sunday, Dec. 18. Participating in the event, kneeling from left, are Audrey Cunfer '89, '08, Helene Reed '66 and Amy Caruso '05, '12; standing, Marilyn DeHaven '06, Erin Grzech '14, Adam Grzech '13, Maureen Rinehimer, Heather Fritz '97, Ann Reichert '06, Tom Sweetz '01, Nancy Stepanski '80, Matt Hinton and Jack Goble.



Relive winter commencement memories in this special photo album at bit.ly/mudec16



PROFESSOR CARL J. KONECKE, M.S.

Longtime chair of Biology Department known for hands-on approach

Since his passing on Aug. 16, 2016, many words and stories have been used to describe Carl J. Konecke, M.S., professor emeritus of biology at College Misericordia. A modest man, educator and mentor, his imprint on the Department of Biology and his impact on untold students remain strong to this day.

A gifted mason and Mr. Fix-It during the summer months, he guided many of the renovations at the Hafey-McCormick Science Building in the 1980s. In need of curriculum revision, Professor Konecke developed Biological Instrumentation and Technique, and Social Implications of Genetics courses for biology students, and the Advanced Human Physiology course for the fledgling Master of Science degree program in nursing.

He routinely repaired instrumentation, built tables and shelves, and spent long hours in the evening working alongside his students on genetics labs and other related subjects. During the school day, the King's College and University of Nebraska alumnus taught anatomy, biology, physiology and genetics.

It is hard to measure the impact he had on his many students and mentees during his tenure from 1970-99, but the ones who shared their stories say it was immense. Take Frank DiPino, Jr., professor of biology at Misericordia University, for example, who was Professor Konecke's protégé. At the time of his appointment, Dr. DiPino had no formal teaching experience. Almost 25 years later, however, it is fair to say that he has assumed many of the same duties as his mentor.

"Carl was modest and never brought any attention to all the work he did, the department he helped to build or the many students he sent on to careers in biology, graduate school or medical school," Dr. DiPino recalled. "He did not seek or receive recognition for all the mentoring he did of many who are now physicians and scientists.

"As chair, Carl led by example and he rarely delegated work to the rest of us in the department. He was respected and admired by faculty and administrators, and loved by his students," he added.

SCHOLARSHIP

University Advancement is working to establish an academic scholarship in Professor Konecke's honor. To make a donation, please call or e-mail Desiree Voitek, assistant director of development, at (570) 674-8027 or dvoitek@misericordia.edu.

Leo V. Carr, M.S., lab manager of the College of Arts and Sciences at Misericordia University, was a pupil and later a colleague of Professor Konecke's from 1995-01. He says the phrase, "can't be done," was not part of Professor Konecke's vocabulary as he routinely worked evenings and weekends for the betterment of the department and

instruction of his students.

"Carl was without a doubt, the epitome of practicality," said Carr. "He was ahead of his time and never just settled for standard."

When molecular methodology was being introduced at intimate private colleges in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Professor Konecke would experiment with the latest techniques so he could best incorporate them into productive labs for his students.

Christian J. Carbe, Ph.D., '98, a post-doctoral fellow at The Commonwealth Medical College (TCMC) in Scranton, Pa., and an adjunct professor at Misericordia and TCMC, graduated cum laude with a bachelor's degree in biology from MU. A transfer student from a large state school, Dr.

Carbe came to Misericordia looking

for a "smaller, more personalized science program" where he could receive the personal attention he knew he needed to succeed as a biology major.

The first professor he met was Mr. Konecke. "From the moment I sat down and spoke with him, I felt at ease and that could do well here," said Dr.

Carbe, who earned his doctorate in medical and molecular genetics from Indiana

University. "I was amazed at the versatility of the courses he taught and found out all too soon just how demanding and challenging his genetics, and anatomy and physiology courses were.

"Mr. Konecke had the rare combination of qualities that included unlimited patience, genuine care for each student's well-being as a scholar and as an individual wrapped in a constant cloak of professionalism that never waned. Mr. Konecke led by example, not that he had to, but because he loved to," he added. [h](#)

Professor Carl Konecke poses for a picture with students from the Dallas Intermediate School during a tour of the science facilities. Professor Carl Konecke provides instruction to a Misericordia University student in this undated photo. (Photo credit: Misericordia University Archives)



DR. ROSEMARIE SERINO SAVELLI '51, J.D.

History and government professor known for Constitutional law expertise

Known as a dedicated and inspirational educator, alumna and professor emerita, Rosemarie Serino Savelli '51, J.D., passed away unexpectedly on July 21, 2016. A life-long resident of Pittston, Pa., Dr. Savelli was a faculty member of the Department of History and Government for more than 50 years, and served as director of the Pre-Law Program. She is remembered as an example of humility and grace, and was beloved by the countless students she taught and mentored.

