

# Misericordia

S U M M E R 2 0 1 4

*today*



## Standing TALL

Ashlee Ward '15 becomes first track & field national champion by winning indoor and outdoor high jump titles

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# Happy 90th Anniversary, Misericordia!



Misericordia will celebrate its 90th Anniversary on Sept. 24. In recognition, it is hosting a series of events. Highlights can be found below. The complete list can be found online at <http://misericordia.edu/muturns90>.

## August 15

### MU Faculty and Staff Opening Meeting

The 924 Challenge is launched. Turn to Page 13 or log on to <http://cougarconnect.misericordia.edu/924challenge> for more details.

## Sept. 15

**Lecture by Leila Nadya Sadat, director of the World-Wide Crimes Against Humanity Initiative, McGowan Room, Bevevino Library, 6:30 p.m.**

## Sept. 21-26

**Mercy Week** recognizes our Sisters of Mercy heritage.

## Sept. 23

**Lecture by Karen Schneider, RSM, M.D., Department of Pediatrics, Johns Hopkins University.** Dr. Schneider will speak about her ministry, the Mercy Medical Mission, which arranges for medical care for children in developing countries. McGowan Room, Bevevino Library, 12 p.m.

## Sept. 24

### 90th Anniversary Day Celebration

- Founders Circle Dedication – Mercy Hall, 11:30 a.m.
- Mercy Week Mass – Misericordia Chapel, 12:05 p.m.
- 90th Anniversary Cake – Banks Center, 12:30-1:30 p.m.
- Random Acts of Kindness Campaign – For details, go to [www.misericordia.edu/rak](http://www.misericordia.edu/rak). #MUKindacts
- Student Athlete Advisory Committee Acts of Kindness - Volunteer and visit Mercy Center on 24th of each month.
- The film, *Temple Grandin*, Lemmond Theater, 8 p.m.

## Sept. 26

**Comfortable Cup of Tea**, faculty, staff and Sisters of Mercy celebrate heritage of Sisters of Mercy and establishment of the religious order. Insalaco Hall, 218-219, 3:30-5 p.m.

## Sept. 28

**90th Anniversary Day of Service**, a clean-up day at the Jewish Community Center Camp in Idetown, Pa., from 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Call (570) 674-8041 to volunteer.

## Oct. 14

The film, *Temple Grandin*, 8 p.m., Lemmond Theater.

## Oct. 23

**Critical Concerns of the Sisters of Mercy**, a panel discussion on how they relate to the work of Misericordia University faculty, Insalaco Hall, 218-219, 4-5:30 p.m.

## Nov. 5

**An Evening with Temple Grandin.** One of the most influential people in the world presents, *The World Needs All Kinds of Minds*. Lemmond Theater, 7:30 p.m. Free tickets are available beginning Sept. 10 at (570) 674-6719.

## March 24, 2015

**An Evening with Retired Faculty and Staff from Across the Decades.** Insalaco Hall, 218-219, 4-5:30 p.m.

## Wish us Happy Birthday

To follow the 90th Anniversary activities on social media, go to Twitter: [www.twitter.com/MisericordiaU](http://www.twitter.com/MisericordiaU) and use the hashtags #MUturns90 and/or #MUKindacts.

## Zabriski, Musto will lead MU development team

Michele Shea Zabriski has been named director of development and Luciana Musto has been appointed assistant director of development.

Zabriski most recently served as major gifts officer, and as director of both constituency relations and the Marywood Fund at Marywood University, Scranton, Pa.

She will direct the development and implementation of a comprehensive strategic fundraising program. She will also develop creative strategies for identifying and engaging diverse constituencies critical to the University's fundraising goals and provide leadership for capital and endowment projects.

Zabriski earned a bachelor's degree in English writing from King's College, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.



Zabriski

Musto is responsible for direct mail and phonathon fundraising. She previously was a development writer at Marywood University and a grants administrator and prospect researcher at Luzerne County Community College (LCCC), Nanticoke, Pa. She has a master's degree in creative writing from Wilkes University, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.; a bachelor's degree in English writing from King's College, and an associate's degree in social sciences from LCCC.

Contact Zabriski at (570) 674-6433 or at [mzabriski@misericordia.edu](mailto:mzabriski@misericordia.edu). Musto can be reached at (570) 674-8027 or at [lmusto@misericordia.edu](mailto:lmusto@misericordia.edu).



Musto

## Misericordia introduces third doctoral program

The Department of Nursing is introducing the online Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree program for the fall semester to accommodate the needs of busy health care professionals and in response to a growing national need.

The DNP program is the third doctoral program available at Misericordia, joining the Doctorate in Occupational Therapy and the Doctor of Physical Therapy.

Misericordia's new doctoral program is being offered in two tracks. The 27-credit, part-time MSN to DNP track can be completed in two calendar years while attending during the fall, spring and summer over six semesters. An optional nine-credit specialization in nursing education – the only DNP program to offer the specialization in northeastern Pennsylvania – is also available for advanced practice nurses who wish to become educators on the collegiate level.

Nationally board certified and licensed advanced practice nurses, including certified registered nurse practitioners (CRNPs), certified nurse midwives (CNMs), certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs), and certified clinical nurse specialists (CNSs) are eligible to apply for the MSN to DNP program.

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing to Doctor of Nursing Practice track, which is slated to begin with the 2015 fall semester, features 64 credits that can be completed while attending classes in three years over nine semesters, including summers. Graduates of the program will be awarded with both the Master of Science degree in nursing and the DNP degree. Graduates are eligible to sit for the national family nurse practitioner board certification examination.

Please contact the Center for Adult and Continuing Education at (570) 674-6451 for more information.

## Dr. Kahanov named College of Health Sciences dean

Leamur Kahanov, Ed.D., A.T.C., L.A.T., has been named the dean of the College of Health Sciences at Misericordia University. She began her duties July 21.

Dr. Kahanov is a certified athletic trainer with a doctorate in education from the University of San Francisco, San Francisco, Calif. She earned a master's degree in exercise and sports sciences from the University of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz., and a Bachelor of Science degree in exercise science and athletic training from Indiana University,

Bloomington, Ind.

"Dr. Kahanov is well known in the field of applied medicine and rehabilitation," says Thomas J. Botzman, Ph.D., president, Misericordia University. "We welcome her and look forward to her leadership in strengthening academic offerings, increasing faculty development opportunities, and serving students and the Misericordia University community."

Dr. Kahanov most recently served as the assistant dean of Interprofessional Education and chair of Applied Medicine and Rehabilitation in the College of Nursing, Health and Human Services at Indiana State University, Terre Haute, Ind.



Kahanov

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Twitter.com/MisericordiAlum

Linkedin.com/groups/Misericordia-Alumni-1416127

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Stay connected at [www.misericordia.edu/social](http://www.misericordia.edu/social)



## FACULTY NOTEBOOK

**President Thomas J. Botzman, Ph.D.**, has been named chair-elect of the American Council on Education's Council of Fellows. His term begins in July 2015.

**Glenn Bozinski, M.S.**, director of admissions, participated in the Harvard University Institute for Management and Leadership in Education.

Tenure and promotion were awarded to: **McKinley Hunter Manasco, Ph.D./C.C.C.-S.L.P.**, associate professor of speech-language pathology; **Michael P. Orleski, Ph.D.**, associate professor of physics, and **Annette M. Weiss, Ph.D., R.N., C.N.E.**, associate professor of nursing.

**Susan Helwig, M.S.**, vice president of University Advancement, participated in the Harvard University Graduate School of Education Institute for Educational Management Class of 2014.

**Glen Tellis, Ph.D., C.C.C.-S.L.P.**, professor and chair of the Department of Speech-Language Pathology, received the Honors of the Association from the Pennsylvania Speech-Language-Hearing Association.

**Marion Villano, M.S.N., R.N.**, assistant professor of nursing, was awarded The DAISY Faculty Award.

**Jennifer Dessoie, O.T.D., M.S., O.T.R./L.**, assistant professor of occupational therapy, was named the chair of the American

Occupational Therapy Association's Administration and Management Special Interest Section.

**Dan Kimbrough, M.S.**, assistant professor of communications, was selected for the Time Warner College Professors Thought Leadership Seminar in New York City.

Members of the Department of Occupational Therapy presented at the 16th International Congress of the World Federation of Occupational Therapists in Yokohama, Japan in June.

**Lalit J. Shah, Ed.D., O.T.R./L.**, professor, collaborated with **Matthew Cash '13, Moira Hauer '13, Jessica Mudgett '13, and Katie Moul '13. Joseph Cipriani, Ed.D., O.T.R./L.**, professor, collaborated with **Jenna Georgia '13, Megan McChesney '13, Megan Stabler '13 and Jaclyn Tschantz '13. Jennifer Dessoie, O.T.D., M.S., O.T.R./L.**, assistant professor, collaborated with **Chelsey Converse '14, Lindsey McLaughlin '14, Shannon McSweeney '14, and Cathryn Steinhoff '14.**

Faculty were honored for excellence in scholarship, teaching and service at the 88th annual Commencement ceremony: **Allan Austin, Ph.D.**, professor, Judge Max and Tillie Rosenn Excellence in Teaching Award; **W. Scott Blanchard, Ph.D.**, professor, Louis and Barbara Alesi Excellence in Scholarship Award, and **Cynthia Mailloux, Ph.D., R.N., C.N.E.**, professor, Pauly and Sidney Friedman Excellence in Service Award.

## Foley named VP of student affairs

Kathleen "Kit" Foley has been appointed vice president of student affairs. Foley has been employed by Misericordia for 29 years, beginning at the institution as an Act 101 counselor in 1985.

As vice president, Foley is the chief student affairs officer and advises the president on all matters pertaining to non-academic student life.



Foley

## Lahart becomes dean of students

Amy M. Lahart has been appointed as dean of students. A member of the University staff for 22 years, she began her tenure as an admissions counselor and served as a human resources associate before moving into the Academic Affairs Division as coordinator of the Alternative Learners Program in 1997.

As Dean of Students, Lahart will be the primary resource for students, parents, faculty and the greater campus community for issues related to individual students and the student community as a whole.



Lahart

## Director of Major Gifts, Planned Giving named

Nora Blessner has been named director of Major Gifts and Planned Giving. She has more than 15 years of experience in fundraising, including 10 years in higher education. She has experience in alumni relations, prospect research, campaign management, annual giving, corporate sponsorships, foundation and corporate relations, and proposal development. Most recently, Blessner was employed as the director of development at the Commission on Economic Opportunity.



Blessner



**HOMECOMING WEEKEND 2014**  
OCTOBER 3-5

Register online: [Cougarconnect.misericordia.edu/homecoming14](http://Cougarconnect.misericordia.edu/homecoming14)



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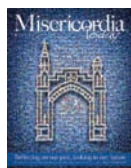
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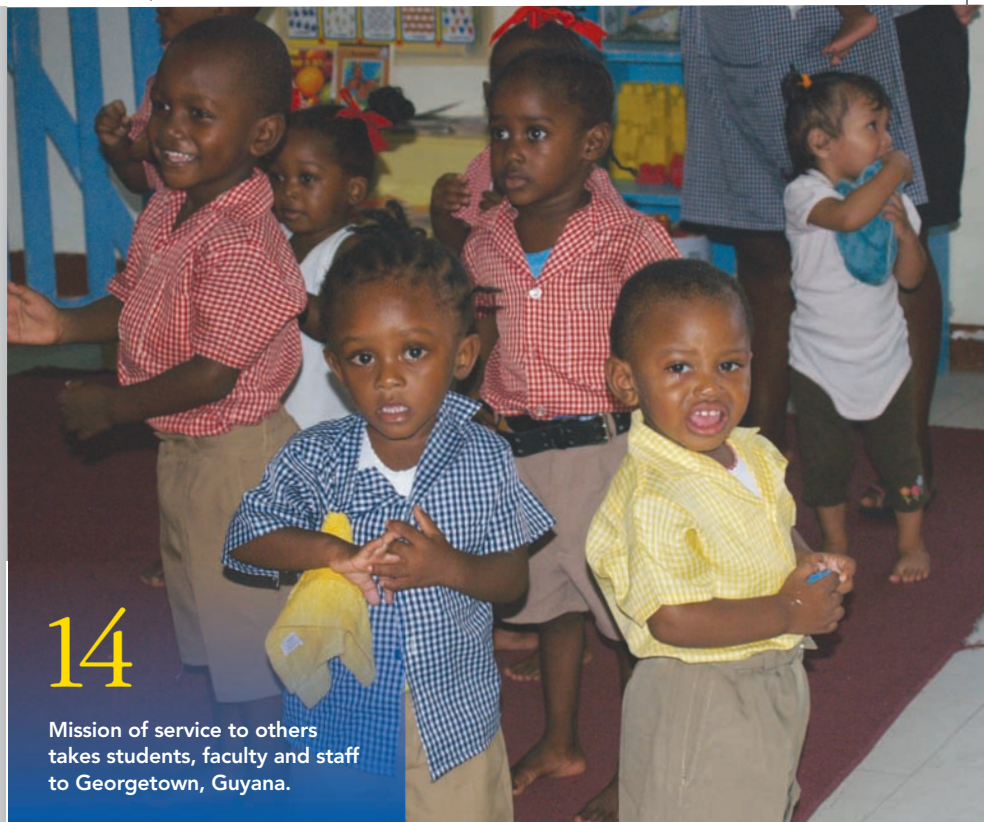
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## HONORS

*Misericordia Today* is a winner of  
the **2014 gold CUPPIE AWARD**  
in the cover category for the Winter  
2013 edition.



**Have a story to share?** Contact *Misericordia Today*  
by calling (570) 674-6372 or by e-mailing at  
**[editor@misericordia.edu](mailto:editor@misericordia.edu)**.



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Mission of service to others  
takes students, faculty and staff  
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## ON THE COVER

Ashlee Ward '15 concluded her stellar collegiate career by  
becoming the University's first track & field national champion  
by winning the NCAA Division III indoor and outdoor national  
high jump titles.







## Your path to success

The winter that would never end has finally ended and the campus has been stunningly beautiful this summer. Each day, I enjoy seeing visitors walk around campus, sometimes stopping to sit on one of the many benches to see what is blooming in the Shakespeare Garden. Walking certainly appears to be a part of who we are and the place where we live and learn.

Mary Sullivan's biography of Catherine McAuley, *The Path of Mercy*, reviews that the Sisters of Mercy were not cloistered, instead choosing to be "walking nuns." Sullivan notes the term "walking nuns" was not a compliment, but a complaint when it was first used in Ireland in the late 18th century. They were not regarded as "real nuns" because they chose to walk the streets of Cork to aid the sick and dying, poor families, and poor children in need of education." I've been thinking about that recently – both locally and globally – and how our choice to walk is a reflection of our past and a path toward our future.

Locally, we walk our campus and the surrounding areas constantly, moving between classes and living and learning on the campus. Our recent Alumni Weekend again reminded us of the astounding growth of recent years and how College Misericordia was once largely housed in what are now Mercy and McAuley Halls. As we have grown, our network of pathways and sidewalks also has grown. With support from our local community, we will soon construct a sidewalk that connects the original campus to our facilities along Lake Street and to the downtown of Dallas Borough. Hopefully, we will continue to grow as a walking campus as the new sidewalk symbolically connects us directly to our neighbors and community. We will then complete the path to Dallas, finishing a walk that began in the 1830s and, to quote Dr. Regina Kelly, RSM '43, "The journey from Dublin to Dallas was not a direct path, though it was indeed a path that would, in the coming years, enable thousands of others to find direction in their lives."

Our mission continues to walk and to live the charisms of Mercy, Service, Justice and Hospitality. As we prepare to celebrate the 90th year of Misericordia University, we are looking to expand our global learning opportunities beyond the paths on our campus. Students continue to provide service in Jamaica and Guyana. This summer's faculty workshop focused on providing even more curricular and co-curricular international and service linkages, exploring ways to establish study-abroad sites, welcome international students to our campus, and to strengthen interchanges with scholars abroad. Misericordia University will become our passport as we seek to share our learning and experiences near and far.

Please do visit us on campus soon and take a walk around to see the beautiful grounds and buildings that comprise our academic and residential home. Our 90th anniversary celebration will provide many exciting options for your visit. In turn, I look forward to seeing you both on my travels and during your visits. The doors are open, so please feel free to walk in anytime.

President Thomas J. Botzman, Ph.D.



# PNC Bank has a history of supporting initiatives at Misericordia

**M**isericordia University students learn that giving back to others is important in building better communities and serving the greater good. This spirit of service to others comes from the University's founders and sponsors, the Religious Sisters of Mercy.

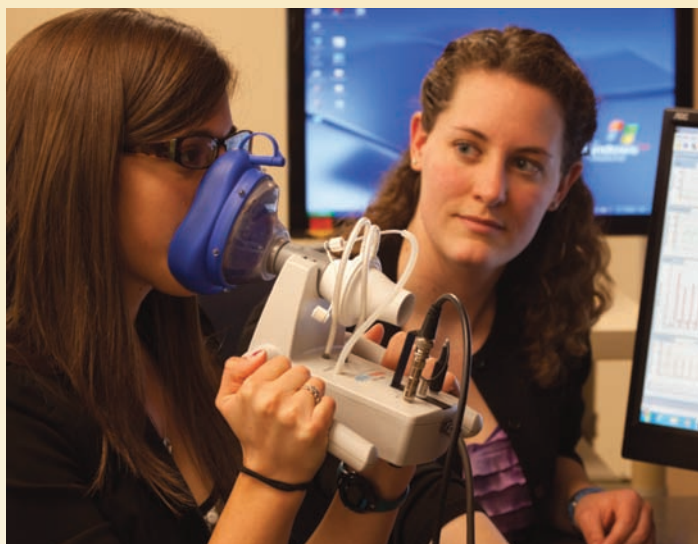
One of Misericordia's corporate benefactors knows this principle very well. PNC Bank supports MU because Misericordia and its students contribute to a better community in northeastern Pennsylvania and beyond. In fact, MU received gifts from PNC in every capitol campaign since 1997 and for many other projects.