In 1955, she became a member of the Misericordia faculty and was awarded professor emerita status upon her retirement in 2009.

Dr. Savelli earned her bachelor's degree cum laude in social studies with a minor in Latin from Misericordia. She was awarded a master's degree at the University of Scranton and her Juris Doctor at the Catholic University of America Columbus School of Law. She furthered her studies at Fordham University and the University of Pennsylvania.

Noteworthy alumni, such as Luzerne County Court of Common Pleas Judge Tina Polachek Gartley '88, remembers Dr. Savelli fondly. Judge Gartley acknowledged her gratitude when she addressed first-year students at Convocation in 2013.

David Wright, Ph.D., chair of the Department of History and Government, recalls Dr. Savelli's strategy in mentoring pre-law students – helping them maximize their strengths and matching them with the right law school – that resulted in a high success rate of law school admissions.

"We often see alumni who say her classes in Constitutional Law were the key to helping them get through the tough first year of law school," said Dr. Wright. "She was strict in an old-fashioned way, but at the same time very caring. The students loved and respected her."

Dr. Savelli's dedication to her profession was evident by her membership in the educational honor societies Sigma Phi Sigma, Phi Alpha Delta and Tau Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma; Who's Who Among America's Teachers and the American Association of University Professors.

In true Misericordia spirit, she served as a volunteer for many organizations, including the American Heart Association, American Cancer Society, American Institute for Cancer Research, March of Dimes, Maryknoll, Sacred Heart League, Franciscan Friars, Missionary Oblates and St. Jude Missions.

Dr. Savelli is survived by her daughter, Dr. Susann Savelli-Keska, who has been an adjunct faculty member in mathematics at Misericordia since 1991; son-in-law, Joseph Keska, and their son, Joseph "J.J." Keska III, all of Pittston, Pa. [h](#)



Rosemarie Serino Savelli '51, J.D., at podium, addresses students and panelists in this 1983 picture. (Photo credit: Misericordia University Archives)

SCHOLARSHIP

University Advancement is working to establish an academic scholarship in Professor Savelli's honor. To make a donation, please call or e-mail Desiree Voitek, assistant director of development, at (570) 674-8027 or dvoitek@misericordia.edu.

Researchers monitor blood concentration
in cerebrum to better understand
communication disorders

THE BRAIN AND THE HUMAN VOICE

BY PAUL KRZYWICKI

The human brain continues to be a treasure trove of secrets.

On average, it weighs about 3 pounds and is the main organ of the central nervous system that regulates voluntary and involuntary actions, such as eating and breathing. Cerebral circulation in the four lobes is supplied by two major systems, the anterior cerebral and middle cerebral arteries that supply up to 25 percent of a healthy human being's blood to the cerebrum. The complex vessel network of arteries, veins and capillaries provide the blood, oxygen and nutrients that are essential for proper brain health and function.

That network also may be the key to better understanding articulation, voice and fluency disorders, as well as aphasia, apraxia, dysarthria, dyslexia, dysphagia and much more.

Through noninvasive methods, the Department of Speech Language Pathology (SLP) at Misericordia University has been studying changes in oxygenated and deoxygenated hemoglobin concentrations in the brains of fluent and non fluent speakers, as well as in individuals following voice training. This groundbreaking research has been ongoing since 2011 and is being conducted in the College of Health Sciences and Education by members of the voice and fluency teams under the direction of Cari Tellis, Ph.D., C.C.C. S.L.P. associate professor, and Glen Tellis, Ph.D., C.C.C. S.L.P., professor.

Faculty mentors selected SLP students for the teams to conduct experiments using the innovative technology functional Near Infrared Spectroscopy better known in the industry as fNIRS. The diffuse optical technique uses a light source in a safe region of the electromagnetic spectrum to

SLP student Cara Imbalzano '20, left, is fitted with the fNIRS cap. Danielle Spagnuolo '19, top right, attaches probes to an fNIRS cap with assistance from D'manda Price '19.

measure hemoglobin concentration changes in real time at the surface of the brain. These changes alert investigators to areas of the brain with increased activation and deactivation related to a specific task.

Misericordia scientists found fNIRS to be a better fit in advancing their research of stuttering, voice and related communication disorders because it is portable and relatively inexpensive, while it also provides precise high temporal resolution imaging of the brain. While PET scans, fMRIs, EEGs and other technology are useful in this type of research, they do not come without their faults. MRI, for example, is sensitive to motion, while PET scans require an injection of a radioactive isotope.

The fluency team has been collecting data from fluent speakers and individuals who stutter during certain speech and non speech tasks in an effort to better understand how the brain responds during moments of stuttering. The goal is to use the results of these studies to develop treatment strategies to help people who stutter. The voice team's research focuses on vocal techniques that are utilized during voice therapy to better understand how the brain responds to the acquisition of a novel voice task. Their overarching goal is to create a more individualized treatment protocol to help clients regain their voice, as well as ensure generalization and maintenance of learned techniques.

The Department of Speech Language Pathology is one of only a few communication disorders programs in the country to utilize fNIRS in research. The dedicated laboratory in John J. Passan Hall contains the cutting edge technology, which consists of a mesh cap that secures a number of



Speech Language Pathology student D'manda Price '19, center and bottom, prepares to hook probes into the fNIRS cap that is being worn by fellow student, Cara Imbalzano '20, during a demonstration.

noninvasive probes and detectors to the head of test subjects. The probes emit near infrared light to surface regions of the subject's brain. The reflected light received by the detectors contains information about blood concentration levels.

As data collection commences, researchers observe waveforms on a computer screen which identify measures of oxygenated and deoxygenated hemoglobin in areas of the brain. The resulting hemodynamic responses which can vary in magnitude mark brain activation or deactivation during planned exercises.

The ongoing research has shown promise. The collaborative student faculty research teams have had articles published in national and international journals and findings presented at state, national and international conferences, including the 8th

World Congress on Fluency Disorders in Lisbon, Portugal; 10th Oxford Dysfluency Conference in Oxford, England; Society for functional Near Infrared Spectroscopy Conference in Paris, France, and more.

Additionally, MU researchers also have been collaborating with Dr. Arjun Yodh and Dr. Rickson Mesquita of the University of Pennsylvania since 2011.

HIGH-TECH UNDERSTANDING

To an outsider, the fluency and voice labs are not ostentatious by any measure. The close quarters, though, have been a hub of activity for faculty and students, alike. The teams routinely schedule participants for new studies, and design and run experiments to collect important data. Student researchers then analyze and interpret their findings and review with Dr. Glen Tellis and Dr. Cari Tellis.

"Throughout that process, I have learned many things that go beyond just understanding how to use the equipment. I've learned how this equipment actually works; how to

Continued on next page

THE BRAIN AND THE HUMAN VOICE

from page 35

interpret findings and troubleshoot when things go wrong or don't look right," says Danielle Spagnuolo '19, who has been a member of the voice team since 2014. "The interpersonal skills that I have acquired interacting with other members of our research teams and with participants have helped me during presentations at conferences and when working with clients in the therapy setting."

For her master's thesis, Erin Roberts, C.F. S.L.P., '16 conducted a study with individuals who have voice disorders. She examined the differences in their hemodynamic responses during the production of a targeted voice task in this case sustained phonation in twang quality. Results for her study indicated that there was a shift in both regions of activation in the brain and magnitude over the course of training. The outcome, she says, "indicates motor learning by the test subject."

Her findings are important, Roberts explains, because they indicate that learning has occurred. They provide researchers with more information about how these individuals acquire the novel vocal skills taught through the integrated implicit explicit voice therapy approach used at Misericordia.

"I have learned so much from all of this, from technical information to theoretical understanding of the benefits of different study designs," says Roberts, who graduated with her master's degree in speech language pathology in the spring, but remains active in fNIRS research. "I think the studies we've done have the potential to show us more clearly the impact voice therapy has on our clients, as well as help



Speech-language pathology students, top, work in the fNIRS lab in John J. Passan Hall, at top, while Cari M. Tellis, Ph.D., C.C.C.-S.L.P., associate professor, collaborates with student researcher Danielle Spagnuolo '19, center and bottom, on the Voice Team's ongoing research.

clinicians make more informed decisions about voice therapy methods."

GLOBAL EXPERIENCE

It is hard to say how many miles the research teams have logged traveling to various conferences to share their latest findings.

Misericordia University SLP students and faculty routinely present at the annual Pennsylvania Speech Language Hearing Association and American Speech Language Hearing Association conferences.

Lately, the Estill World Voice Symposium, World Fluency Conference and Fall Voice Conference also have become customary settings to share their scholarly work.

"Presenting conferences has provided all of us with the opportunity to hear new ideas that are at the forefront of the field," says Roberts. "It generally gets me curious about different methods of measurement or treatment techniques that I can research more when we get home."

The experience and exposure of presenting at conferences has tangible and intangible benefits to the academic program and students as it builds recognition among peers around the world, while also introducing the future clinicians to the importance of being life long learners in a profession that is still evolving.