"We have two main areas of focus with our funding," says Lauren Allen '99, VP/director of Client and Community Relations at PNC Bank. "We look at programs that help children ages 0-5 get ready for school through our PNC Grow up Great program, and we also focus on economic development projects."

Among the MU projects funded

by PNC is the Speech-Language and Hearing Center. "The center marries up to our objectives very well. I and other representatives of PNC have seen the facility on Lake Street. We have observed the important work happening there," says Allen, who received her master's in organizational management from Misericordia.

Misericordia's Assistive Technology Research Institute is the most recent recipient of PNC funding. The project, led by Denis Anson, M.S., O.T.R./L., will produce an online tool to assist speech-language pathologists in selecting the most appropriate assistive communication devices for patients. The devices cost thousands of dollars each so selecting the most appropriate one can



Speech-language pathology students Jeanette Perucca '15, left, and Victoria Flormann '14 use the Phonatory Aerodynamic System to obtain aerodynamic measures to evaluate the efficiency of vocal fold vibration.

save money and time.

Headquartered in Pittsburgh, Pa., the bank empowers its regional teams, such as the one in northeastern Pennsylvania, to make decisions that best fit the needs of the area. "We want to support the communities where our employees and customers live and work. That's why all decisions are made locally by a diverse team of employees," adds Allen.

– By Jim Roberts

## Students reap rewards of Alden Trust's generosity

**S**ince 1996, Misericordia University students and faculty have benefited from the generosity of the George I. Alden Trust. Smart classrooms in Sandy and Marlene Insalaco Hall, patient assessment facilities in John J. Passan Hall, and the Alden Trust Computer Lab in the Mary Kintz Bebevino Library are highly visible examples of the physical improvements to campus courtesy of funding from the Alden Trust.

Created in 1912 by George I. Alden, the Trust was established for the general purpose of "the maintenance of some charitable or philanthropic enterprises" with particular expressed interest in "the promotion of education in schools, colleges, or other educational institutions."

Mr. Alden taught mechanical engineering for 28 years at Worcester Polytechnic Institute. He grew up in

Templeton, Mass., and earned his money for college in the furniture factories of



Funding from the Alden Trust made the computer lab in the Mary Kintz Bebevino Library a reality.

nearby Gardner, according to the Trust's web site. One biographer describes him as, "serious himself, he expected everybody else to be, believing more in

practice than in precept... "

Alden and his colleague, Milton Higgins, were known nationally in the late 19th century for the promotion and delivery of high quality engineering education that combined practice with theory.

Misericordia University's mission and overall size fits well with the Trust's focus on higher education, particularly smaller independent institutions. The Alden Trust sets high standards to fund mostly capital projects at institutions that "demonstrate a combination of educational excellence, exciting programming, and efficient and effective administration," according to the Trust's mission and history statement.

For more information about the Alden Trust, please visit its website at [www.aldentrust.org](http://www.aldentrust.org).

– By Jim Roberts





## CAMPUS VIEWS

### Documentary receives national recognition

The Academy of Interactive and Visual Arts (AIVA) has awarded a 2014 Communicator Award to two Misericordia University Department of Communications professors for their documentary, *Vote: The Disabled Democracy*.

More than 6,000 entries from around the world were received by AIVA for the 20th Annual Communicator Awards.

The Communicator Awards is the largest and most competitive awards program honoring the creative excellence for communications professionals.

The Communicator Award is the second award presented to Melissa Sgroi, Ed.D., assistant professor and chair of the Department of Communications, and Dan Kimbrough, M.S., assistant professor of communications, for their 30-minute documentary, which aired on WVIA-TV 44 in May.

The Accolade Film, Television, New Media & Videography Awards awarded them a 2014 Award of Merit for the documentary, which chronicled the barriers to voting that exist for people with disabilities and how accessibility issues can disenfranchise some voters.

It is the second Accolade Award for Dr. Sgroi and Professor Kimbrough. In 2013, they received an Award of Merit in Disability Issues for *Vote*.

"We hope these documentaries have shed light on barriers to voting for people with disabilities because this is a form of disenfranchisement that has not been widely reported on to my knowledge or reported on at all," said Dr. Sgroi. "We hope these stories have educated people so they will notice barriers and take action to resolve them and enable all citizens to participate in the democratic process."



Dr. Sgroi



Kimbrough

### SGA's 'Cougars in Color 5K' raises \$2,483 to fight cancer

The Misericordia University Student Government Association's inaugural *Cougars in Color 5K Race* raised \$2,483 for The Lucy Fund – an organization that raises money to battle metastatic cancer.

The Lucy Fund was established by Lucy E. Stanovick shortly after she was diagnosed with Stage IV metastatic breast cancer in 2008. By the time the wife and mother of two was diagnosed, the cancer had spread to other regions of her body. Undeterred, the Saylorsburg, Pa., resident researched the disease and then established The Lucy Fund in order to raise awareness and funding for metastasis research.

Mrs. Stanovick lived for 4½ years with the disease and organized five *Party 4 Life* events herself before dying on Aug. 16, 2012. Overall, the Stanovick family has organized six *Party 4 Life* events – including one on the campus of Misericordia University – that have raised more than \$201,000 for research efforts at the National Foundation for Cancer Research (NFCR) and the NFCR

Center for Metastasis Research at The University of Kansas Medical Center.

"Our goal is to fund research that will lead to the ability to control metastasis," said her son, Nicholas Stanovick, a rising junior English and philosophy double major at Misericordia University. "Ninety percent of people who die from cancer die because their cancer has metastasized, but less than 5 percent of cancer funding research goes into that."

The *Cougars in Color 5K Race* featured various stations along the race course on the upper campus where brightly-colored powder was tossed into the air and onto the runners. At the finish line, the runners received one last packet of colored



### Purchase of Active Shooter Response Kits improves emergency preparedness

The Dallas Township Police Department, with support from Misericordia University, purchased several Active Shooter Response Kits for use by police officers and other emergency personnel who would respond to a high-risk situation on campus or in the neighboring communities.

The University agreed to provide funding for 15 ballistic vests upon a request from Dallas Township Police Chief Robert Jolley. Ten vests were issued to members of the police department and the remaining vests will be stored in the department's

emergency response truck to be made available to other emergency responders who answer the call to an incident on campus or in Dallas Township.

The vests are advanced, high-density body armor that can withstand gunfire from high caliber rifle rounds as well as typical handgun ammunition. They can also be used to shield civilians in the event of an evacuation through the line-of-fire area during an active incident, according to Robert Zavada, associate director of campus safety.

The collaboration between MU and police is another step in ensuring the campus' emergency preparedness. The





## CAMPUS VIEWS



At the finish line, participants in the race show why it is called the 'Cougars in Color 5K.'

powder to douse themselves and fellow runners in color. At the end of the day, the runners appeared to be tie-dyed from head to toe.

"We're trying to make metastatic cancer chronic, not deadly, by coordinating impactful events that

empower communities, colleges, and businesses to financially support metastatic research," Nicholas said at the race, repeating the mission statement for The Lucy Fund. "We want to make it like being diagnosed with diabetes."



Showing the kits, from left, are President Thomas J. Botzman, Police Chief Robert Jolley and Robert Zavada of Campus Safety.

University's Campus Safety Department also utilizes an emergency notification loudspeaker system that is designed to

alert students, guests, faculty, staff and local residents of a potentially dangerous situation on campus. The loud speaker emits audible tones and instructions via the spoken word.

Additionally, Misericordia offers the MU-ALERT system to members of the campus community so users can receive a text alert on their smart phones about emergencies, weather events, school delays and closings, and other important announcements. The same announcements are posted to an internal web-based portal and shared via Twitter, Facebook and the University's cable television channel, as well. The University also has an emergency plan that is reviewed and updated as necessary by the administration.

### Middle States Commission reaffirms MU accreditation

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE), which accredits all colleges and universities in the mid-Atlantic region, reaffirmed Misericordia University's accreditation. Accreditation by the appropriate review organization is one of the most important measures of academic quality for a institution of higher education.

The accreditation process was the culmination of almost two years of preparation by the Misericordia community. It was led by a steering committee comprised of board members, faculty and staff. The process of developing a self-study document and hosting an external peer reviewer team evaluation visit takes place every 10 years and applies to the entire University. The reaccreditation was conducted in compliance with the 14 standards of excellence outlined by MSCHE standards.

The five-year Periodic Review Report for MSCHE is due to the Commission in 2019. The next accreditation review of self-study document and evaluation team visit is tentatively scheduled for 2024.

### Newman Fellow Award presented to Becker

Catie Becker '14 was named a 2014 Newman Civic Fellow by Campus Compact.

The award recognizes inspiring student leaders who have demonstrated an investment in finding solutions for challenges facing communities. Through service, research and advocacy, honorees are making the most of their collegiate



Becker

experiences to better understand themselves, causes of social issues, and effective mechanisms for creating lasting change. Fellows serve as national examples of the role that higher education can play in building a better world, according to Campus Compact.





## CAMPUS VIEWS

### Library adds study rooms, encloses computer lab

Four group study rooms were added to the second floor of the Mary Kintz Bevevino Library during the spring semester.

The computer lab on the same floor also was enclosed with sound-deadening glass panels. Each study room is about 105 square feet and contains a table with four chairs.

KI Walls of Manitowac, Wis., made the Genius Moveable Walls for the projects. The walls are not permanent and can be easily disassembled and re-assembled.

Each study room has power and computer ports. Wi-Fi access is available and the study rooms also have writable wall surfaces. Students can borrow dry erase markers from the library and use the walls as a white board. Students can reserve the rooms for up to four hours at a time. Room reservations can be made by contacting the Reference Desk.

The library also plans on adding four additional study rooms on the second floor in the near future.



Students use one of the new study rooms.

### New Alumni Commencement picnic welcomes graduates

Misericordia University's newest alumni from the Class of 2014 got a taste of how much fun it is to be a member of the Alumni Association at the inaugural New Alumni Commencement Picnic held on May 16 prior to Commencement rehearsal.

New alumni mingled with staff and faculty at a picnic lunch, enjoyed the talents of two caricature artists, and hammed it up in a photo booth.

"We were happy to officially welcome



### MU's newest alumni sit for caricature portraits.

our newest alumni into the MU alumni family that is more than 16,000 strong," said Amy Lingobardo, assistant director of Alumni and Donor Relations. "The New Alumni Picnic is a celebration of their years of success on campus and our way of welcoming them into their new life as alumni. Our graduates are students for a few years, but they are alumni for life. We hope this is the beginning of an annual celebration to send our graduates and newest alumni forward and into a bright, successful future."

### Misericordia Fund better reflects impact of giving

Misericordia University recently updated the name of its Annual Fund to the Misericordia Fund to better reflect the impact that gifts to the University make on students. Latin for mercy, Misericordia has a special meaning to alumni and friends alike, and sets apart the uniqueness of the University.

"We thought about how to pay tribute, in many ways, to the founding Sisters of Mercy during this 90th anniversary year," said Michele Shea Zabriski, director of development. "The choice to change the name of our annual fund was clear."

Gifts to the Misericordia Fund provide scholarships, fund academics and help to make an impact in areas of greatest need. For more information, please visit [www.giving.misericordia.edu](http://www.giving.misericordia.edu).

### Ivory Coast leaders discuss terrorism with GLNS majors

Misericordia University students in the Government, Law and National Security program learned about terrorism, and

social and political conflict in their course on global politics from two guest lecturers.

Abdoul Karim Ouattara, an adviser to the president for the Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Ivory Coast, and Rev. Jean-Claude Atusameso, executive director, Jatukik Providence Foundation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, focused their discussions on the need to provide opportunities, employment and a future for young people in the countries of western Africa in order to steer them away from terrorist organizations.

The reconciliation commission was established to restore unity in Ivory Coast after a period of unrest in the country.



Student Marina Painter '15 participates in a discussion with Ivory Coast leaders.

### We The Kings rocks Misericordia campus

The alternative rock band We The Kings brought its high-energy sound to the Anderson Sports and Health Center in April for the Department of Student Activities' Spring Fest Weekend.

We The Kings was touring the country in support of its fourth album, *Somewhere Somehow*, which entered the Billboard Hot 200 at No. 44. Several hundred music fans enjoyed the concert.



Students enjoy We The Kings in concert.



# Misericordia's 'Flood Babies'

**Campus community  
turned into hospital  
center, evacuation site during  
Agnes flood in 1972**

BY PAUL KRZYWICKI

Susan Anderson Morgans, 63, and Gretchen Dante, 63, will tell you they are as different as night and day. Morgans is more reserved and describes herself as an observer who participates in life. Dante, on the other hand, is an extrovert and a self-described hippie. They also call themselves the best of friends – having done so since a happenstance encounter at then-College Misericordia on July 22, 1972.

Alone, worried, and about eight-months pregnant, Dante was not ready to give birth with all of the unknowns swirling around her. With her husband, Peter, in Philadelphia, Pa., at the Ike and Tina Turner and the Ikettes-Rolling Stones American Tour concert, and the greater Wyoming Valley devastated from the historic Hurricane Agnes flood, she was being transported from a shelter in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., to a small, Back Mountain college campus to give birth to her first child.

Just a few weeks prior to giving birth, the Dantes had to be rescued by boat from their Main Street, Wilkes-Barre, apartment due to the Susquehanna River breaching the dike system on June 23. Once on dry land, emergency responders mistakenly thought Gretchen was in labor



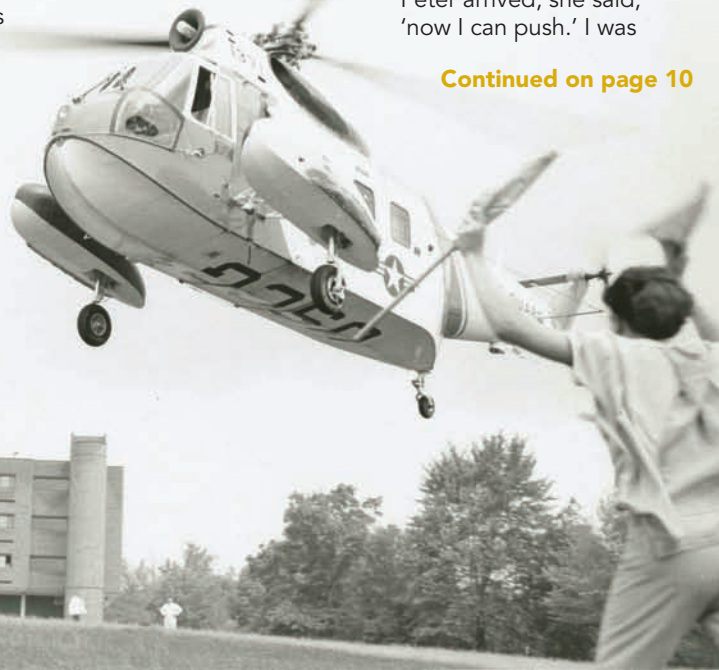
Susan Anderson Morgans, above, holds her newborn son, Theodore Anderson, in Alumnae Hall. An armed forces helicopter, below, lands on the campus grounds in 1972.

and rushed her by ambulance to Wyoming Valley Hospital in Wilkes-Barre. Although a collision with another vehicle delayed her arrival, she soon was discharged without giving birth and was sent to a shelter for flood victims.

"She did everything she could to delay pushing because she wanted her husband there," says Morgans, who befriended Dante during that uncertain time in

Alumnae Hall on the campus of Misericordia. "Once Peter arrived, she said, 'now I can push.' I was

**Continued on page 10**



*Through  
the Years*

**1875**

Sisters of Mercy establish a presence in Wyoming Valley, Luzerne County, Pa.

**1924**

College Misericordia, Luzerne County's first four-year college, is established.

**1925**

Misericordia granted charter by Pennsylvania Department of Education to confer degrees.

**1927**

The Class of 1927 features five graduates, including Valedictorian Gertrude O'Connell.

**1928**

The first four-year class graduates with valedictorian Helen Rita Gildea.

**1949**

The first nursing students graduate.

**1952**

Walsh Hall opens and is named in memory of Mother Mary Teresa Walsh.

**1957**

Misericordia hires first full-time president, Sister Celestine McHale, RSM, who serves from 1957-64.

**1963**

Misericordia dedicates Alumnae Hall.

**1972**

Poet Maya Angelou speaks on campus for the first time on Feb. 18, 1972.

**1974**

First men graduate from Misericordia.

**1978**

Misericordia officially becomes co-educational.

**1993**

Anderson Sports and Health Center dedicated in honor of Dr. Robert S. Anderson.

**1999**

Mary Kintz Bevevino Library is dedicated.

**2003**

Dedication ceremony marks opening of Geraldine Ruth Daley Anderson Bell Tower.

**2007**

Institution becomes Misericordia University.

**2011**

John J. Passan Hall, the home of the College of Health Sciences on the lower campus, is formally dedicated.

**2013**

Ceremony between a doubleheader baseball game marks dedication of Tambur Field.

**2014-15**

Misericordia celebrates 90th anniversary.





## Campus serves as evacuation and hospital center during Agnes flood

Continued from page 9

there for the birth of her son and we have been friends ever since. I gained a child and a lifelong friend. Even though it was an anxious time there were so many good things that came out of those few days up there."

"I held him in," acknowledges Dante, a resident of Wakefield, R.I., today. "I sat there (at Misericordia) and sat there and sat there waiting for my husband to get there. As soon as I got into bed, my husband walked in – sweaty and tired because it was like 3 a.m. – and he delivered our baby."

Misericordia became an evacuation center for more than 1,000 people and a temporary site for Nesbitt Memorial Hospital of Kingston, Pa., on June 23, 1972 due to the remnants of Hurricane Agnes flooding the City of Wilkes-Barre and surrounding communities. The flooding resulted in lives lost, tens of thousands of people being evacuated, and in billions of dollars in damages. At the time, it was the costliest hurricane in the history of the United States.

Overall, 52 babies were born in Alumnae Hall – including Theodore Anderson (July 21, 1972) and Aubrey Peter Dante (July 22, 1972). "We relive the events of those particular days that we spent at Misericordia in the dorm rooms with our babies," Morgans says, acknowledging the topic of conversations with her girlfriend. "There was a lot going on, not only in the valley with the flood, but there was a lot of apprehension. We were pregnant and due to deliver and where were we going to go?"

"During that time, we were wondering who was going to deliver our babies and were they going to be okay. There were just a lot of unknowns and no one could give you a straight answer because of all the chaos. You had to trust where you were being led," adds Morgans.

For Morgans, the birth of her "flood baby" was a much more relaxing experience than the one she had in 1971 with her eldest daughter, Heather, at a hospital in State College, Pa. It was also "the lesser of two evils," as those five



Vera Sorber, above, holds her newborn daughter, Rebecca Sorber Wallace. At right is a picture of Rebecca at 1-month old.



days at Misericordia sheltered her and her newborn from the uncertainty that encircled the flood-ravaged area and her second-floor apartment in Kingston.

The entire Misericordia campus quickly was transformed into a strategic evacuation center and 100-bed health care facility with cardiac and intensive care units, operating and emergency rooms, an x-ray department and an obstetrics unit. Armed National Guard soldiers patrolled the main gate and passes were required to gain access to the upper campus, including the

Administration Building (today's Mercy Hall), Alumnae Hall and other facilities. Helipads were set up near Merrick and Alumnae halls for military helicopters that transported evacuees, and brought food and medical supplies to campus.

Those same images and others remain vivid for Vera Sorber, 63, more than 42 years after giving birth to Rebecca on July 25, 1972. She witnessed the looks of concern that blanketed the faces of National Guard soldiers patrolling the archway. As she was helped from her vehicle and into the make-shift obstetrics unit, the Dallas Borough native witnessed a military helicopter land adjacent to the building. Despite the unusual environment, Sorber remained confident in the doctors and the facility for the birth of her first child.

"I felt confident I would have a safe delivery," says Sorber, a Loyalville, Pa., resident today. "My biggest concern was my husband (Chip Sorber) who was working in Edwardsville on post-recovery efforts."

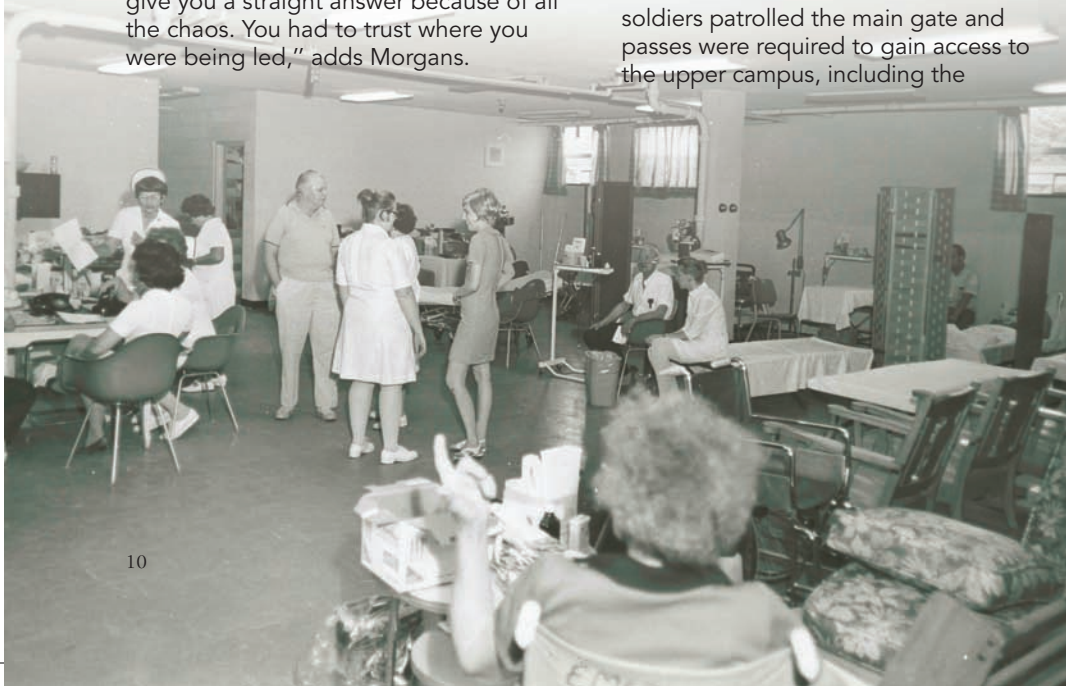
The Sorbers spent only about 24 hours on campus for delivery and aftercare, but the family

has been linked to Misericordia ever since. Vera's nieces, Hillary Cave Lipinski '94, and twin sisters, Elizabeth Cave Noe '98 and Alison Cave '98, earned their undergraduate degrees from the college on the hill. The couple also had two more children – Jesse in 1974 and Chad in 1981 – albeit in a more traditional fashion at Nesbitt Memorial Hospital.

Tucked beneath the pages of a weathered Bible is the sentimental note Elizabeth Stochla, 80, wrote to her late husband, Joseph, while he was a patient at the Veterans Administration Hospital in Plains Twp., Pa., more than 42 years ago. She placed the yellowed piece of paper in there for safe keeping some years ago. In it, she shares the birth announcement of their son, David Stochla, on June 28, 1972.

"We had a baby boy," she proudly proclaimed in the note. "I am very happy and I know he is happy, too."

David was born a mere five days after the flood waters rushed through the Wyoming





Valley, including Edwardsville, Pa., where the family resided. Thankfully, their home was not in the flood plain and Stochla still lives in the home to this day. Together, the couple raised six children in the home.

"I was very nervous," recalls Stochla, who spent three days on campus. "My husband was in the VA at the time, we had no telephone and I could not communicate with him. When I had the baby, I had a fireman drive me. He took the note to my husband to let him know everyone was okay."

In July 1972, Mary Kachmarsky had a difficult choice to make: Give birth at West Side Vocational-Technical School near her Pringle, Pa., home or go to College Misericordia. Kachmarsky was 39 years old the first time she came to campus – and it took a baby bump and verbal pass from a doctor to get her there. "I tapped on my tummy (to show National Guard soldiers why she was there)," Kachmarsky says, adding, "If this is not a pass, I don't know what was."

It was a sweltering 90-degree day and her husband, Dennis, was away on business as a federal food inspector when she went into labor. Kachmarsky hitched a ride from a family friend and arrived at Misericordia to give birth to Mary Elizabeth on July 19, 1972. The facility did not have a bed available, so she delivered one of her seven children on a mattress lying on the floor in about 20 minutes.

"It was an experience anybody would have loved to have had," says Kachmarsky, who still lives in the family homestead in Pringle. "I can almost remember every detail. They took very good care of us. I could not praise them enough for the facilities they had up there. We were well blessed. We were out of the water. I felt more secure going to Misericordia."

Sixteen years later, the Kachmarsky family returned to campus along with many of the babies and their families for a special celebration that included a large

family-style picnic, a performance of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and a special birthday present for the teenagers. College Misericordia offered special scholarships to help each of the 52 babies born on campus attend Luzerne County's first four-year college.

"We are planning an evening of informal fun and celebration for everyone," Dr. Bruce Wilson, Misericordia's executive vice president, announced prior to the event in August 1988. "This is going to be an exciting, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to re-establish old acquaintances and



**Theodore Anderson and Aubrey Dante, above, enjoy a play date in 1973. Mary Kachmarsky, above right, poses with her daughter, Mary Kachmarsky Pascucci '94.**

look to the future. We feel we have a vested interest in the outcome of the lives of these young adults."

Mary Elizabeth Kachmarsky Pascucci '94 was one of the "flood babies" who accepted the \$1,000 annual scholarship to MU. She earned her B.A. degree in liberal studies and later earned an MBA.

Today, she works in the banking industry and has two children.

"There was a photo taken and an article in the newspaper," Pascucci says, recalling the event. "They had us all grouped together and then they offered us a scholarship."

It was that scholarship, her familiarity with Misericordia and its academic reputation that had her matriculate to the college as an undergraduate student. "It was a

combination of everything," she says. "The comfort zone of having that connection and it was local and I wanted to stay local."

To this day, Pascucci and many others take time to reflect upon the circumstances of those trying days. "My story is typically told during my birthday," says Pascucci, who was born at 11:30 a.m. "It is one of the many stories that I tell and I am proud to tell: I was born in a college dormitory and I went to college before I went to kindergarten."

The Religious Sisters of Mercy have had a long-held tradition of providing to those most in need, whether it is in their own community, in a neighboring state, or abroad in the global community. In this case, the college campus and its volunteers sheltered, clothed and fed the displaced, cared for the sick, and served as a safe haven for newborns and the formation of new friendships.

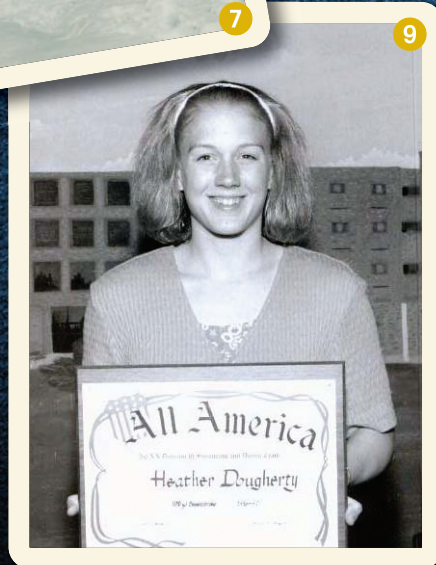
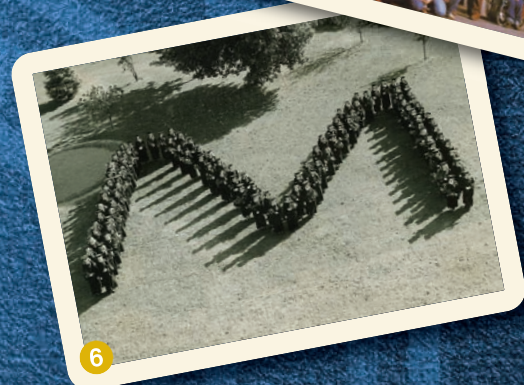
"Every time the (flood) anniversary rolls around usually Gretchen and I talk and we relive these memories," says Morgans, who lives in Wilkes-Barre today. "She is my longest and oldest friend – tried and true."







# Through the years



- 1 Representatives of the Diocese of Scranton bless the ground in 1955 where Hafey Science Hall was constructed.
- 2 Male students pose for a picture in the 1970s in a residence hall.
- 3 The women's 1932 field hockey team poses for a picture.
- 4 Members of the Misericordia community pose for a picture in 1982.
- 5 Fans and cheerleaders welcome Cougars football team for first home game in 2012.
- 6 The 1947 Investiture class of 1951 shows its school spirit.
- 7 Snow blankets the ground at the original entrance to campus in the 1920s.
- 8 Students pose for a picture at the Junior Ring Dance in December 1965.
- 9 Heather Dougherty Holdredge '97 was the first NCAA All-American and is a member of the first Hall of Fame class in 2003. She accomplished her feat in the 100 breaststroke.

Photo by Rosalie Winard





Photo by Rosalyn Winard

# Temple Grandin keynotes 90th anniversary celebration

Misericordia University, the Department of Speech-Language Pathology and Students Spreading Disability Awareness are presenting Temple Grandin, Ph.D., for a free lecture and book signing event on Wednesday, Nov. 5 at 7:30 p.m. in Lemmond Theater in Walsh Hall as part of the University's 90th anniversary year celebration.

Dr. Grandin has been called one of the world's most influential people by Time Magazine and the most accomplished and well-known adult with autism in the world. She is an advocate for autistic communities, a consultant on the humane treatment of animals, a professor of animal science at Colorado State University, a bestselling author, and a high-functioning autistic person. She will present the lecture, *The World Needs All Kinds of Minds*.

Due to limited seating, tickets are required for this speaking engagement. Reservations can be made beginning Sept. 10 through the Misericordia University Cultural Events Box Office at

(570) 674-6719.

Born in Boston, Mass., Dr. Grandin did not talk until she was three and a half years old and had all the signs of severe autism. She communicated her frustration instead by screaming, peeping and humming, according to her website, [www.templegrandin.com](http://www.templegrandin.com). In 1950, she was diagnosed with autism and her parents were told she should be institutionalized. Her parents defied that advice and, instead, had their daughter receive many hours of speech therapy. Intensive teaching enabled her to learn speech. Dr. Grandin's story stunned the world, and she shares it in the book, *Emergence: Labeled Autistic*.

She has published many books and articles on a wide-range of subjects, including her critically acclaimed books *Animals in Translation* (New York Times bestseller) and *Animals Make Us Human*.

The subject of the 2010 Emmy-Award winning HBO film, *Temple Grandin*, she is also a world-renowned designer of livestock handling facilities.

## Celebrating MU's heritage: The 924 Challenge



Misericordia University will celebrate its 90th Anniversary on Sept. 24, 2014. In recognition, the University is hosting a series of celebratory events. Please log on to <http://misericordia.edu/muturns90> for the most up-to-date information.

### The Challenge

Sept. 24, 2014 marks 90 years to the day that Misericordia University opened its doors. In celebration of the Sisters of Mercy's vision, the Office of University Advancement has launched *The 924 Challenge*, which is asking for the support of 924 donors by Sept. 24 to honor Misericordia's rich history and to pave a solid foundation for future students.

Misericordia was founded to offer opportunities to those who otherwise would not be able to afford college. Holding fast to the tenets of Mercy, Service, Justice and Hospitality, the University continues to educate young women and men who learn, serve and succeed with Mercy in their hearts.

As many as 98 percent of MU students receive some form of financial aid and donor support plays a critical role in their success. A gift to *The 924 Challenge* will benefit the *Misericordia Fund*, which provides scholarship aid, funds academic programs, enhances student life on campus, supports areas of greatest need, improves library and computer resources, and secures additional educational equipment. It is also an investment in the future of MU, allowing the University to continue to educate students and provide them with the support they need to succeed in their careers and in their lives.

Gifts of all sizes are welcome. To make a gift to *The 924 Challenge*, please go to <http://cougarconnect.misericordia.edu/924challenge>, or contact Luciana Musto, assistant director of development, at (570) 674-8027 or at [lmusto@misericordia.edu](mailto:lmusto@misericordia.edu).



This kind deed was brought to you by **MISERICORDIA UNIVERSITY'S RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS CAMPAIGN.**

On the 24th of each month, our alumni, students, faculty and staff are spreading kindness across the country in honor of our 90th year. Pay the kindness forward and make someone's day a little bit brighter. #MUkindacts

See more random acts of kindness at  
<http://cougarconnect.misericordia.edu/rak>

This kind deed was brought to you by Misericordia University's Random Acts of Kindness Campaign. On the 24th of each month, we are spreading kindness in honor of our 90th year. Pick up the tab for a cup of Joe or hold the door for someone. Then present our coupon so your random act of kindness continues to benefit others. Share your gesture on Twitter by snapping a picture of your coupon and describing what you did. Attach the hashtag, #MUkindacts, so we can share it. See more acts of kindness at [cougarconnect.misericordia.edu/rak](http://cougarconnect.misericordia.edu/rak).



# GUYANA

Our Mission of Mercy



Students provide service to  
underserved of Guyana

## LEARNING TO LISTEN

### Megan Lagé '14

Morristown, N.J.

B.S. Psychology

Parents: David and Regina Lagé

Siblings: Kevin and Christopher

When she first visited Misericordia University, Megan Lagé '14 says it reminded her of her high school campus. Choosing psychology as a major, she became active in service projects as a student worker in Campus Ministry. She was the spring break coordinator from 2012-14 and participated in service trips to assist the Sisters of Mercy and the underprivileged in New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Philadelphia, Pa. She also participated in a cultural awareness trip to Peru in 2012. Lagé is currently researching graduate school programs and plans on a career as a secondary education counselor.

#### On the orphanages:

"What made this trip so special for me was the people – especially the children. The children wasted no time in acting like your best friend ... and they definitely made it much harder to say goodbye."

#### On the David Rose School for the Deaf:

"Many of the children here used sign language, but they still wanted to talk to us. It was a challenging, but very rewarding site."

#### Lessons learned:

"The hardest part for me was seeing all the injustice and knowing that there is nothing that can be done immediately. This trip will serve as a constant reminder to me that everyone comes from a different place both culturally and geographically ... and who we are is based on how we were brought up and raised."

BY MARIANNE TUCKER PUHALLA

**G**EORGETOWN, Guyana – When you first see him, Michael Ali seems like most 16-year-old boys – roughhousing with his brothers, Jamal, 10, and Kevin, 13. Michael loves to write and wants to become a journalist. What makes this bright Guyanese boy with an unforgettable smile different, though, is that Michael and his siblings live at the St. John Bosco Orphanage in the Plaisance section. Michael has been there since he was three years old. His brothers have been there since they were little as well. It is the only home they have ever known. Michael has no knowledge of his parents and looks to the orphanage's director, Sister Julie Matthews, R.S.M., as both mother and teacher.

There are 50 boys from ages 4-16 who live at the orphanage. Their brightly colored school uniforms are clean and pressed, but the play clothes are tattered – frighteningly representative of the economic situation of the area. Guyana is the third poorest country in South America and the per capita income is just more than \$3,400 a year, according to World Bank ratings.

Many of the boys were abandoned by their families because they could not afford to raise them. They get few, if any, visitors. The orphanage is full; there is no room for the multitude of others who are in the same situation.

So when a service-learning group from Misericordia University, including May 2014 graduates Catie Becker '14, Arthur Dowell '14, Ann Kaufman '14, and Megan Lagé '14; rising junior Kayleigh Morein '16; Maureen Romanow Pascal, P.T., D.P.T., N.C.S., associate professor of physical therapy; Jeffrey Passetti, assistant



Brothers Kevin, Jamal and Michael Ali know no other home than St. John Bosco Orphanage.

director of Campus Ministry, and Marianne Puhalla, staff writer in the Marketing Communications Department, arrived on June 2, they were greeted with heartfelt hugs and outstretched arms.