Take Danielle for example. The 20 year old was introduced to the Department of Speech Language Pathology as a teenager through therapy sessions in the University's Speech Language Hearing Center. At the time, the 13 year old had an articulation disorder and "wanted to be taken seriously" when she spoke. One year later, she learned how to produce the r sound after receiving articulation therapy.

Danielle was reintroduced years later when her sister, Tia Spagnuolo '16 matriculated to the academic program. The older Spagnuolo sister was also a lead researcher on the voice team during her time at Misericordia, and was one of the first

to conduct fNIRS research at the University with Roberts.

Today, Danielle sees the importance of conference presentations and the value of mentorship and related research. "It is important to continue to talk to and learn from other individuals in the field," acknowledges Spagnuolo, a lead researcher on the voice team. "Having the incredible opportunities to travel to national and international conferences provides the chance to talk to experts in the field about ways to improve research or ask questions about what research that is happening in other labs.

"The research that is happening now is the future of the field, and these conferences provide the opportunity to talk to the individuals collecting this data about what they are doing and why they are doing it. Being able to integrate current findings into therapy is vital to providing the most up to date and effective treatment," the daughter of John and Cyndi Spagnuolo adds.

Research, such as fNIRS at Misericordia, also enables students to find their niche in specialty fields like SLP. D'manda Price '19, a native of Paterson, N.J., has had a deep interest in "everything that involves the brain" since high school. At MU, that curiosity has blossomed.

"I fell in love with research," says Price, who wants to seek a Ph.D. in neuroscience after earning her master's degree at MU. "I cannot see myself doing anything else besides research. I especially love being able to research the brain's response to different speech tasks because I feel as though this research will ultimately make a difference in the lives of



Type the shortcut, bit.ly/musplmentorship into your web browser or use your QR-code enabled smartphone to watch a video about the importance of mentorship to undergraduate and graduate research students at Misericordia University. (Video by Earl & Sedor Productions)



the clients we see and help them better understand whatever disorder they have."


MENTORSHIP

A relatively new technology, fNIRS has presented new opportunities for researchers to better understand communication disorders. It also has afforded faculty researchers with another opportunity to engage their students in one on one settings outside of the classroom.

Those experiences, the students say, open themselves up to a new world of opportunities. "The advice that they have given me has truly shaped me and showed me that I have many options for a career in speech language pathology," says the

daughter of Dalton and Sherry Price. "This department and its faculty are extraordinary and they shape each and every one of their students into becoming great clinicians because of the experiences that we receive before we go out into the field."

"We love what we are doing," Danielle adds. "I love the research. I love the people I am working with and the excitement Dr. Cari Tellis has for it. We all feed into it. Everything starts with her. Her excitement is infectious, and now it's a lot of hard work but we love doing it."

"The biggest thing that I have learned about research is how often, and how quickly, research can change," says Roberts. "But it's one of the things that I've really grown to love about research that there is always something new to read about, consider, or look into. It's pretty interesting how one person's idea can apply to research that you're doing and spark another new idea." 

SLP professor publishes new book

Cari M. Tellis, Ph.D., C.C.C. S.L.P., associate professor of speech language pathology at Misericordia University, recently co wrote the book, "Counseling and Interviewing in Speech Language Pathology and Audiology," with Orlando R. Barone, M.A., of the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

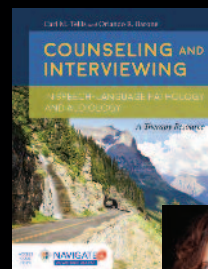
Published by Jones & Bartlett Learning, the 294 page book uses original models and inventive techniques to impart the most helpful approaches to counseling as part of the therapy process in speech language pathology and audiology. The solutions focused approach utilized in the text aims to build on clients' strengths; facilitates client motivation based on the concepts of purpose, growth, and ownership, and creates in clients the belief that they have the tools and skills to maintain their abilities once

treatment has ended.

Filled with real life scenarios, each chapter delves into a key aspect of counseling by simplifying and clarifying the concepts and methods so clinicians will find them practical and comprehensive.

Each new print copy also includes Navigate 2 Advantage Access, an online tool that unlocks a comprehensive and interactive eBook, complete with online video segments, student practice activities and assessments, according to the publishers.

The textbook can be purchased at Barnes & Noble, on Amazon.com, and at other book retailers. It is also available in a Kindle format.



Hall of Fame enshrines five athletes

Misericordia University inducted the 14th class into its Athletics Hall of Fame as part of Homecoming weekend. This year's honorees included Miki (Bedics) Farnese '06, Amy (Bower) Ingram '06, Leslie Livingstone '03, Leanne (Howell) Simmons '00 and Paul Zaengle '97.

A women's soccer standout, Farnese led the Cougars to three NCAA Tournament appearances and was a two-time team MVP. She ranks first in career points and career goals, and eighth in career assists. Farnese was a four-time All-Pennsylvania Athletic Conference (PAC) selection, including three times on the first team, and was the PAC Player of the Year as a senior.

Ingram, a member of the cross country and track & field teams, was a two-time NCAA qualifier in cross country and earned All-America honors as a junior. She won two individual PAC cross country titles and finished second twice. Ingram was a four-time All-Region in cross country and was a three-time team MVP. She owns the fourth and fifth

fastest times in school history. An Eastern College Athletics Conference (ECAC) champion and NCAA qualifier at 5000m, she still holds the school record. Ingram also was a two-time team MVP in track & field.

Livingstone was All-PAC three times as a point guard. She led the PAC in assists four times and ranked among the national leaders. She holds school single-game, single-season and career records for assists, and ranks second in career steals and third in rebounds. Livingstone was the team MVP as a sophomore and earned the Coach's Award as a senior. She led the Cougars to back-to-back appearances in the PAC championship game.

Simmons was a standout pitcher on the softball team, earning All-PAC selections twice and All-Region honors as a senior when she was named the Misericordia Wendy's Athlete of the Year. She has the fourth-highest



The 14th induction class, from left, are Amy (Bower) Ingram '06, Leanne (Howell) Simmons '00, Miki (Bedics) Farnese '06, Leslie Livingstone '03 and Paul Zaengle '97 pose for a picture after the ceremony.

single-season win total in school history and ranks third in career wins and fourth in career strikeouts. Simmons was the team MVP as a junior and received the Coach's Award as a senior.

Zaengle was a four-year starter at sweeper on the men's soccer team and helped the Cougars to three straight trips to the PAC title match. As a senior, he was team MVP and first-team All-PAC after leading MU to its first PAC title. He was the PAC Championship match defensive MVP as a junior and helped the Cougars to their first ECAC championships appearance. [h](#)

Annual golf tournament slated for Sept. 25

The Misericordia University Department of Athletics hosted its 4th annual golf tournament Sept. 26 at Huntsville Golf Club. Nearly 100 friends enjoyed food, fun and golf. In addition to the captain-and-crew format, it featured a chipping contest and a sports memorabilia auction.

Make plans to participate in the 5th annual event on Monday, Sept. 25. To



Misericordia University alumnus Al Santasiere III '01, left, poses with former NY Yankees pitcher David Wells and his wife, Tiana, at the 2016 golf outing.

make reservations, please call (570) 674-6374.

Women's Soccer – MAC Freedom champions

Women's soccer captured its fourth MAC Freedom championship in the last five years with a 5-0 win over DeSales. With the win, the Cougars advanced to the NCAA Tournament for the sixth straight season. They dropped their NCAA opener to Swarthmore and finished the season 17-4.

All-MAC/Freedom

MU placed 30 student-athletes on the All-MAC/All-MAC Freedom teams during the fall season. They are:

Women's Soccer: Jacqueline Stevens '18, Offensive Player of the Year; Kristen Ritter '18, Defensive Player of the Year; Mark Stauffer '97, Coach of the Year; Alex Gallagher '18, first-team; Kylen Smith '18, first-team; Alyssa Pojero '18, first-team; Jeanna Orfanos '19, second-team; Emily

Szeflinski '18, second-team; Alexa Alchevsky '18, second-team; Evelyn Logie '17, '20, second-team, and Ashley Edgell '19, honorable mention;

Men's Soccer: Levi Roberts '19, '22, Rookie of the Year, honorable mention; Chris Edkins '16, '19, first-team; George Stock '17, first-team; Anthony Ippolito '17, second-team; Niko Amity '18, second-team; Devin Marriott '18, second-team, and Dante Ippolito '18, second-team;

Field Hockey: Colby Eldridge '18, '19, first-team, and Megan Meckling '18, second-team;

Football: Pat Newins '17, first-team; Sam Johnson '17, honorable mention, and Alec Rhoads '17, honorable mention;

Cross Country: Sean Luzzi '17, '20, first-team; Alex Fitch '18, '21, first-team; Trever Reed '17, second-team; Amy Viti '16, '17, second-team; Bethany Killmon '17, '18, second-team; Clare Schoen '19, '20, second-team, and Meredith Hartz '18, '21, second-team.;

Volleyball: Nicole Tagerty, '17, '18 second-team.