It took just minutes before games of tag and soccer erupted and they began to climb on the jungle gym – forming lifetime friendships within seconds.

"Every year when the Misericordia students come, they teach us tricks to help us learn in school and share their stories with us," Ali says. "They teach us lessons on being good and tell us to stay in school. They are good friends to have and we look forward to their visits."

"The boys' orphanage was the hardest place to leave," Becker offers. "The smiles, hugs, and friendships made do not begin to describe the time we had there. We met some amazing kids who will absolutely make the world a better place. It was such a joy being able to visit them every day."

Ali will graduate from the orphanage when he turns 17. As long as he holds a



full-time job, he will be allowed to move to the Mercy Boys' Home, operated by Sister Marie Noel Menzes, RSM '64, a Misericordia alumna who taught history at the campus in the mid 1960's. Ali says he will continue to look after his brothers who will remain at the orphanage and hopes to build a life for them all one day.

The St. John Bosco Orphanage was just one of seven sites the Misericordia travelers volunteered at as part of the service-learning course, Theology of the Church. The seminar culminated in the 16-day service-learning trip to Guyana's capital city of Georgetown from June 1-16. During class, they learned about the Mercy tenet of Service and what servant leadership means. They also received a preview of this Third World nation of just 750,000 people sandwiched between Venezuela and Suriname on South America's Caribbean coast.

The Sisters of Mercy have a large presence in Guyana. As founders and sponsors of Misericordia University, they have been receiving campus volunteers to aid their efforts since 1990. They admit it is a hard place to live.

There is a distinct smell to Georgetown. There is no citywide sanitation system, so most streets are lined with mounds of garbage. Due to the country's Dutch origins, many of the city's neighborhoods have Dutch names, such as Vryheids Lust,

and are crisscrossed with canals that double as the sewer system. When it rains, the waste in them is washed out to sea.

Mosquitos are prevalent, and goats, pigs and horses roam the streets, living off of the garbage and occasionally clogging traffic. Most of the city's homes would be considered ramshackle by United States' standards, with rotting

boards and pieced-together roofing. The telltale sign of the more well-to-do houses is their palette of colors associated with its Dutch origins, from pink and orange to green. By necessity, nicer houses are almost always surrounded by a high fence, often topped with multiple rolls of barbed wire.

Veronica Feronic is a resident of the Missionaries of Charity home, operated by sisters of the order of the same name in the Houston section of the city. Only 59 years old, "Eve" as she is called, has lived there for the past 10 years, sharing her space with more than 20 women in the nursing facility. There are more than 30 children also under the watchful eye of the nuns in an adjacent day care building. Both are annual stops on Misericordia service-learning trips.

Growing up in Guyana, Eve did domestic work to help put her 13 siblings



Catie Becker '14 provides comfort to an orphaned baby girl at Red Cross Children's Convalescent Home.

## GUYANA

### Our Mission of Mercy



### Arthur Dowell '14

Berwick, Pa.

B.A. Communications

Parents: Twilla and Aaron Dowell

Siblings: Naria and Joseph

Arthur Dowell '14 was introduced to Misericordia when he attended a Communications and Media Career Exploration Camp after his junior year in high school. As an MU student, he became involved with numerous student activity projects, including serving as a summer orientation coordinator. He also became immersed in service projects, taking part in Campus Ministry-sponsored trips to help Habitat for Humanity in Spokane, Wash., and in Mobile, Ala., and to assist the Sisters of Mercy at a sustainable farm in Rhode Island. He hopes to soon launch a career in sports reporting.

#### On St. Joseph's Mercy Hospital:

"It was shocking to see an everyday hospital give daily care with so little compared to what we have at home. It breaks my heart knowing that they cannot provide the level of care that is needed."

#### On the David Rose School for the Deaf:

"The kids and staff were always excited to see us. It was very heartwarming and they were welcoming to everybody. Not to mention they kicked our butts at backyard sports."

#### Lessons learned:

"I got to grow and learn as an individual because I took advantage of the opportunity to step out of my comfort zone. I met with Sister Catherine Glyn-Williams, R.S.M. She is one of the sweetest ladies I have ever met. From her, I learned to take the opportunities given to me and make the most of them."

Continued on page 16



MU volunteers, front row from left, Ann Kaufman '14, Megan Lagé '14, Kayleigh Morein '14, Catie Becker '14, and center back, Arthur Dowell '14 share a special moment with their new-found friends at the St. John Bosco Orphanage in Georgetown.



# GUYANA

## Our Mission of Mercy



### Catie Becker '14

**Shickshinny, Pa.**

**B.A. History**

**Parents: Janine and Steve Becker**

**Sibling: Emily, 18**

Catherine "Catie" Becker '14 took on numerous leadership roles while she was an undergraduate student at Misericordia, including organizing the Starry Knights after-school program for 50 students at Lake-Noxen Elementary School. She also was president of the Student Government Association where she raised the level of recognition of the organization and helped run two successful Spring Fest Weekends. Becker took part in previous service trips to a Sisters-of-Mercy run farm in Rhode Island, and to low-income areas of Alabama and Philadelphia. Inspired by the success of her trip to Guyana and other volunteer efforts, she will pursue a graduate degree at Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., and pursue a career in social work.

**On the St. John Bosco Boys' Orphanage:** "I had heard about the boys' orphanage and how much love they give, but I never expected to get attached so quickly. About six days in, we took them to the sea wall and they wanted to hold my hands and wanted me to watch them skipping rocks. They were so proud to show me what they could do. At that point, I felt it was real and I realized that definitely the hardest part of the trip would be leaving them. I was right."

**On the Ptolemy Reid Rehab Center:** "The smiles on the students' faces were so heartwarming. We were welcomed with hugs from everyone and had the opportunity to meet some amazing kids and teachers."

### Continued from page 15

through school, yet received no formal education herself. Not long after her mother died, she contracted a parasitic infection in her right foot and was unable to care for herself, so she came to the nursing facility to live. Now suffering advanced stages of gangrene, she refuses surgery and has opted to spend her days at the home. She is often the spokesperson for the women who are far more impaired than she is.

"We like when the students come," Feronic says in her thick Guyanese dialect. "There is nobody to talk with you much here ... we are happy when they come and be with us. I love them. We look forward to their visits each year."

During their first stop at the center, the Misericordia visitors sat in a circle amongst the women. Within minutes, the residents began singing to the students. Next, Eve started an impromptu prayer chain, and the women offered prayers for the visitors to have safe travels during their stay.

"We were there to help take care of them, and before we could even get started, they were praying for us," reflects Dowell. "It was such a powerful moment, and one that helped us soon



Veronica 'Eve' Feronic is a long-time resident of the Missionaries of Charity home.

realize that this is the way that Guyanese people are – so very caring. These women had very little, but they were so glad to see us and that was their way of showing appreciation. It was a moment I will never forget."

Just a half hour into the students' first visit to St. Ann's Orphanage, one little girl – about four – asked Lagé if she would adopt her. "To me, what made this trip so special were the people, especially the children," says Lagé, who as an

undergraduate took part in four service trips in the U.S. and a cultural awareness mission to Peru. "The orphanage children wasted no time in acting like your best friend. And they definitely made it much harder to say goodbye."

At St. Joseph's Mercy Hospital, a Sisters of Mercy-run facility in Georgetown, it was readily apparent that the Guyanese doctors and staff were making the most of what they have while recovering from a fire that destroyed a large portion of the hospital in 2010. The MU students learned that the hospital's pediatrics unit does not have a ventilator and the four-bed Intensive Care Unit is ill equipped, lacking the equipment to actually provide intensive care.

"I sat in with a doctor who had to explain to a mother that her child had asthma," says Morein. "She did not even know what asthma was – or what an EpiPen (epinephrine injection) was used for. Without television and computers, the people there have so little knowledge about what they can do to care for their families. It was eye-opening."

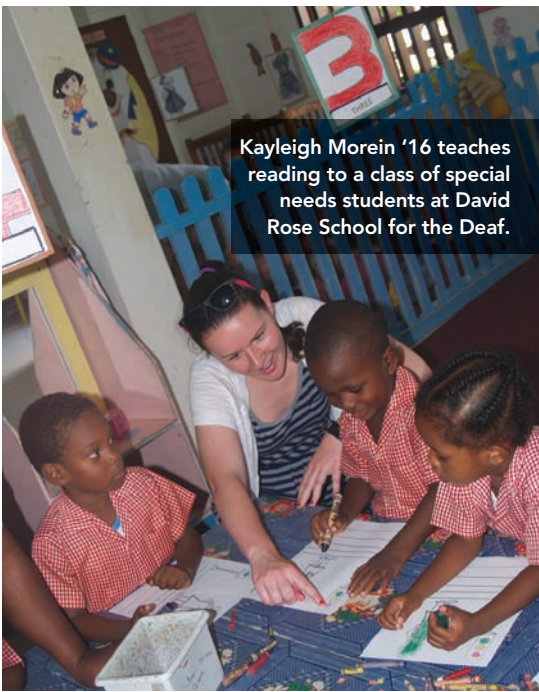
The same is true for the staff at the nearby Ptolemy Reid Rehabilitation Center. Director Cynthia Massay is proud of the work the center does with special needs children and as a National Orthotics and Appliance Workshop, providing prostheses and hearing aids for 300 patients in the region. She says she counts on help from outside the country to improve the services the facility provides.

The Misericordia group took turns helping with the 30 daycare students and eight special needs children who reside at the facility, holding, feeding and playing with them. They also helped teach reading to students enrolled in the on-site school.

"I was fortunate to work with Daniel, a 9-year-old boy at Ptolemy Reid who was unable to stand, feed himself or lay on his stomach. In addition, he was non-verbal and could only communicate through pointing and grunting," explains Kaufman. "The first time I visited, I held him and played with him for just two hours and it was a really hard job. I can only imagine how tough it is to work there every day, yet the nurses and aides seemed to love their jobs and love the children. They were grateful for the extra set of hands, and I can only hope I made Daniel's day just a little bit better."

The Mercy Wings Vocational School was established by the Sisters of Mercy who have taken on the delicate task of training young men and women who have fallen through the cracks of the public school system. The students are taught basic English and math, and





Kayleigh Morein '16 teaches reading to a class of special needs students at David Rose School for the Deaf.

receive vocational training in masonry, child care, carpentry, cooking and computer literacy. Much of the school's success comes in helping the students develop positive self-esteem, obtain jobs, and gain life-skills.

"Mercy Wings is a school that gives children a second chance," explains Lagé. "The staff really cares about the success of their students. I spent a morning there teaching 14- and 15-year-old teenagers to read, and even though it was a very difficult task, the pride that the kids had when they finished their assignments was quite evident."

At the David Rose School for the Deaf, a mural of large brightly painted blocks featuring the sign language alphabet lines the entrance hall. Located in the Thomaslands section of Georgetown, the school serves dozens of deaf and special needs children from ages 6 to 16. They were thrilled to have American visitors – even ones who did not know sign language. "The students were amazing," notes Morein. "Although we could not fully communicate with them, as our knowledge of sign language was limited, we came to understand that even a smile or a high-five can sometimes speak more volumes than words."

Decidedly the toughest visit for the Misericordia group was to a day care facility in one of the poorer sections of the city. Unlike what they had seen before, the staff seemed overwhelmed and defeated by more than 30 pre-school children in their care. The facility was far less clean than the others and there were broken and cracked ceramic tiles on the floor, peeling paint, and children desperately in need of love and attention.

The MU group helped to assemble puzzles, read books and was swarmed by the children during playtime. In an

upstairs nursery, Becker cared for a four-month-old baby; Kaufman handled a rambunctious toddler, and Dowell and Lagé entertained three challenged children who had supervision, but for the most part were left on their own.

"Time and again, we saw people doing the best with what they have," Passetti comments. "But it is quite an adjustment to come home after seeing what we saw. There are so many lessons to be learned in this struggling country."

On her eighth trip to Guyana, Dr. Pascal says the purpose of the trip is not as much about doing service as it is about helping the students to become better people. "When someone asks why I have wanted to return, I always say, 'The people,'" Pascal explains. "Since the first time I came here about 10 years ago, I have met an extraordinary number of wonderful people, especially the Sisters of Mercy. A big part of this trip is about being present to all sorts of people: staff at the places we visit, the children and adults we meet in the different ministry sites, and even sometimes people we meet casually in a public place.

"I feel like I've done this part of my job if someone seems to have the feeling I've listened to them and care about their concerns," she adds. "Everyone has their own story. The willingness to tell one's story, and the time to sit and listen to it, is something we do not always get to experience enough in the U.S. The most important take-away is not the service we do – it is to learn to be in the moment – listen to the stories of those around you and those you meet.

"We have a tradition of tipping the staff on our last day at the retreat center," Pascal adds. "When I gave a man named Jamal his tip, he told me in French that the staff only prepares food when there are guests. Since we were leaving, and



Ann Kaufman '14 administers a test to carpentry students at Mercy Wings Vocational School.

there would be no guests for a few days, that meant no food. He told me he prayed to God that morning, asking for a way to get food until the next guests arrived. Then he told me our tip was the answer to his prayers."

# GUYANA

## Our Mission of Mercy



### Kayleigh Morein '16

East Meadow, N.Y.

Medical Science

Parents: Mary and James Morein

Siblings: Jamie

As a student planning to pursue a master's degree in the Physician Assistant Studies Program, Kayleigh Morein '16 has already dedicated herself to a career of helping people. So when the opportunity arose to travel to Guyana, she jumped at the chance. "I had been warned to be careful, but was amazed at how polite and friendly the people are. The students stand automatically when you walk into their classroom. It is not something you would see at home."

#### On the Missionaries of Charity:

"I was so happy to spend time with the 'grannies' as we called them. They were always so happy to see us and the amount of prayers said for us was endless."

#### Lessons learned:

"The attitude of the people in Guyana is so wonderful. They don't have material things, yet they are amazingly happy. It put things into perspective for me. I am 10-times more thankful every day for what we have. I want to use what I learned and make people here aware of their situation."

#### Aha moment:

"Meeting Orrin, a 10-year-old boy at the orphanage. He has seven sisters and two brothers and his family never comes to visit. There was just something about him. He was one of the ones standing in the background and was much more reserved. He made me think about how much I have and how lucky I am to have a loving family."





# GUYANA

Our Mission of Mercy



## Ann Kaufman '14

Williamsport, Pa.

B.A. Government, Law  
and National Security

Parents: Leanne and Scott Kaufman

Sibling: Sarah Kaufman '11

It took Ann Kaufman '14 two years as an education major at another university to take the advice of her older sister, Sarah Kaufman '11, and transfer to Misericordia. She is glad she did. She found a passion for the Government, Law and National Security Program and conducted research on the psychology of terrorist groups in Northern Africa. "I love the fact that the program covers so many facets of the field, and I am going to be able to do so much with it." Kaufman's next stop is at the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, where she will pursue a master's degree in Security and Intelligence Studies.

### On the David Rose School for the Deaf:

"The teachers try to accomplish so much with so few resources. They were always genuinely grateful for our assistance and the students were incredibly compassionate and welcoming. Communicating with deaf students can be difficult, but after visiting the school almost every day, we were able to communicate without using words – which was very powerful."

### On Ptolemy Reid Rehab Center:

"This site has so much to offer the Guyanese people, which is one reason why I really enjoyed going there. The students and patients had a wide variety of special needs, and the staff was always looking to do what was in the best interest of each person. There were so many great kids at this site that I would have loved to go back and visit more."

Spirit of Guyanese people outshines  
challenging living conditions  
in developing country

# A VISITOR'S VIEW

BY MARIANNE TUCKER PUHALLA



**G** EORGETOWN,  
Guyana – What  
is it like staying  
in Guyana? The St. Paul's  
Retreat Center where we

were housed is a beautiful oasis in the middle of much poverty in the Vryheids Lust section of Georgetown, six miles from the capital city's center.

St. Paul's Center was built by the local diocese to house conferences and groups of visitors. Lucky for us, the new section of rooms features white tile floors and large windows with obligatory mosquito nets hanging over each bed.

Except for the two returning visitors – Jeffrey Passetti and Professor Maureen Pascal – most of us were unfamiliar with using the nets. The nets became our saviors and we looked forward to tucking ourselves in at night to gain respite from the flying onslaught. (We slept covered in bug spray just in case.)

There was not enough DEET in the world to save us. Like most in our group, at any one time I had more than 50 bites on my arms and legs and was lucky they were not itchy. Others in the group were not as fortunate. Nearly everyone had at least one or two inflamed bites and dozens of others providing a constant reminder to take your anti-malaria pills.

Because of the cost of power, air conditioning is a rare commodity and very few places have windows with screens. In our residence and even at St. Joseph's Mercy Hospital, most rooms have open windows with slats to keep out the rain, allowing a range of creatures

Log on to <http://bit.ly/Guyana14> to see a photo gallery of the service trip.

from small lizards, flying cockroaches and the many mosquitos to visit at one time or another.

Despite the fact that it is a Caribbean nation with hundreds of miles of ocean frontage, there are no beaches in the Georgetown area. The Demerara and much larger Essequibo rivers flank the city and dump millions of pounds of silt and plant debris into the ocean, forming a delta that muddies the water as far as 20 miles out to sea. Without beaches to attract tourists, the country is turning toward eco-tourism and is encouraging visitors to explore the interior rainforest. More than 80 percent of the country is uninhabited. With roads that can best be described as paths, it is best to conduct trips more inland by boat and kayak.

Most of the population lives along a narrow swath of coastline. The locals drive at a frightening pace and often need to dodge the cows, horses, pigs and goats that roam the streets. Impatience reigns, and even bus drivers pass frequently on two lane





roads, using their horn to claim right of way. When they are not speeding and beeping, they are forced to a slow crawl over cavernous potholes that are commonplace on side streets and cause cars to frequently bottom-out. One taxi driver says he replaces his tires every two months.

Rotting garbage is prevalent along the streets in every section of the city, as there is no organized sanitation system. As best we can tell, sewage goes into the canals that flank the streets. What does not decompose or is not eaten by the animals is left to pile up along with thousands of plastic bottles, pieces of broken glass and metal, and scraps of wood. Close-toed shoes are recommended to walk just about anywhere.