STUDENTATHLETE SPOTLIGHT



Kylen Smith '18

Kylen Smith '18 recently concluded her career with the Misericordia University women's soccer team, where she was a four-year starter at outside back.

The lone senior on the 2016 team, she is a nursing major from Hershey, Pa. The three-time, first-team All-Middle Atlantic Conference (MAC) Freedom selection was part of three MAC Freedom championships and also helped the Cougars to four straight NCAA Tournament appearances. Misericordia compiled a 70-13-5 record during her career.

The daughter of Pat and Kelly Smith ranks seventh in school history with 24 assists, and is the only defensive player ranked among the top 10 in school history in that category. **h**

COMMUNICATIONS ALUMNUS HITS HOME RUN AT MLB, NHL NETWORKS

BY PAUL KRZYWICKI

A football recruit for the Cougars' inaugural season in 2012, Nicholas J. Ciochi '16 knows firsthand about the excitement sports can bring to both participants and spectators, alike.

Whether it's a fumble-causing tackle, game-winning home run or a goal-completing hat trick, fans react similarly whether they are seated in the stands or comfortably on their couches at home.

Nicholas J. Ciochi '16

COMMUNICATIONS

The former collegiate wide receiver and tight end also knows the importance of finding the right action shots, and collating and editing them into entertaining VO's (voice-overs), SOTs (sound-on-tapes) and bumps (bumpers) – a variety of highlight reels in different formats for anxious viewers as an associate broadcast editor for MLB Network and NHL Network in Secaucus, N.J.

Ciochi received his Bachelor of Arts degree in communications in May 2016. He credits his success in the highly competitive television industry to the personal attention he received as a student and the experience he gained during an internship at a regional television station in Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

"The small class sizes at Misericordia allow for great one-on-one working relationships between students and professors," says the Hopewell Junction, N.Y., native and John Jay High School graduate. "The faculty within the Department of Mass Communications and Design monitor both written and performance progress of each student. I felt comfortable asking for guidance in everything I did at MU."

At WBRE-TV 28, an NBC affiliate, Ciochi was able to enhance his editing skills on state-of-the-art editing bays, and by working on news coverage packages for the newsroom and creating promotional commercials for the Creative Services Department. The varied experiences afforded him the opportunity to explore his creative side, while also confronting the deadline pressures oftentimes associated with broadcast media.

That experience helped him smoothly transition to his associate broadcast editor position, as the corporation that operates both networks can be extremely hectic and challenging, according to Ciochi. An exciting postseason in Major League

Baseball, combined with the start of the National Hockey League season means added viewership – and additional responsibilities and highlight packages.

"Nick was always open to new ideas, and he was a committed learner," Melissa Sgroi, Ed.D., assistant professor and chair of the Department of Mass Communications and Design, says about her former student. "He also was quite focused during his job search – and it obviously paid off. The work he did in class, during internships, and in student media prepared him, and we are very proud to see that he landed at MLB Network."

In addition to his internship during his undergraduate studies, the son of Dave and Catherine Ciochi collaborated with fellow students to earn a resume-building 2015 Award of Excellence in The Videographer Awards annual competition, which is administered and judged by the Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals. The students earned the award in the student production category for Season 6, Episode 3 of *Hey You, MU!*, the


Nicholas J. Ciochi '16 poses for a picture on the set of Studio 42 at the MLB Network.



Nicholas J. Ciochi '16 collaborated with the student production team, from left, Taryn Talacka '15, Matthew Gromala '17, Dan Kimbrough assistant professor; Mike Gombita '18, Felicia Glover '17, Brittany Hayes '15, Matthew Scanlon '17 and Melanie Quintanilla '17 to earn a 2015 Award of Excellence from the Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals for an episode of *Hey You, MU!*.



flagship show of the campus television station, MCN 87.

"The Department of Mass Communications and Design does a great job with starting you off in your first year with a lot of hands-on projects," says Ciochi. "Getting the hands-on experience coming right into college taught me things that I took with me throughout college, which I carried with me to my job." 

Chick-fil-A celebrates official grand opening on campus

Representatives of the campus community, Chick-fil-A and Metz Culinary Management officially opened the newest dining option in the Banks Student Life Center during a ribbon cutting ceremony on Nov. 10.

Known for its advertising campaign featuring cows carrying signs that say "Eat Mor Chikin," Chick-fil-A is the highest ranking fast food restaurant in the country for customer satisfaction, according to the American Customer Satisfaction Index Restaurant Report. It has locations in 46 states and Washington, D.C.