It is the smell that is most disturbing, worse in some areas than others. Our students were prepared for it and had addressed the garbage issues in their service-learning class prior to the trip. I was more naive and the horror disturbed me everywhere we went.

We had the privilege of visiting national treasures, including Kaieteur Falls – four



Horses roam freely amidst the garbage on the property adjacent to the St. Paul's Retreat Center in Georgetown, Guyana.

times taller than Niagara Falls, the amazing rainforest and an Amerindian reservation along one of the picturesque rivers. Yet we collectively determined that it is the people that make Guyana a beautiful place. They were quick to offer a smile and a "Good Afternoon" when we walked

by. Those providing services welcomed us with open arms and frequently said they are making the most of what they have, despite the knowledge that they are behind in technology, funding and training that is available outside of their world.

My job is to share the story of the people of Guyana and shine a light on the good work done there by the Sisters of Mercy and others who are braving very tough conditions to make a difference in the world.

*Marianne Tucker Puhalla is a staff writer in the Department of Marketing Communications. She can be reached at mpuhalla@misericordia.edu or at (570) 674-6286. Please contact her to share your story of living Misericordia University's charisms of Mercy, Service, Justice and Hospitality.*

# GUYANA

## Our Mission of Mercy



### Once a teacher....

More than 40 years ago, **Sister Marie Noel Menzes, RSM '64**, taught history at Misericordia. At age 84, she continues to share her knowledge. The recipient of a well-deserved appreciation award from the University of Guyana, Sister Noel spent hours providing a lesson on the history of Guyana to the Misericordia visitors. As director of the Mercy Boys' Home along with **Sister Celine Marie Kirsch, RSM '50**, a native of Cresson, Pa., Sister Noel has provided care for more than 300 boys during her 35-year assignment.

Misericordia alumna Sister Celine Marie Kirsch, RSM '50, and Sister Marie Noel Menzes, RSM '64, above, welcome Misericordia University visitors to their home for a lesson on the history of Guyana. Participating in the picture, from left, are Sister Celine Marie Kirsch, RSM '50, Kayleigh Morein '16, Ann Kaufman '14, Catie Becker '14, Megan Lagé '14, Sister Marie Noel Menzes, RSM '64, Arthur Dowell '14 and Jeffrey Passeti, assistant director of Campus Ministry.

### BONUS COVERAGE

Please log on to [Misericordia.edu/MUTodayExtended](http://Misericordia.edu/MUTodayExtended) for expanded coverage of the 24th annual mission trip to Guyana, and additional material related to our 90th anniversary celebration.

Participants also maintained a blog during and after their volunteer work in Guyana. Please sign on to [MUGuyana2014.Tumblr.com](http://MUGuyana2014.Tumblr.com) to read their entries.



A child sits on playground equipment surrounded by barbed wire fencing at the St. Ann's Orphanage in Georgetown, Guyana.



# Making musical memories

*Alumni, faculty of former music program come together at Alumni Weekend*

BY MARIANNE TUCKER PUHALLA

They sang, provided accompaniment at Alumni Mass and had the most fun renewing old friendships. The newly formed group of music class agents used Facebook to reach out to fellow alumni and came together at a special luncheon as part of Alumni Weekend that was held May 30 to June 1 on campus.

The reunion within the reunion was organized by Michele Tripus Orrson '84, music therapy, and Raymond Podskoch, Jr., '90, liberal studies. Their hope was to bring together alumni and faculty members of the former music program at Misericordia University that was phased out in the mid-90s.

The Alumni Office helped send letters and e-mails, and created a Facebook page for the music gathering. More than 30 alumni from the 50s through the 90s and guests came together for lunch and 10 people performed at the Alumni Mass that was offered by Monsignor John Bendick in the University Chapel. The guests included Ted and Mary Veremeychik, both retired professors from the Music Department who traveled from Rochester, N.Y., for the event, and Mary Dower, widow of Music Professor Richard Dower.

"When Michele connected with me about the idea of an all-music department reunion, I immediately offered a chance for everyone to dust off their instruments, warm up voices, and share their talents to perform once again together at the 4 o'clock Mass," explains Podskoch, music coordinator and accompanist for Campus Ministry. "It was an essential part of our Misericordia heritage to attend Mass, and I hoped it would remind all alumni of how strong and glorious our music program was for so many years."

Podskoch is happy with the results. "We had a flute trio who played

Sharing their talents on the flute, Cheryl Jones Ellsworth '84 in forefront, and Michele Tripus Orrson '84, perform during Alumni Mass.



Michael Amory '90 and Judy Lingousky Marley '78 are among the members of the music alumni group who took part in Alumni Mass.



preludes and accompanied the hymns, a violin and enough voices to perform the four-part score. I believe the highlight was the Hymn during Communion – Mozart's 'Ave Verum Corpus.' The music was absolutely heavenly."

For some alumni, it was a chance to heal. "I was surprised at how many of the group said they had not yet forgiven Misericordia for dropping the music program in 1991," says Orrson. "A number of them had never been back to campus since graduation, but as we toured the fine arts facilities, people were truly impressed to see the arts alive and well at MU. They walked away feeling proud again. There is no denying it ... the campus is just beautiful."

Both Orrson and Podskoch say they hope the enthusiasm will continue. "Alumni asked us to keep the Facebook page open, and I plan to survey the group to see how often they would want a music reunion. I would love to see the group continue to expand," Orrson notes.

"We talked about making this an annual gathering on Alumni Weekend, and possibly pursuing a Festival Choir of Alumni for major university events, like Baccalaureate Masses and Commencements," Podskoch adds. "Who knows ... maybe we will be able

to influence the revival of Sister Carmel's beloved Madrigal dinners."

Amy Lingobardo, assistant director of Alumni and Donor Relations, says the University enjoys when groups of alumni come together to celebrate their special

memories on campus. "We were happy to help organize a luncheon for the music affinity group and assist their efforts to reach out to others and provide musical accompaniment at Alumni Mass," she says. "They toured the campus and joined the entire group for cocktails and dinner. Their laughter filled the campus and their activities helped make it a very special weekend."

More than 160 alumni attended the three-day event, including 30 members of the Class of '64 (the largest attendance by class year) who attended the Golden/Golden Plus Luncheon honoring their 50th reunion.

A group of occupational therapy alumni also came together as an affinity group. They attended continuing education lectures for credit, learned how to earn their doctorate, and enjoyed special camaraderie at lunch, cocktail parties and dinner.

Alumni Weekend participants were treated to chair massages, made oral history recordings with the help of current students, and took part in sessions on couponing and immigration.

Alumni are invited to connect with the Music Affinity Reunion Facebook group at [facebook.com/groups/MisericordiaMusic](https://facebook.com/groups/MisericordiaMusic) or contact Lingobardo at [alingoba@misericordia.edu](mailto:alingoba@misericordia.edu) for additional information.



**Members of the music affinity alumni group who performed at Mass on Alumni Weekend, are shown, front row, from left, Julia Washcalus Bojarcik '84, Cheryl Jones Ellsworth '84 and Michele Tripus Orrson '84. Second row, Beth Schmauch Walls '82, Sally Hawk Jones '84, and Joan Timko Alvear '80. Row 3: Raymond Podskoch, Jr., '90; speech-language pathology student Hilary Hoover '15, Michael Amory '90 and Judy Lingousky Marley '78.**



ATHLETICS

PULLOUT



# TWICE AS NICE







Ashlee Ward '15, above, captures the NCAA Division III Indoor High Jump title with this leap of 1.76 meters on March 15 at Nebraska Wesleyan University, Lincoln, Neb. Ward, at left, displays the trophy she received for taking the outdoor title on May 23 at Ohio Wesleyan University, Delaware, Ohio.

## Ward wins two national titles in NCAA Division III

BY SCOTT CRISPELL

Ashlee Ward '15 took the Misericordia University track & field program to new heights – literally. A fourth-year student in the occupational therapy (OT) program, Ward concluded her stellar collegiate career with a pair of national championships. She became the University's first track & field national champion by winning the NCAA Division III Indoor High Jump crown in March and followed that up by claiming the NCAA Division III Outdoor High Jump title in May.

"It was an amazing way to finish my career," says Ward, who exceeded her own expectations of eclipsing the 5-foot, 8-inch mark by more than an inch. "Winning the indoor championship was thrilling, but it added a little bit of pressure to the outdoor season."

A state runner-up as a high school senior, Ward knew she wanted to attend college close to her Wilkes-Barre, Pa., home. With an opportunity to compete in track & field and study occupational therapy, Misericordia provided the perfect fit.

"Misericordia had everything that I wanted," explains Ward. "I liked the Division III philosophy, and I wanted to study OT. The fact that I could do that so close to home made the decision easy for me, and Misericordia has lived up to my expectations."

Ward has certainly lived up to expectations as well.

"When Ashlee came in as a first-year student, I knew she had the potential to be a national qualifier," says MU head coach Chris Wadas. "After her junior season, I could see that she could go even higher and thought that she could become an All-American. She put in a tremendous amount of work during the off-season that helped her get to the highest level."

During her career, Ward won seven Middle Atlantic Conference high jump championships – four outdoor and three indoor – and was a four-time NCAA qualifier, including three trips to the outdoor championships. In her first appearance at the NCAA Indoor Championships, Ward was considered a favorite after posting the

Continued on page 32



Members of  
Class of 2014  
select prestigious  
graduate schools

# A new Beginning

BY MARIANNE TUCKER PUHALLA

Commencement was the culmination of a banner year for Misericordia University as several graduates selected medical or veterinary schools and more than a dozen others crossed the stage with placements in hand at prestigious graduate schools.

The academic leadership was evident as the class recognized three valedictorians with 4.0 grade point averages: Mary Elizabeth Gulotta '14, a speech-language pathology graduate; Amelia Poplawski '14, a biochemistry graduate, and Tiffani Sedorovitz '14, a mathematics graduate with a computer science minor.

Poplawski, who did undergraduate cancer research with The Commonwealth Medical College (TCMC) in Scranton, Pa., will pursue a Ph.D. in the Molecular Cancer Biology program under the Department of Pharmacology and Cancer Biology of Duke University School of Medicine.

"Key professors at Misericordia had a profound impact on my education and pursuit of graduate school," says Poplawski. "Their influence was tremendous and their encouragement, inspiring. The fact that I had the opportunity to choose between three Ivy League universities and one of the best medical research graduate schools in the country is a testament to the success that Misericordia faculty strive for and achieve."

Fellow valedictorian Sedorovitz has accepted a graduate teaching assistantship in the mathematics department at the University of Denver in Denver, Colo.

Gulotta earned her master's degree in SLP and is doing early intervention work in speech-language pathology at

Elwyn, an organization in Philadelphia, Pa., that provides services to people of all ages with disabilities.

In addition to Poplawski, two other biology graduates conducted cancer research with TCMC. Sara Sabatino '14 will pursue a master's degree in forensic medicine at Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine in Philadelphia, and plans a career as a forensic pathologist. Donna Castelblanco '14 was a professional studies major with minors in ethics and chemistry. She will attend the University of Pennsylvania's Perelman School of Medicine to pursue a master's degree in bioethics.

Fellow biology major Anna Konstas '14 will attend TCMC to pursue a medical degree. Matt Essington '14 is also a Biology Department graduate who will pursue a master's degree in interdisciplinary studies in biology and physical sciences at The Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine in New York City, N.Y. Andrea Carr '14 also earned a B.S. in biology with a minor in chemistry, and will pursue her graduate degree in Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M) at the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine, Columbia, Mo.

Among other notable graduate school placements, Ann Kaufman '14, a graduate of the Government, Law and National Security Program, will pursue a master's degree in Security and Intelligence Studies at the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs.

"The professors in the History and Government Department have helped me achieve far beyond what I thought I was capable of achieving by assisting me in finding a research area I am passionate about and working to

Some of the students who have been accepted to prestigious graduate school programs, first row from left, are Jessica Cupano, Brittney Wolf, Donna Castelblanco, Tiffani Sedorovitz and Sara Sabatino; second row, Anna Konstas, Shelby Giblin, Andrea Carr, Ann Kaufman, Jacob Hebda, Matt Essington, Amelia Poplawski and Shauna Quirk.

better my analytical skills," says Kaufman, who plans to continue to do research into terrorist groups in Northern Africa. "I am confident the skills I learned during my time at Misericordia will empower me to succeed at the graduate-school level."

Psychology graduate Brittney Wolf '14 will pursue a master's degree in counseling psychology at Washington State University in Pullman, Wash., and biology graduate Shelby Giblin '14 will seek her master's degree in biology at East Stroudsburg University, East Stroudsburg, Pa.

English Department graduate Jacob Hebda '14 is enrolled at the University of Baltimore, Baltimore, Md., to pursue a Master's of Fine Arts in creative writing and publishing arts. He plans to earn a Ph.D. in literature and become a professor of both literature and creative writing. "The rigorous, critical character of Misericordia's English curriculum helped me to develop the analytical writing and research skills necessary for approaching literary masterpieces," Hebda says.

Psychology graduate Jessica Cupano '14 will pursue her master's degree in social work at Temple University, Philadelphia, Pa.

Two medical imaging graduates will continue in radiation therapy programs: Shauna Quirk '14 at Washburn University, in Topeka, Kan., and Lauren Jankowski '14 at Gwynedd-Mercy College, Gwynedd Valley, Pa.









# Alumni News

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



Kelly Spencer  
McAndrew '79

The Roan family — on my mother's side — has a proud legacy that spans four generations at Misericordia. We are looking forward to the celebrations our alma mater has scheduled to reflect and celebrate everything that Misericordia has accomplished during its storied 90-year history.

Our more than 16,000 alumni each have their own individual reason to be thankful for our institution of higher education. For me, Misericordia is much more than a place where I received a strong education. The real world is full of daily challenges. We received the tools we needed to successfully navigate and flourish in our chosen career fields, while also being instilled with a sense of service to others. Turn the pages in this edition of Misericordia Today and you will see that today's students continue to bring our charisms of Mercy, Service, Justice and Hospitality to life through their good deeds.

Our alumni earned their bachelor's, master's and doctorate degrees here and went on to become well-respected professionals and community leaders. Just as important, though, is the fact that they also learned the importance of giving back. Make sure you turn to Page 13 and cut out the coupon to participate in our Random Acts of Kindness Campaign that we are holding in honor of our 90th anniversary. It is truly indicative of our Way.

I am sure you know what I mean. We are capable professionals, thanks to MU, but we are also able listeners and problem solvers who became compassionate, civic-minded people while enrolled at our alma mater.

Our campus footprint also has changed dramatically over the decades. I bet those young ladies who arrived in the farmlands of Dallas would not recognize our campus of today.

If you are a graduate who has not been to campus lately, I encourage you to attend one of our celebrations commemorating this milestone. We also are planning another great Homecoming complete with an alumni hospitality tent. I can think of no better way to reconnect with former classmates than cheering our football team on to another victory.

*Kelly Spencer McAndrew*

## Class Notes

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

**'60 Ann Marie Jaskiewicz Kloinko '60** has been selected to receive the 2014 Professor Emeritus Award in recognition for her years of outstanding and dedicated service to students, faculty and staff of Northern Virginia Community College and the Virginia Community College System. Professor Klinko has retired after 30 years as a member of the teaching faculty at the Alexandria Campus. She was an honored guest at the College Service Awards Luncheon held in March.

**'64 Marianne Wilpiszewski Strong, M.A., '64** was recognized when Dell Publishing and the Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine (AHMM) selected her story, *Death at Olympia*, to be one of 25 stories recorded and put on the Internet as a podcast. Please follow this link to hear the story: <http://castroller.com/podcasts/AlfredHitchcockMystery/3943916>. The story originally appeared in the July/August 2003 issue of AHMM. You can find additional news about Marianne by logging on to her website at [www.wilskistrong.com](http://www.wilskistrong.com). Marianne earned a bachelor's degree in English and history cum laude.

**'70 Lucille Procopio '70** had her first book, *Chelzy Stone's Mystical Quest in the Lost and Found Game*, published in 2013 by RoseLamp Publications, LLC. Lucille hopes to turn the 252-page fantasy fiction novel and characters into a board game adventure series. The book is available at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) as a paperback and for Kindle, and is available at Barnes and Noble. The Wilkes-Barre, Pa., resident earned a Bachelor of Science degree in biology.

**'73 Grace Rozycki '73, '04, M.D.,** was named the Willis D. Gatch Professor of Surgery, executive vice-chair of the Department of Surgery and the director of the Indiana Injury Institute at Indiana University School of Medicine,

### Alumni Award nominations

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

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

Indianapolis, Ind. Dr. Rozycki previously worked at Emory University School of Medicine, Atlanta, Ga., where she served as chief of trauma, surgical critical care, and emergency general surgery at Grady Memorial Hospital. She also served as vice chair of academic affairs for the Department of Surgery at Emory University School of Medicine. At Misericordia, Dr. Rozycki earned a Bachelor of Science degree in biology, cum laude, and received a Doctor of Humane Letters Degree.



**Janice Kosty Lamb '73** celebrates 44 years as a registered nurse in 2014. She received a BSN from Misericordia in 1973. Janice is the clinical practice education nurse for Maternal/Child Services at Saint Agnes Hospital in Baltimore, Md. She has been happily married to her husband, Joseph, for 40 years. They have three children and four grandchildren.

**'91 Ty Taylor, Jr. '91** has been named associate director of athletics for operations and facilities, and head basketball coach at Cedar Crest College, Allentown, Pa. Ty also serves the all-women's college as head cross country coach. The Falcons compete in the Colonial States Athletic Conference. While



at Misericordia, Ty played soccer and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration and marketing.

**'92 Melody Villano '92** and her husband, Michael Konetski, were united in marriage on May 25, 2013.

**'93 Marie Danglovitch '93, O.T.R./L.; Kristen Komorek '93, O.T.R./L., and Elizabeth McQuaid '05, O.T.R./L.,**

participated in the *Cultivating Your Power & Influence: The AOTA Leadership Development Program for Managers* in January 2014. The American Occupational Therapy Association only accepted 15 applicants for the prestigious program in Bethesda, Md.

Elizabeth graduated cum laude with her BMS in occupational therapy, while Marie and Kristen earned their Bachelor of Science degrees in OT. Pictured at the program from left, are Elizabeth, Dr. Nancy Stanford-Blair, Kristen and Marie.



Misericordia University President Thomas J. Botzman, Ph.D., fulfilled his promise to match every gift, dollar-for-dollar, that was made by the Class of 2014 by presenting a check to the University Advancement Division of the University. The class gift will support the Joan L. Krause Student Emergency Fund, which provides assistance to students in crisis or faced with unexpected financial emergencies during the 2014-15 academic year. President Botzman, center, presents a ceremonial check to Michele Shea Zabriski, director of Development, left, and Amy Lingobardo, assistant director of Alumni, Community and Donor Relations.

**'94 William J. Burns '94** has been named president and chief executive officer of Embrane, the leader in delivering application-centric network services and virtual appliance lifecycle management. According to Embrane, William will leverage his nearly three decades of experience across networking, data center, applications and services to accelerate the company's growth. Prior to joining Embrace, he was the CEO of Spirent Communications. William graduated cum laude with a Bachelor of Science in business administration.

**Dorothy Mathers '94** received the Veronica M. Muzic Master Teacher Award at Penn College of Technology, Williamsport, Pa. It is the most prestigious of the college's faculty tributes.

**'99 Stephanie Buchinski '99** and Gregory Grzymski were married Sept. 7, 2013.

**Mary Ann Dziak '99** was named the executive director at the Pittston YMCA, Pittston, Pa., on April 29, 2014. Mary Ann has worked in children's services for many years. Most recently, she was the executive

director of the Boys and Girls Clubs in Scranton, Pa., for five years. She has spent most of her career in children and family services and education.

**'00 Abbey Jones, V.M.D., '00** recently established the Schultsville Animal Hospital in Clarks Summit, Pa. Abbey played softball for the Lady Cougars and earned her Bachelor of Science degree in biology cum laude. She earned her doctorate degree at the University of Pennsylvania Veterinary School in 2005.

**Continued on page 28**



## Take Archibald McGrowl on your travel adventures

Take a piece of Misericordia with you while you travel. Alumni can download and cut out Misericordia University's official mascot, Archibald McGrowl, and take him on your summer and early fall adventures.

Visit [http://misericordia.edu/images/alumni/archie\\_mcgrowl.pdf](http://misericordia.edu/images/alumni/archie_mcgrowl.pdf) to download a pdf version of Archibald, print and cut it out. Pack him in your overnight bag and take him for an adventure. Snap a photo and share it with us at [Facebook.com/MisericordiaAlum](https://www.facebook.com/MisericordiaAlum) or [Twitter.com/MisericordiaAlum](https://twitter.com/MisericordiaAlum). You can also e-mail your photo to [alumni@misericordia.edu](mailto:alumni@misericordia.edu) if you do not have a Facebook or Twitter account.

You can follow Archibald's adventures with our Archibald McGrowl map by visiting <http://bit.ly/archiemcgrowl>. A prize will be awarded at Homecoming for the most creative photo and the most exotic location.



Continued from page 27

'02

**Maria Waselus Davenport '02**

and her husband,  
Jason Davenport,

welcomed their first son,  
Matthew William on Feb. 1, 2014.



**Erinne Elise Koehler '02** and Daniel Brown were married Sept. 29, 2013. Erinne is an occupational therapist with Rochester General Health Systems, Rochester, N.Y. They honeymooned in Italy and currently reside in Rochester.



**Eric Crahall '02** and his wife, Christina, welcomed twin daughters, Abigail and Grace, on March 31, 2014.

'03

**Bonnie Crossman Race '03**

and her husband, Donald,  
welcomed their baby girl,  
Isabella Adrian, on Oct. 14, 2013.

'04

**Eric Bersch '04**

and his wife,  
Michelle,  
welcomed their

baby boy, Benjamin, on July 26,  
2012. Ben joins his big sister, Aubrey, 4, at  
their home in Lake Ariel, Pa.



**Leslie Dotzel '04** and her husband, Philip, welcomed their second child, Philip Tucker Dotzel, on Dec. 2, 2013. He joins big sister, Kinsey Rae.

'05

**Amy Zamerowski '05** and  
Todd Howard were united in  
marriage on June 8, 2013.  
Amy is employed by Autism  
Behavioral Services, Exeter,  
Pa. The couple honeymooned in Antigua.

**Jenelle Price '05** and Robert Osborne were united in marriage on Aug. 17, 2013. Jenelle is employed by Mohegan Sun at Pocono Downs, Plains Twp., Pa., in human resources as a training specialist. The couple honeymooned at Sandals La Toc in St. Lucia.

**Jennifer Clifford '05** and Peter Zaidan were united in marriage on Dec. 14, 2013.

**Katie O'Neill '05** and her husband, Richard Kulasinsky, were married May 18, 2013. Katie is a substitute teacher for Wayne Highlands, Forest City Regional and Susquehanna Community school districts.



Alumni returned to campus to act as Commencement marshals for the May ceremony. Participating, first row from left, are Carol Williams '67, Sarah Kauffman '11, Allen Sabatino '97, Tammy Nudo '09, Alisha Nudo '12 and Lailani Augustine, Alumni, Community and Donor Relations; second row, Judy Ellis '88, Noreen Meholc '84, Vera Cebrosky '84 and Christelle Patrice '13, third row, Adam Grzech '13, Brian Donahue '88, John Krsulic '84 and Thomas Sweetz '01.

The couple took a wedding trip to Jamaica. They reside in Vandling, Pa.

**Michele Melillo Babbitt '05** and her husband, Timothy, welcomed twins, Christina Marie and Timothy Albert III, on Jan. 30, 2014.

**Laura Baloga '05, '10** and her husband welcomed their daughter, Alison Grace, on April 13, 2014.

'06

**Tina Billias Giannetta '06**

and her husband, Michael,  
welcomed their son, Michael,  
on Sept. 20, 2013.

**Jennifer Bitters Fumanti '06** and her husband, Robert, welcomed their daughter, Lucy, on March 24, 2012.

**Jolene Carey '06** and her husband, Jeffrey Pace, were married Jan. 18, 2014.

**Heather Fenstermacher '06** and her husband, Sean Wargo, were married Sept. 2013.

'07

**Mark Miscavage '07, '09** has  
been named corporate quality  
assurance director at Titanium  
Industries, Inc., at corporate

headquarters in Rockaway, N.J. He earned his B.S. in business and his MBA from MU.

**Jamie Tatusko '07** and Russell White were married June 22, 2013.

**Jamie Havard '07** and **Peter Moska '07** welcomed daughter, Alivia, on Nov. 13, 2013.

**Jessica LaSorsa '07** joined  
Community Bank Wealth  
Management as a Client  
Associate in its Northeastern  
Pennsylvania markets.



**Bethany Ann Tomascik '07** and Kevin Carle were united in marriage on Sept. 7, 2013. Bethany is employed as an analyst by Fortigent, Rockville, Md. The couple honeymooned in Hawaii. They reside in Gaithersburg, Md.

**Jacquelyn Henning '07** and her husband, Justin Swackhamer, were married June 30, 2012. Jackie and Justin spent a week honeymooning on the romantic Danube River.

**Rachel Oberg '07** and her husband, Ted, welcomed their first child, a baby girl, Penelope Rae on April 17, 2014.

**Ryan Kearney '07** and his wife, Kristin

**Misericordia alumni are No. 1 in NEPA for 2012-13 with 19.3% giving rate**



1939

**Viola Worjnarski Piszczek**  
Dec. 15, 2013

1941

**Helen Evans Culp**  
Feb. 6, 2008

1943

**Audrey Jackson Cusumano**  
March 13, 2014  
**Jeanne Connolly Kane**  
March 15, 2014

1944

**Barbara Cook Santamaria**  
Jan. 2, 2014  
**Sister Bronisia Zawadzki, OSF**  
April 18, 2014

1947

**Florence Matura Hozempa**  
Feb. 6, 2014

1948

**Claire Moran Grady**  
March 18, 2014  
**Anne "Penny" Calligheris Leibrock**  
April 12, 2014  
**Sarah Mollen**  
Jan. 24, 2014  
**Marian Haggerty Moran**  
Oct. 16, 2013  
**1949**  
**Dorothy Lesko Rother**  
Nov. 2, 2013  
**Frances Uhlinger Sela**  
Feb. 9, 2012

1950

**Elizabeth Guiney Fenton**  
June 20, 2014  
**Bernardine Iskra Kalna**  
Jan. 16, 2014  
**Jeanne Marie Kerrigan Natale**  
Nov. 5, 2013

1953

**Sister Mary Ancilla Kasarda, RSM**  
May 8, 2014  
**Maureen Monahan Krasavage**  
March 10, 2014  
**Sister Rose MacDermott, OSB**  
June 27, 2014  
**Sister Mary Magdala Wallace, RSM**  
April 26, 2014

1954

**Sister Annunziata Mastro Simone, D.M., '54**  
June 13, 2014

1955

**Dr. Margaret Herlihy Cioffi**  
May 3, 2014  
**Judith Moyer Eaton**  
July 12, 2012  
**Sister Anna O'Connell**  
April 7, 2014

1957

**Mary Claire Steck Lyons**  
March 16, 2014  
**Dolores Nagai Yamashiro**  
May 29, 2014

1958

**Sister Jeanne Devaney, RSM**  
July 5, 2014  
**Sister Mary Avila Long, RSM**

April 25, 2014

1960

**Mary Ann Adonizio Machey**  
May 24, 2014  
**Elizabeth Rahl Strahorn**  
July 6, 2014

1961

**Carole Robinson Nocek**  
June 29, 2014  
**Anna Ravina**  
Feb. 21, 2014

1962

**Patricia E. Stankus**  
July 7, 2013

1963

**Dr. Mary Patricia Bonner Coopman**  
April 17, 2014  
**Barbara Curtis**  
Dec. 14, 2013  
**Angela Turco Hornack**  
Feb. 7, 2014  
**Margaret Reilly**  
May 10, 2014  
**Katherine Williams**  
Jan. 11, 2014

1966

**Marcia Hepler Kadilak**  
Jan. 11, 2014  
**Cecelia Urban Wascavage**  
Nov. 30, 2012

1967

**Mary Harry Connolly**  
April 16, 2014  
**Theresa Stretansky Wadas**  
April 1, 2014

1970

**Anita Remaykis Armstrong**  
Feb. 10, 2014

1971

**Michaeline Loughrey**  
May 1, 2014

1973

**Jane Pesavento Grogan**  
June 3, 2014

1976

**Filomena Sharpe Mancuso**  
March 26, 2014  
**Martin Pleban**  
Dec. 27, 2013

1983

**Brian Barnes**  
May 30, 2014

1988

**Elaine Lawville Lee**  
April 10, 2014  
**Charles Vanderhoff**  
March 8, 2014

2004

**Jennifer Dorosky**  
Dec. 19, 2013  
**Deborah Casterline Wolfe**  
May 9, 2013

2007

**Major David Charles Puher**  
Jan. 25, 2014

Novajosky, were married May 18, 2013. Ryan is employed by the Pennsylvania State Police. They took a wedding trip to Riviera Maya, Mexico, and live in Dickson City, Pa.

'08

**Lauren Cacciola Parmer '08** and her husband welcomed their son, Bradley. He was born Sept. 25, 2013.

**Danielle Kathryn Jescavage '08** and her husband, David Matthew Robbins, were married Sept. 28, 2013. Danielle is employed as a CT technologist at Geisinger Wyoming Valley, Plains Twp., Pa. They honeymooned in Aruba and reside in Bear Creek, Pa.

**Keegan Gosik '08**, the sales and marketing director for Sensational Host, Inc., Maple Shade Twp., N.J., received the Campbell Soup Co. Extraordinary Leadership Award.

**Krista Koch '08, M.D.** began her career as a Naval physician in Portsmouth, Va., and is now in Flight Surgery Training in Pensacola, Fla., studying to fly with pilots.

**Kristen Danko Cunningham '08** and her husband, Jason, welcomed their son,

Bryce, who was born on Feb. 28, 2013.

**Ashley M. Wolanski '09**

graduated from the Pennsylvania College of Optometry, Salus University, Elkins Park, Md., with her doctorate degree in optometry. She has accepted a position with Biernacki Eye Associates with offices in Wilkes-Barre and Mountain Top, Pa. Ashley earned a Bachelor of Science degree in biology with a minor in chemistry. She lives in Shavertown, Pa.



**Jennifer M. Elward, '09** defended her thesis, *Development and Application of Explicitly Correlated Wavefunction Based Methods for the Study of Optical Properties of Semiconductor Nanomaterials*, at Syracuse University. Jennifer is set to receive her Ph.D. at May 2015's commencement. Her Ph.D. will be in theoretical and computational chemistry. In August 2015, she will be moving on to a postdoctoral fellowship at the U.S. Army Research Laboratory in Adelphi, Md.

Jennifer earned her undergraduate degree in chemistry, cum laude.

**Danielle Renee Adams '09** and her husband, Steven Ricki Lutz Jr., were married on Saturday, Oct. 12, 2013, in an outdoor garden ceremony.

**Tanya Earley '09** and her husband, Michael Goodman, were married Sept. 8, 2012. Tanya is working at Gaudenzia Inc., Norristown, Pa., as a drug and alcohol counselor.



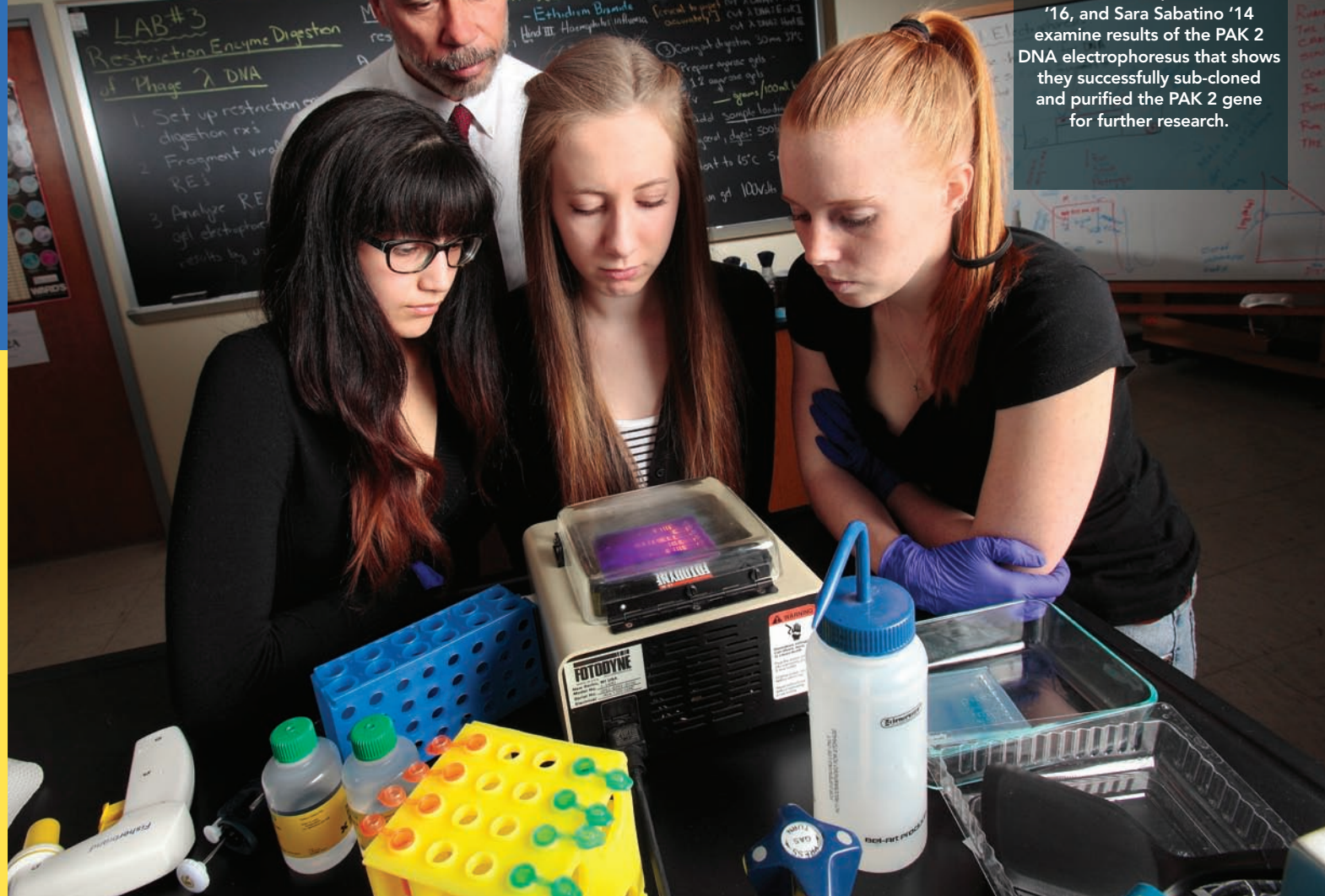
**Michelle Josephine Casale '09** and Richard Adam Yaggie Jr., were married May 5, 2012. Michelle is employed by Susquehanna Health as a registered nurse. The couple resides in Jersey Shore, Pa.

**Heather Fitch '10** and her husband, William Clark, were married Oct. 5, 2013. Heather is the director of HR for Huntzinger Management Group, Plains Twp., Pa. They took a wedding trip to Aruba and live in Tunkhannock, Pa.

'10



Misericordia University Biology Professor Frank DiPino, Jr., watches his student researchers, from left, Donna Castelblanco '14, Rachel Bohn '16, and Sara Sabatino '14 examine results of the PAK 2 DNA electrophoresis that shows they successfully sub-cloned and purified the PAK 2 gene for further research.



# RESEARCH

Students, faculty collaborate with

# TARGETS

Commonwealth Medical College

# CANCER

BY MARIANNE TUCKER PUHALLA

They never imagined when they were in high school that the research they would be doing as undergraduates in college may someday lead to a treatment for breast cancer.