At Misericordia, Chick-fil-A is located in the Cougar's Den, adjacent to the Chopping Block, a design your own salad station. Earlier in the semester, the University also opened a We Brew Starbucks in the lounge area of the Student Life Center.

The University added a patio immediately outside the front of the Student Life Center facing Sandy and Marlene Insalaco Hall. The popular



Representatives of the campus community, Chick-fil-A and Metz Culinary Management cut the ribbon to officially mark the opening of the new facility.

outdoor venue offers tables with umbrellas and outdoor seating for 50. [h](#)

Valerie Hemingway, exhibit celebrate noted author's life

The College of Arts and Sciences, Pauly Friedman Art Gallery and Soyka Fund for the Humanities brought together a collection of pictures, experts and students for a series of events during the fall semester to recount the life and work of American writer Ernest Hemingway.

Fans of the late Nobel Prize-winning novelist, short-story writer and journalist heard a first-hand account of his life from his former secretary, Valerie Hemingway, during the opening of the exhibit, *Hemingway*

and the Veneto, in the Pauly Friedman Art Gallery on Oct. 22.

The exhibition that was on loan from Venice International University



Valerie Hemingway, right, poses with Barbara Soyka at the opening of the exhibition.

showcased photographs of Hemingway and the people, places and things that were dearest to him during two important eras of his life: World War I and his time in Venice and Veneto.

Valerie Hemingway provided the keynote for the opening reception's program, *Perspectives on Hemingway and the Image: A Symposium on the Life and Writing of Ernest Hemingway*. The program also featured student paper presentations and a roundtable discussion with nationally known Hemingway scholars. [h](#)

Health Care Symposium addresses patient-centered care

The University hosted its 7th annual Health Care Symposium, *Patient-Centered Care: Leadership and Innovation*, in November with a keynote address by Ted Epperly, M.D., F.A.A.F.P., president and chief executive officer of the Family Medicine Residency of Idaho, Boise, Idaho. Presentations also were made by Sarah Thomas, senior director of global innovation for Genesis Rehab Services, and faculty.

Dr. Epperly, a clinical professor of family medicine at the University of Washington School of Medicine, Seattle, Washington, serves as co-chair of the Center on Care Delivery and

Integration of the Patient Centered Primary Care Collaborative. He currently serves on the Board of Directors of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education.

An occupational therapist, entrepreneur, and elder advocate, Thomas also is the Genesis Innovation Fellow at Aging2.0.

Event sponsors included Allied Services Integrated Health System, Commonwealth Health, Erwine's Home Health and Hospice, Geisinger Health System, Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield, and Metz Culinary Management. [h](#)



Symposium participants included, seated from left, Sarah Thomas and Ted Epperly, M.D., F.A.A.F.P.; standing, Joseph J. Grilli, M.P.A., D.P.A.; President Thomas J. Botzman, Ph.D.; Leamor Kahanov, Ed.D., A.T.C., L.A.T., and Alfred S. Casale, M.D., Geisinger Health System.

'CREATING THE MASTER RACE'

'Deadly Medicine' exhibition also features Medical & Health Humanities Deadly Medicine Speaker Series

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and Misericordia University are presenting the provocative exhibition, *Deadly Medicine: Creating the Master Race*, that outlines how Adolf Hitler was supported by medical doctors and researchers in his quest for improving the Aryan race. The exhibition in the Pauly Friedman Art Gallery in Sandy and Marlene Insalaco Hall runs through Tuesday, March 14.

The museum's traveling exhibition examines how Nazi leadership, in collaboration with individuals in professions traditionally charged with healing and the public good, used science to help legitimize persecution, murder, and ultimately, genocide.

The interactive exhibition, which has been shown at the United Nations and around the world, is being complemented by the Medical and Health Humanities Deadly Medicine Speaker Series.

The speaker series began in January and features Holocaust experts and historians. Thomas Hajkowski, Ph.D., associate professor of history and government at Misericordia University, will deliver, *The Medical Professional and the Nazi Regime*, on Tuesday, Feb. 21 at 7 p.m. in Huntzinger Room 218 of Insalaco Hall. Dr. Hajkowski will take a historical look at Nazi medicine during the war. His talk is free, and open to the public.

After the free talk, the University will screen the documentary, *An Interview with Benjamin B. Ferencz*, in the same location. The documentary is the story about the lone surviving member of the prosecution team of the Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg, Germany.

Rabbi Roger Lerner of Temple B'nai B'rith will offer the public presentation, *The Hippocratic Oath and Medical Research: Where's the Line?*, on Wednesday, March 1 at

GALLERY HOURS:

The Pauly Friedman Art Gallery is closed on Mondays and for all University holidays and snow days. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday 1 to 5 p.m. For more information, please log on to www.misericordia.edu/art or call (570) 674-6250.

noon in Huntzinger Room 218 of Insalaco Hall.

Eva Mozes Kor, a Holocaust survivor and forgiveness advocate, concludes the Medical and Health Humanities Deadly Medicine Speaker Series with the special presentation, *The Triumph of the Human Spirit, from Auschwitz to Forgiveness*, on Tuesday, March 14 at 7 p.m. in Lemmond Theater. A survivor of the Mengele twin experiments, Ms. Kor will speak about her experience and the notion of forgiveness. She will hold a book signing immediately after her presentation.

The program is free, but tickets are required due to limited seating. To reserve your tickets, please call the Misericordia University Box Office at (570) 674-6719.

Deadly Medicine explores the Holocaust's roots in then-contemporary scientific and pseudo-scientific thought," said exhibition curator Susan Bachrach of the U.S. Holocaust

Memorial Museum. "At the same time, it touches on complex ethical issues we face today, such as how societies acquire and use scientific knowledge and how they balance the rights of the individual with the needs of the larger community."

The eugenics theory – a social philosophy advocating the improvement of human genetic traits through higher rates of reproduction for people with desired traits, or reduced birth rates and sterilization of people with less desired traits – sprang from turn-of-the-20th-century scientific beliefs asserting that Charles Darwin's theories of "survival of the fittest" could be applied to humans. Supporters, spanning the globe and political spectrum, believed through careful controls on marriage and reproduction, a nation's genetic health could be improved.

According to the museum, the Nazi regime was founded on the conviction that "inferior" races, including the so-called Jewish race, and individuals had to be eliminated from German society so the fittest "Aryans" could thrive. The Nazi state fully committed itself to implementing a uniquely racist and anti-Semitic variation of eugenics to "scientifically" build what it considered to be a "superior race."

By the end of World War II, 6 million Jews had been murdered. Millions of others also became victims of persecution and murder through Nazi "racial hygiene" programs designed to cleanse Germany of "biological threats" to the nation's "health," including "foreign-blooded" Roma and Sinti (Gypsies), persons diagnosed as "hereditarily ill," and homosexuals, according to the museum.

The exhibition is made possible by the Lerner Foundation and Eric F. and Lore Ross, with additional support from the Lester Robbins and Shelia Johnson Robbins Traveling and Special Exhibitions Fund. [h](#)

'TRIUMPH OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT'

Eva Mozes Kor, a Holocaust survivor and forgiveness advocate, will make a presentation on Tuesday, March 14 at 7 p.m. in Lemmond Theater.



Eva Mozes Kor



From the Sister Mary Carmel McGarigle University Archives and Special Collections

Students work in a chemistry classroom at the then all women's College Misericordia in 1933.

SAVE THE DATE ...

MARCH 4-12 Spring Break

MARCH 22 Phonecast with President Thomas J. Botzman

MARCH 28 *In a Different Key: The Story of Autism*. Presented by Geisinger Medical Center and Autism Center

MARCH 30 50 Nights to Commencement
cougarconnect.misericordia.edu

APRIL 1 Celebrate 100 Years of OT:
Alumni reception
Tir Na Nog, 1600 Arch St.,
Philadelphia, PA

APRIL 29 Spring Open House
admissions.misericordia.edu/openhouse

MAY 19-20 Spring Commencement
misericordia.edu/commencement

JUNE 2-4 Alumni Weekend
cougarconnect.misericordia.edu/aw17

SEPT. 17 Athletics 5th Annual Golf Tournament
Reservations: (570) 674-6374

OCT. 6-8 2017 Homecoming
cougarconnect.misericordia.edu/homecoming17

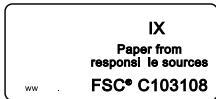
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Through March 14
Deadly Medicine: Creating the Master Race exhibit

James Dougher:
Cryptic Artifacts.

March 1
The Hippocratic Oath and Medical Research: Where's the Line?

March 14
The Triumph of the Human Spirit, from Auschwitz to Forgiveness

March 28
Autism Center Spring Lecture

Echoes of Autism.

April 1 June 2
Robert Stark: The New American Landscape 2016

April 6
Fireside Chat with Lisa Caputo

April 6 9
Godspell

April 8
16th Annual Easter Egg Hunt & Brunch with the Easter Bunny

April 18
Canadian Brass

April 28
Chamber Music Concert



Canadian Brass is in concert in Lemmond Theater in Walsh Hall on April 18.

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The Jewels of Central Europe

Nov. 30 Dec. 9
Christmas Magic at the Markets

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