Misericordia University seniors Donna Castelblanco '14, of Edison, N.J., and Sara Sabatino '14, of Nuangola, Pa., and sophomore Rachel Bohn '16, of Mountain Top, Pa., are spending every spare moment they have in a biology laboratory working one-on-one with Misericordia biology Professor Frank DiPino, Jr., Ph.D. Their project: use molecular biology methodologies to prepare, characterize and alter the PAK-2 gene to explore the potential to use it as a therapeutic target in the development of anti-tumor drugs.

"Why PAK-2? The PAK-2 gene encodes a protein that acts as a molecular switch to control cell behaviors such as cell division, migration, and survival," explains Dr. DiPino. "In breast cancer and colon cancer, this molecular switch is short-circuited and the cell divides, migrates and survives in an abnormal uncontrolled manner. These abnormal behaviors lead to tumors and metastasis."

In the second phase of their research, the pre-medicine students will use in vitro mutagenesis to introduce specific mutations in the DNA of the PAK 2 protein. "This is analogous to cutting each wire to the switch until the short circuit is identified.



Once the short circuit is identified, drugs can be developed to bypass the short circuit thereby correcting the normal circuitry and returning the normal behaviors of the cell," Dr. DiPino adds.

The students know their work is just one piece of a much larger genetic puzzle being tackled by researchers around the globe. The team is working in collaboration with Jun Ling, Ph.D., assistant professor of biochemistry and director of the Office of Research Compliance at The Commonwealth Medical College, Scranton, Pa.

"We have a very marvelous relationship and a mutually beneficial collaboration between TCMC and Misericordia University," says Dr. Ling. "TCMC is a medical school with research strength, and we can provide training to the Misericordia students. In turn, they are gaining research experience and are generating data that is contributing to and helping speed up my research efforts. By working together, we are helping promote their academic studies while providing training that fosters success in research or medicine-oriented careers."

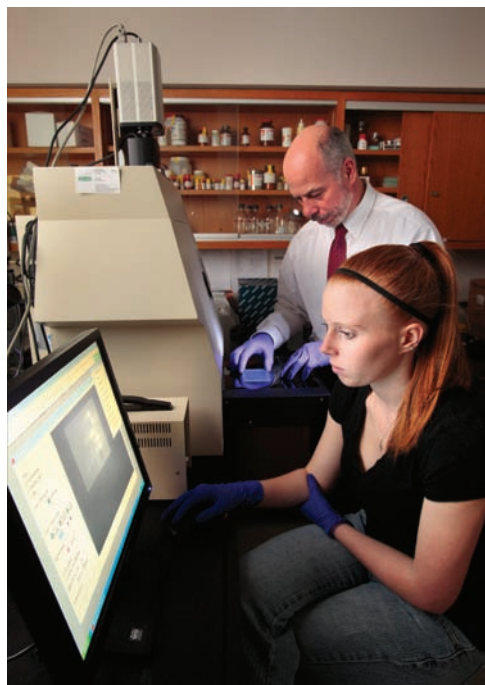
Having started their work in earnest in September 2013, by March 2014 the Misericordia group had already made enough clinical progress to be asked to present a review of their findings at the American Medical Student Association (AMSA) Annual Meeting in New Orleans, La., alongside Dr. DiPino.

"Ever since I came to a biology summer camp at Misericordia, I wanted to go to school here," says Sabatino, a biology major who plans to pursue a career as a medical examiner. "I was intrigued when I first saw the cadaver lab ... not many undergraduate schools have one. Still, I never imagined I would have an opportunity as an undergraduate to be a part of such an important research project and present at national conferences."

Sabatino graduated from Misericordia in May and has been accepted to the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine where she will work towards a master's degree in forensics.

Bohn, a fellow biology major, says she is inspired to pursue a career as a primary care doctor by her mother, Misericordia alumna Donna Hudick Bohn '89, Pharm. D., and her father, Dr. Mark W. Bohn. M.D. "It is just amazing to me that what we are doing in the Misericordia lab in a short period of

time could impact the threat of cancer across the country and around the world," Bohn says. "It is exciting to collaborate with researchers because that is what the field of biology is all about. It is very nice that we get to be exposed to that type of interaction at an undergraduate level."



**Misericordia University biology researcher Sara Sabatino '14 works alongside Professor Frank DiPino, Jr., Ph.D., to document the gel results and analysis showing successful sub-cloning of the PAK 2 gene as a part of their research with The Commonwealth Medical College, Scranton, Pa.**

For Castelblanco, the founder and president of the AMSA Premedical Club on campus, her academic path has taken many more twists and turns. She enrolled at Misericordia as a psychology major and planned to pursue a doctoral degree in physical therapy, but was drawn to the natural sciences and an interest in philosophy. By combining the two, she graduated with a degree in

**Continued on next page**

**Use your smartphone to scan this QR-code and watch a video about the research.**



Watch MU researchers examine PAK-2 gene.

<http://bit.ly/MUCancerResearch>

## UNIVERSITY INVESTS IN SCIENCE EQUIPMENT

Misericordia University and the College of Arts and Sciences have invested more than \$250,000 in new science equipment and technology in the last six months to meet the needs of a growing student population, advancements in new and existing technologies, and to replace older equipment with modern instrumentation.

In the Department of Biology, a research-grade fluorescent microscope from Zeiss was purchased for student/faculty research and for upper-level elective courses. The Axio Observer Z1 inverted microscope system will be used to obtain high-resolution images of cells, identify subcellular location of proteins and their interaction with other proteins using immunofluorescent techniques. The Axio Observer also has the capability to perform live cell imaging so experiments can be viewed in real time. The new Stemi 2000 C stereo microscope obtains distortion-free, high-resolution images of large biological samples.

To visualize and perform quantitative analysis of DNA and proteins, the GelDoc XR+ image analyzer and two GelDoc EZs were purchased to supplement the existing XR image analyzer. The Pasco sensors and data logger are research-grade sensors and hand-held testers conduct water quality testing.

In the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, a bench-top nuclear magnetic resonance spectrometer was purchased for the organic chemistry lab. It will be used to characterize and assign organic compounds in the lab and has the ability to run scans in minutes. A new gas chromatograph-mass spectrometer will be used for analysis and characterization. An upgraded luminometer will be used in biochemistry research and the development of biochemistry lab protocols. New mid/far-infrared FT-IR spectrometer and Raman spectrometer instruments will be used in research and will allow for the characterization of molecular structure.

The University is planning on purchasing additional equipment for the Hafey-McCormick Science building in the future.



**Continued from page 31**

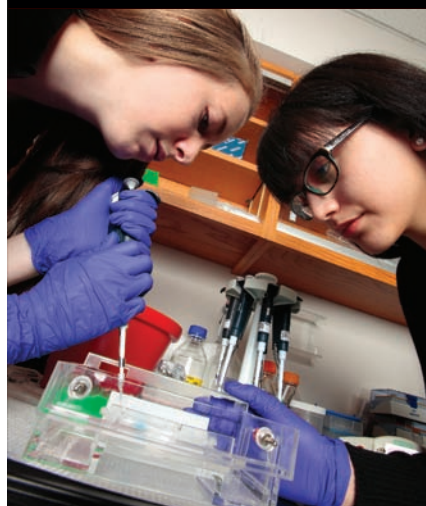
professional studies in May with minors in ethics and chemistry – and has decided on a career in bio-ethics. She plans to continue her education this fall at the University of Pennsylvania where she will pursue a master's degree in bio-ethics in the Perelman School of Medicine.

"It has definitely been a humbling experience to be involved in undergraduate research that may lead to the development of an anti-cancer drug," Castelblanco says. "I never dreamed at this point in my life I would be working in research that is this important."

Dr. DiPino says as a scientist, he sees it as his job to serve as a mentor for students and help them get involved in worthwhile projects. "Most of us have a mentor who took us under their wing and got us involved in science. The most rewarding part of my work is mentoring students in biology," Dr. DiPino says. "Here at Misericordia, we have a philosophy to involve students in undergraduate research to give them hands-on work in the lab and practical skills as well as an understanding of how to properly design and carry out experiments using

the latest technology. The best way to learn science is by doing science. Misericordia students go from learning knowledge in the classroom to creating knowledge in the research laboratory."

**Misericordia University student researchers Rachel Bohn '16, left, and Donna Castelblanco '14 are shown loading PAK 2 DNA into agarose gel to verify that they have successfully sub-cloned the PAK 2 gene as part of their research to better understand the structure of the PAK protein and its role in cancer.**



Bohn says the opportunity has been life changing. "Most students do lab work as part of their assignments," Bohn says. "For us, being able to do this research in a Misericordia lab and try to discover something that hasn't been discovered yet ... something so important ... it really sparks your curiosity and makes you want to work harder for it. Being able to help contribute to cancer research ... what an incredible opportunity."

Speaking from the heart, Sabatino agrees with her colleague. "When you think about doing this research and you are in here in the lab everyday, you think about how everyone knows someone who suffers from cancer. Being able to be a part of the future of this research is really incredible."

With Castelblanco and Sabatino graduating, sophomore biology major Jessica Moss '16, will be joining Bohn and Dr. DiPino on the research team.

A fourth Misericordia student, Amelia Poplawski '14 also conducted research directly with Dr. Ling at TCMC. The biochemistry graduate used her computational chemistry expertise on a separate related PAK-2 project. Poplawski is entering a Ph.D. program at Duke University in the fall.

## ASHLEE WARD

**Continued from page 23**

best height in the nation during the season.

"It was my first time qualifying for nationals in indoor, but I knew I would have a good chance since I was the top seed," says Ward. "It was especially exciting as it was the first time I had ever competed in a jump off."

It was not easy, but Ward outlasted a field of 17 jumpers and set a new school record of 1.76 meters, while claiming MU's first track & field national championship in a jump off against Gladys Njoku of Stevens. The leap was the 10th-highest indoor height in NCAA Division III history.

"Ashlee has been training for this moment throughout her career," adds Wadas. "She has been at her best throughout this season and we knew she would have a chance to win it all."

After passing on the opening height of 1.55 meters, Ward cleared 1.60 and 1.65 meters on her first attempt at each height. She advanced on her second attempt at 1.69 meters and took her third try at 1.72 and 1.75 meters before

eventually winning in the jump off.

The dream continued for Ward during the outdoor season as she finished second at the prestigious Penn Relays and won the Eastern College Athletic Conference (ECAC) championship before entering the national meet as the top seed.

She matched her winning indoor height of 1.76 meters to top the 22-athlete field.

Ward and runner-up Julie Eagle, a senior from Worcester Polytechnic Institute, were the only competitors to clear 1.76 meters. After both missed on three attempts at 1.79 meters, Ward was declared the champion based on having fewer misses. Ward passed on the opening height of 1.55 meters and was perfect on her first three jumps at 1.60, 1.64 and 1.67 meters.

In addition to the pressure of trying to win her second national title in three months, Ward faced elimination on her final attempt at 1.70 meters before clearing to remain alive with seven other competitors. "I was a little nervous, but I was really mad at myself," she explains. "That is a height that I always make and thankfully I

made it when I had to."

Ward cleared her first jump at 1.73 meters as the field dwindled to five student athletes, and then she went on to break her own school record on her second try at 1.76 meters.

"I'm thrilled for Ashlee," Wadas says. "This is a fitting way for her to end her career. She has been one of the hardest workers in our program for four years. She and assistant coach Amy Mantush worked extremely hard this year to get Ashlee to the top of the podium."

Ward's success will also have an impact on current and future members of the Misericordia track & field program, according to Wadas. "Our current team members can see that it is possible to compete at the highest level and how hard they have to work to get there," Wadas says. "Ashlee's success will raise expectations throughout the program."

The increased visibility also helps with recruiting. "High school students see that Misericordia can produce a national champion," says Wadas. "It certainly helps to be able to talk to a recruit, especially if they participate in the high jump."





# SERVICE LEARNING



Novel courses increase engagement in classroom, build global awareness, and benefit communities and people in need

Since its inception in 1924, the Misericordia community has been known for service to those most in need. Whether the institution was an intimate, all-female college or the regionally acclaimed co-educational University it is today, the Misericordia way of providing challenging academics, personal attention, and service to others has stood the test of time.

Today, the University continues to expand upon educational opportunities for students inside and outside of the classroom. Many of the new courses and majors include a service-learning component. In the 2013-14 academic year, more than 1,100 students and 50 faculty members participated in the 66 classes offered with a service aspect.

These specially designed courses enable students to apply their classroom lessons in the field, develop a sense of teamwork and civic mindedness, improve listening and problem-solving skills, and so much more.

The courses can take our students far from our campus borders to island nations and into classrooms to teach the fun aspects of mathematics.

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# Understanding the **HOLISTIC** approach to OT



Misericordia University occupational therapy students provide service to the underserved populations in Honduras

BY PAUL KRZYWICKI

Holistic is defined simply as being "concerned with complete systems rather than with individual parts," according to the Merriam-Webster online dictionary.

For Misericordia University occupational therapy (OT) student Colleen Noga '14, that trisyllabic word also defines one of the reasons why she chose to enter this novel field in health care. "Traveling to Honduras and providing OT services internationally has given me confidence in my

education and leadership abilities," says Noga, reflecting on the service-learning trip she participated in with five other Misericordia OT students at Fundacion CasAyuda School in Comayagua, Honduras from March 1-9. "It challenged my flexibility, adaptability and communication skills.

"The occupational therapy profession prides itself in having a holistic approach to treatment. To be truly holistic, we must expand ourselves to different areas and populations in order

to increase our cultural sensitivity and cultural awareness. This trip has allowed me to enhance my cultural competence, which is vital in such a diverse health care profession," adds Noga, a Marlton, N.J., native who graduated May 17 with a Master of Science degree in OT and a bachelor's degree in psychology.

Comayagua is about 50 miles northwest of the capital city of Tegucigalpa in a valley surrounded by lush, rolling green mountains. Honduras is the second largest country in Central





Misericordia University students and faculty recently participated in a service-learning trip to Honduras. Participating in the mission trip, at far left, first row from left, are Carrie Gorman '14, Jacobus, Pa.; Carly Lewis '14, Shenandoah Heights, Pa.; Brittany Pondelek '15, Alburtis, Pa.; John Ignatovich '15, Forty Fort, Pa.; Colleen Noga '14, Marlton, N.J.; Dr. Joan Surfus, lead instructor, and Adrian Whitmoyer '15, Richland, Pa.; back row, Linsey Smith, co-instructor, and Veronica Olicon, translator.

Misericordia University occupational therapy students Colleen Noga '14, left, and Carly Lewis '14, below far left, plan OT treatments at Fundacion CasAyuda School in Comayagua, Honduras.



Honduran children, at center left, enjoy some play time with Misericordia University OT student Carrie Gorman '14.

Brittany Pondelek '15, top left, shares a playful moment with two Honduran students during her Misericordia University service-learning trip.

Colleen Noga '14, immediate left, poses for a picture with a Honduran boy at Fundacion CasAyuda School in Comayagua, Honduras.

Misericordia University students, below, John Ignatovich '15 and Adrian Whitmoyer '15 blow bubbles and talk to children during their service-learning trip to Honduras.



America, but it is also its second poorest as high unemployment reins over an economy that is reliant upon exports like bananas, coffee and textiles, but is also vulnerable to natural disasters that can devastate crops and homesteads which are made of mud and sticks atop mud floors.

Like most underdeveloped countries, Honduras' health care system is developing slowly and lacks an adequate amount of properly trained clinicians in specialty fields like OT, physical therapy and speech-language pathology. For Misericordia students, the CasAyuda School serves as a clinical and service-learning site for the OT international class that is instructed by Joan Surfus '11, '12, O.T.D., an adjunct faculty member who is also an alumna of the master's and doctorate degree programs at MU, and Linsey Smith, M.A., O.T.R./L.

"This trip really challenges every part of you," says Dr. Surfus, who is also the clinical coordinator for Pediatric Therapy Network in Torrance, Calif. "You learn about being taken out of the comfort zone of your normal daily occupations, roles and routines. This, along with traveling to another country and another culture while learning the

dynamics of your new group, is a lot to take in. You grow personally, professionally and spiritually.

"The area that you grow the most in is unique to each individual. I believe that even if this is the only service trip or international experience the students end up participating in, they will still take with them lessons that will last a lifetime. I also believe those of us who participate and go with the intention of giving or serving, realize very quickly that we are receiving not just as much, but sometimes more than we are giving," adds Dr. Surfus, who has been volunteering at the school for 10 years.

Fundacion CasAyuda School is a private school for children with special needs, about half of which are hard of hearing. It has about 85 students, ages 3 to 25, with about 15 of them living in the boarding school because they live in remote villages that are too far away to commute daily. Misericordia student clinicians provided occupational therapy treatments for the students as well as treatments and consultations with children from the community, and also



offered educational sessions for parents so they could continue some treatments with their children after the mission trip concluded.

"Most of the children would not receive occupational therapy services if we did not go to the school," says Carly Lewis '14 of Shenandoah Heights, Pa., who received her master's in OT and bachelor's degree in health science at the May 17 commencement ceremony. "It made me realize how much of an impact one can have when working with the underserved populations. It definitely makes me want to work with underserved populations in the United States because there are many individuals who need OT services who are not receiving them."

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Carrie Gorman '14, Jacobus, Pa.; John Ignatovich '15, Forty Fort, Pa.; Brittany Pondelek '15, Alburtis, Pa.; Adrian Whitmoyer '15, Richland, Pa., and Lewis and Noga served children with multiple disabilities, including autism, developmental delays, Down syndrome, learning disabilities, hearing impairments and more. The students utilized fine motor, gross motor and sensory integration activities, and various other interventions, including the use of gross motor obstacle courses, fine motor activities, sensory integrative activities, and positioning techniques with their Honduran clients.

"We were able to observe the children in their classrooms interacting with their teachers and peers," Noga explains. "We were able to screen and assess their abilities. We identified their skills and needs; were able to work one-on-one with students; create and implement treatment plans despite limited resources, and provide an extensive in-service and training to the educational staff. We also consulted with parents and families from the community.

"Being able to carry out the OT process in a new and challenging environment was a stimulating experience," Noga adds.

Misericordia University student clinicians and volunteers offer their time, talent and brawn in myriads of ways around the globe. Besides Honduras, international service and service-learning trips have been conducted in Haiti, Jamaica, Guyana, Macedonia, Peru, and Romania in recent years, as well as throughout the United States. Service opportunities at MU are plentiful and

begin with the Orientation Day of Service for first-year students and continue throughout students' academic careers.

"I pride myself on changing people's lives," says Ignatovich, a Wyoming Valley West High School graduate. "It gave me great satisfaction to help people in the country of Honduras. Likewise, it appeared that the local Honduran people were grateful we were there providing services to children. I hope that I was able to make a difference to some people in Honduras because I definitely received gratification from working there."

"Although many people go on service trips to give something to others, there is so much that you get back, too," adds Whitmoyer, the daughter of Ron and Sandy Whitmoyer and a Tulpehocken High School graduate who is scheduled to receive her master's degree in OT in 2015. "Service trips have the ability to really shape you as a person, and I think that it is a great way to learn about yourself."

Misericordia University offers a five-year, entry-level master's degree program in occupational therapy for students who are embarking on their collegiate careers and would like to become occupational therapists. MU also has a weekend program for people who already are certified occupational therapy assistants or who have a bachelor's degree in a field other than occupational therapy and would like to become qualified OTs. A post-professional pediatric certificate program for practicing OTs, as well



Misericordia University occupational therapy student Carly Lewis '14 of Shenandoah Heights, Pa., top left, works with a Honduran child while on her service-learning mission trip to Honduras.

Occupational therapy students, top right, John Ignatovich '15 of Forty Fort, Pa., far right, and Adrian Whitmoyer '15 of Richland, Pa., teach cutting skills to Honduran children.

John Ignatovich '15 takes a moment to have some playful interaction with a Honduran student at Fundacion CasAyuda School in Comayagua, Honduras.

as a post-professional master's degree and doctoral program in OT also are available.

"I want to be an OT because not only do I simply want to help people, but I want to change the lives of others," says Ignatovich, who is on track to graduate with his master's degree in 2015. "I think that being an OT gives you the ability to impact people's lives in a positive way. Nothing gives me more satisfaction than improving the life of another human being."



# Mathematics equals FUN



## Teacher Education and Math Club students organize Pi Day Celebration Fair

BY PAUL KRZYWICKI



MOUNTAIN TOP, Pa. – Pi may be an irrational number, but the goal of 22 Misericordia University students and their professors at the inaugural Pi Day Celebration Fair at St. Jude Elementary School was to introduce students to a new level of mathematics using fun techniques.

About 22 miles from campus, 219 elementary school students watched a PowerPoint presentation about 3.14 (pi) and then participated in an age-appropriate classroom activity.

Afterward, students gathered in the gymnasium and rotated among stations that focused on pi through a variety of integrated activities that included making Pi Day bracelets, singing songs about circumference and diameter, creating stories using pi digits, reviewing facts about pi in a Jeopardy-style game, and measuring the diameter of bubbles.

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Alexandra Graham '15, top left, provides hands-on instruction to St. Jude student Tyler Martinelli.

Teacher education major Ashley Cesare '15, left, provides instructions to St. Jude students at the Pi Day Celebration Fair.

Teacher education major Kelsey Thompson '15, below, leads a group project with St. Jude Elementary School students during the Pi Day Celebration Fair.





## WHAT IS PI?

Pi is a name given to the ratio of the circumference of a circle to the diameter. That means, for any circle, you can divide the circumference by the diameter and always get exactly the same number. It does not matter how big or small the circle is, pi remains the same, according to Math.com.

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"We are always trying to reach out to people about how amazing mathematics can be," says Angela Menditto '14 of Bushkill, Pa., the Math and Computer Science Club president at Misericordia University. "When we go off campus, we get to branch out and actually teach people a thing or two about how relevant and foundational math is for everyone."

Sixteen teacher education majors enrolled in the service-learning course, ECE Math Methods II, and six members of the Math and Computer Science Club developed the activities with Michele Brague, Ed.D., assistant professor of the Department of Teacher Education, and Steven Tedford, Ph.D., associate professor of the Department of Mathematics. By the elementary school students looking at math through a different prism, they got to see that "math can be cool and fun," according to Menditto. For Misericordia's students, they had an opportunity to apply several different aspects of their collegiate education in a real-world setting.

"I felt that building a connection between Misericordia University and St. Jude Elementary School would give our students an opportunity to interact with a new audience and would give St. Jude's students an opportunity to see some of the more interesting aspects of mathematics," says Dr. Tedford. "Having observed the interaction between the elementary and college students, I feel this project was very successful for both groups of students."

As a math and secondary education major at Misericordia University, Andrew Casanova '14 of Hawley, Pa., believes it is up to the nation's teachers to help future generations discover "who they are and to choose the path that will lead them to a life of the highest fulfillment," he says. Through activities, such as the Pi Fair and other service-learning opportunities at MU, he knows he has chosen the correct career path.

"I think students should understand that everything we learn here at Misericordia University has an application," says Casanova, shortly after the March 14 event. "They should

witness the fruit of their education as they go out and perform in their vocation.

"I believe service should not be done for the sake of 'feeling good' about what one did, rather service should be done in an effort to produce something truly amazing. Something as simple as a Pi Day celebration put smiles on children's faces. In my eyes, the product of our service was not only educating them about a unique irrational number, but making these students excited to be there," he adds.

During the 2013-14 academic year, more than 1,100 Misericordia University students enrolled in 66 service-learning courses. The service-learning component of the academic courses is intended to strengthen the content that was addressed in the classroom and to provide valuable real-life experiences in which the students practically apply their lessons.

"Service-learning courses are an integral component of pre-service teachers' learning experiences," says Dr. Brague, explaining the added value of these academic courses. "They allow our pre-service teachers the opportunities to work with





school-aged students in real-world settings, implement a variety of teaching and management strategies, and build a rapport with the students and fellow classmates."

Marian High School graduate Matthew Yaich '14 envisions himself being a fourth grade teacher in the near future. He says the added classroom experience has enhanced the academic experience for him and his classmates. "Our students gain a lot of valuable teaching experience with off-campus activities and it shows us what we will be getting ourselves into as future teachers," says Yaich, a Jim Thorpe, Pa., resident who is a childhood and special education major at MU. "The more we work with the students, the more we will be prepared to be teachers."

Megan Velehoski '15, an early childhood and special education major, wants to make a difference in the world,

she says. And what better way to do so than to play a large role in shaping the lives of future generations. "I want to be that person a child can think of and say, 'she really made an impact on my life,'" says Velehoski. "I love children and becoming a teacher will give me the opportunity to not only work with them, but to also help shape the people they will become. School should be an enjoyable experience, and I want to make sure it is for students."

Misericordia University students will return to St. Jude Elementary School for another educational opportunity next year, but it will not be on Pi Day as it lands on a Saturday in 2015. In the meantime, St. Jude Elementary School Principal Mrs. Jeanne Rossi says the collaboration between higher education and primary education students is invaluable for everyone.

"I'm so thrilled that we have a

partnership with Misericordia," says Principal Rossi. "Having activities that are initiated by the teachers are one thing, but by having the professors and students here was really very valuable. It was a win-win situation for our school and Misericordia students as well. The dedication shown by the faculty from Misericordia who were here leading the students and helping the students facilitate those sessions were wonderful. There was so much energy and excitement. The parents were very grateful."

"The best part about our day at St. Jude was providing some insight into the mathematics behind Pi Day," adds Menditto. "Although most of the children are too young to understand some of the beauty and technical mathematics behind a number like pi, members of the club were able to explain the general concept and derivation of pi."



Misericordia University students organized the inaugural Pi Day Celebration Fair at St. Jude Elementary School in Mountain Top, Pa. Scenes from the event, include clockwise from lower left:

St. Jude Elementary School student Julie Rose Peterlin, left, enjoys an educational moment with teacher education major Sophia Genkin '14 of Allentown, Pa., at the Pi Day Celebration Fair. Misericordia University teacher education major Kayla Mellish '15 of Williamsport, Pa., participates in an activity with elementary school students. Math and Computer Science Club President Angela Menditto '14 of Bushkill, Pa., standing, and teacher education major Caitlin Nealon '15 of Scranton, Pa., conduct a pi activity.

Participating in the event, first row from left, are Ashley Cesare '15, Sophia Genkin '14, Elizabeth Klee '14, and Kayla Mellish '15; second row, Angela Menditto '14, Tiffani Sederovitz '14, Chelsea Morris '14, Caitlin Nealon '15, and Megan Velehoski '15; third row, Sarah West '14, Jess McLaurin '15, Tamara Stubits '15, Liz Anderson '15, Kelsey Thompson '15, Michele Brague, M.Ed., assistant professor, and Cara Donahue '14; fourth row, Taylor Burak '15, Anna Nole '15, Alexandra Graham '15, Andrew Casanova '14, and Lauren Wysocki '15; and fifth row, Kevin Feifer, director of service learning; Steven Tedford, Ph.D., associate professor; Matthew Yaich '14, and Joseph Lodato '14.

Misericordia University teacher education major Matthew Yaich '14 works with a group of St. Jude Elementary School students. Teacher education major Taylor Burak '15 provides direction to St. Jude Elementary School students, including Avery Chepolis, center, at the inaugural Pi Day Celebration Fair.





# 'SERVICE creates more SERVICE'



Misericordia University students rally to raise money, secure wheelchairs for Jamaicans after participating in annual mission trip to island nation

BY PAUL KRZYWICKI



Outside of Curphey Veterans Home in south Manchester, Jamaica, few people know Mr. Clark or his story. This grizzled veteran of the Jamaica Defence Force is in his 70s and has not been able to care for himself since he suffered a debilitating injury a number of years ago playing rugby, which left him paralyzed from the waist down.

Mr. Clark is not alone when it comes to hardship amidst the brush in the mountainous region of this island nation. Far from the prosperous tourist

regions of the country, many Jamaicans live in ramshackle homes or in group facilities that rely on the generosity of others to sustain them. Together, they cobble together an existence that is not measured by personal property or wealth, but rather by faith, family and friendship.

"We were told by one of the volunteers that the only way Mr. Clark could get a wheelchair would be if someone else died," says Misericordia University student Caitlin Vitale '16 of



West Pittston, Pa. "That stuck with me. I won't forget that."

Misericordia sponsors an annual service-learning trip to Cross Keys, Manchester each January with Father Patrick Mwangi of St. Joseph's Catholic Church for the academic course,



Theology of the Church. Students do volunteer work at facilities in need, such as Mustard Seed Orphanage, St. Mary's Missionaries of Christ Nursing Home, Balaclava Nursing Home, St. Bosco's School for Boys, and others.

"Just about every one of us who went on the trip was encouraged and inspired by someone else who went on the trip before," says Vitale, whose brother Sean participated in the mission trip in 2012. "Everyone has a story and

in supplies or the lack of basic necessities, like body lotion, wheelchairs and medical supplies. More importantly, though, Misericordia students learned the importance of caring for their global neighbors.

The son of Kenneth and Kathleen Brennan approached his first service trip abroad with an open mind. A co-leader of the Wilkes-Barre Habitat for Humanity Chapter and a tutor at the McGlynn Learning Center in

Posing with wheelchairs that will be sent to Jamaica, from left, are Caitlin Vitale '16, Dr. Joseph Cipriani, Katerina Kindig '14, Johnna Miller '14 and Amanda Casem '16.

Government, Law and National Security major Conor Brennan '15, below far left, shaves a resident of Balaclava Nursing Home in Jamaica.

Occupational therapy major Amanda Casem '16, far left, poses for a picture with a group of Jamaican children at St. Joseph's Early Childhood Education School.

Amanda Casem '16, at immediate left, applies hand lotion to a resident at St. Mary's Missionaries of Christ Nursing Home. The daughter of Chuck and Elaine Casem is scheduled to graduate with her master's degree in occupational therapy in 2016.

Misericordia University teacher education major Sarah Richard '14, immediately below, poses for a picture with a Jamaican girl after donating dresses to young girls in Cross Keys, Manchester.



you see their pictures and you hear their stories and it leads you there."

Luke Atkins '14, Richland, Pa.; Conor Brennan '15, Stockholm, N.J.; Lauren Carey '13, Olyphant, Pa.; Amanda Casem '16, Mountain Top, Pa.; Katerina Kindig '14, Mechanicsburg, Pa.; Johnna Miller '14, Wapwallopen, Pa.; Lindsay Rader '14, Ringtown, Pa.; Sarah Richard '14, Pine Plains, N.Y.; Rebecca Santoleri '15, Glen Mills, Pa., and Marie Weidemoyer '16, Perkiomenville, Pa., accompanied Vitale and chaperones Michele Brague, teacher education; Dr. Joseph Cipriani, professor, occupational therapy, and Jeffrey Passetti of Campus Ministry to Jamaica from Jan. 2-8 for the 10th annual mission trip.

Together, they experienced the unsanitary conditions many large families are forced to live in, and how health care and educational facilities have to adapt to their circumstances due to shortages

Wilkes-Barre, Pa., he wanted to experience the "real Jamaica," he says. With Father Mwangi by their sides, Brennan and his classmates learned about two societal issues in Jamaica that are uncommon at home as they approached a house in squalor.

"As we got there, many of the residents were fleeing because they were afraid. They saw white people and thought we were associated with the government and we were going to take the kids," says Brennan, a government, law and national security major. "They fled into the bush."

Standing in shin-high piles of garbage, the Misericordia students scrubbed, sanitized and painted the cinder block walls to cleanse the three-room house and rid it of filth and cockroaches. The Jamaican family used makeshift wooden frames for beds and



covered them with cardboard and bug-infested, shredded foam for the 20 members of their family – many of them children that were barely clothed.

Through the mist of an all-day steady rain, an additional act of kindness from a volunteer with Passionist Volunteers International touched Brennan. "There were unclothed, dirty children playing with cockroaches and Krystyna (Starsiak of Massachusetts) picked them up and started kissing them on their foreheads," he says, recalling the moment when the family began to return slowly to their homestead. "It

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didn't matter to her what their conditions were."

Hours later back at the church's compound, Brennan and a Jamaican caretaker talked about what he witnessed and the differences between America and Jamaica. In the end, their conversation fostered a philosophical conclusion: "It does not matter if you are black or white," says Brennan, a Wallkill Valley Regional High School graduate. "You still bleed the same red blood, so you have to take care of your neighbors."

It was Mr. Clark's story, though, that inspired the students initially in mid-winter and throughout the spring semester and into summer. Before leaving Jamaica, they vowed their week of service would continue to benefit those most in need and prove to be a legacy mission trip for them and for Misericordia.

"The very last night we were there in the chapel we all agreed we did not want the service to end," says Casem, an occupational therapy major from Mountain Top, Pa. "We really wanted to help out everyone we met. We knew we could make a difference, but you cannot make a difference in one week."



Students shared their ideas with each other for fundraisers in the near future to benefit the Jamaican service-learning trip. Their first effort resulted in the 11-minute and 30-second video, "Jamaica: One Love," that was produced by Miller with the assistance of Brennan, Casem and Vitale. She used still pictures the students took while in Jamaica and

solicited memorable quotes from the students about their experiences. Miller and Vitale then made an oral presentation before the Misericordia University Board of Trustees at the February meeting before showing them the video.

"A lot of them were emotionally shocked because I am not sure how much detail they knew about," says Miller, the daughter of Todd and Lisa Miller of Wapwallopen, Pa. "I described to them the house and tried to put them in our shoes. I noticed a couple members who were tearing up. We just wanted to show them there is a different part to the world."

"Afterward, they were asking what can they do to help or how can we support you?" Miller adds.

The Misericordia University Board of Trustees donated \$14,200 in support of shipping eight donated wheelchairs from Pride Mobility in Exeter, Pa., and various other worthwhile efforts. "We are fortunate to have students with that



**Mr. Clark poses for a picture with, from left, Krystyna Starsiak of Passionist Volunteers International, and Misericordia University students Conor Brennan '15 and Luke Atkins '14.**

**Caitlin Vitale '16, at left, plays an educational game with a Jamaican child during the annual service-learning trip.**

kind of character and commitment at Misericordia," says John C. Metz, chair of the Board of Trustees. "It was a very emotional presentation. We were impressed with the students and their video. It inspired us to support them and their mission. You can see that they really lived the experience."

Funding from the trustees will also be

used to expand a farming project and a school breakfast program, as well as provide some needy families with basic necessities, such as lunches for school and medical assistance. "I really appreciate the board's donation because it is a great feeling knowing the school supports you and stands behind your mission," adds Miller, a physical therapy major.

Two of the wheelchairs were shipped to Jamaica in May with students Caitlin Day of Oak Hill, Va., and Siobhan Spaer of Dickson City, Pa. The remaining six will be sent to Jamaica early next year with Dr. Cipriani, who will then properly fit the people to the wheelchairs.

"I am so proud of being part of a group that collectively wanted to take things further," adds Casem, the daughter of Chuck and Elaine Casem of Mountain Top, Pa., who raised an additional \$300 through a fundraiser with her St. Jude Youth Group. "I know a couple of the students who are going to Jamaica next year will take this over

and pass it down. I really think we can get something started annually."

Students also are engaged in planning future fundraisers to benefit their Jamaica mission trip and future ones as well. They are examining the feasibility of hosting a soccer tournament and a food festival with authentic Jamaican food on campus with

the assistance of Father Mwangi.

"I am happy with what occurred. This campus is a lot about service and giving back to the community," says Brennan, who participated in a Mercy Leadership trip to Dublin, Ireland in July. "This was just one of the many examples of how Misericordia teaches people they can make a difference."

"What we experienced and what we learned is something you want to share," adds Vitale. "The best thing about service is that it creates more service."

To support the service trips to Jamaica, please send your checks made payable to the Campus Ministry Jamaica Fund, Misericordia University, 301 Lake St., Dallas, PA 18612.