

Congratulations to alumni

JULIE RAGOZZINO '84, NURSING



Everyone has been touched by a nurse—if not literally, then through an experience with a family member, friend or co-worker.

To celebrate Nurse Appreciation Week, May 6-12, we asked for your stories of nurses who are heroes. The winning nurse would receive a \$100 American Express gift card, a video of him or her in action and the story posted on the HealthyLife blog for all to see.

The Nurse Appreciation Week winner is registered nurse, Julie Ragozzino, of Albany ENT and Allergy Services in Albany. Julie was nominated by Margaret Kandoian for her dedication and determination to help solve Margaret's health issue. Here is Julie's nomination:

"I appreciate Julie Ragozzino, a registered nurse at Albany ENT and Allergy Services. As a young woman several years ago, I experienced swelling in my ankles and legs. My primary care physician could not determine the reason or cause; he prescribed diuretics. Dietary constraints and diuretics did not work; the swelling persisted. During one of my visits to my allergy office for injections, Julie noticed my ballooning legs and compromised mobility and offered to review my prescriptions. On my next visit, Julie told me she suspected one of my medications might be the cause for the fluid retention. She researched and found a study that in rare cases implicated this medication as a cause for swelling of extremities after six months' use. I had been taking this medication for seven months as mandated by my HMO as a cost-saving measure. With my permission and the allergy office director's concurrence, she offered to coordinate a course of action with my primary care physician: to stop the diuretic and use a previously prescribed antihistamine. Within a week, the swelling started to subside, and within a month was completely gone. Julie then took the initiative to make several phone calls on my behalf to my HMO to convince them that the 'mandated' medication that caused fluid

retention was not in my best interest. The HMO agreed and allowed me to use a previously proven medication not in their formulary. I appreciate Julie for her personal involvement in my case and for taking the time to look into a seemingly unrelated medical problem. She followed through with all concerned parties until a favorable resolution was found on my behalf. At that time, Julie was one of several nurses administering allergy injections. She currently manages the Allergy Department at Albany ENT and Allergy Services. She is a compassionate individual who deserves to be recognized for her dedication and supportive demeanor with patients.

Although not in her 'official' nursing role, I'd like to mention another example of Julie's compassionate nature outside the office. For years on her day off, Julie and her therapy dog, Gretchen, visited residents at Our Lady of Mercy Life Center in Guilderland, NY. They looked forward to interactions with the residents, bringing them cheer and friendship. However, Gretchen is now becoming a senior herself and is entering retirement. Julie hopes to adopt another German shepherd and will train her new puppy to become a therapy dog for future visits."

NURSING ALUMNI GATHER

Maria College recently hosted a gathering of its Nursing Alumni. Those in attendance heard from speakers about what's new in Maria's Nursing Department, toured the nursing facilities on campus, enjoyed refreshments together, and some even received awards.

Barbara Bonificio, 1975 Nursing Graduate, was named *Alumni of Distinction*, and the *President's Award* was awarded to **Esther McAvoy**, Professor, Nursing at Maria from 1969 through 2003.

The mission of Maria's nursing program is the same for today's graduates as it was when the first nursing class entered the workforce all those years ago: a focus on caring, on a teaching-learning environment, and on personal and professional growth.

Nursing Alumni Committee

Barbara Bonificio, RN, MS-BC	Esther McAvoy, RN, MS, Faculty Emeriti
Margie Byrd, PhD	Holly Evans Madison, RN, PhD
Elizabeth Haver-Brown, RN	Linda Millenbach, RN, PhD
Susan Lahue, RN, MS	Carole Wickham, RN, CNS-BC

"Esther instilled in each of her students the desire to be the best nurse possible, always thinking how to meet the client's needs. I guess you could say that one of the reasons I am here at Maria College as Assistant Professor of Nursing is because of Esther."

Susan Lahue, RN, MS, Nursing '74

We need you...

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

The Maria College Alumni Association is looking to grow and needs your help. In order to fill several positions on its Board of Directors, the Association is looking for people who:

- ◆ have a desire to serve.
- ◆ can make a commitment of three years, with two meetings a year.
- ◆ appreciate a values-based education.
- ◆ are interested in applying post-college experience to grow the Alumni Association.

- ◆ would like to pass on the unique Maria experience to current students.
- ◆ are forward-thinking and also appreciate tradition.

What's in it for you? You can go back and re-connect with Maria in a meaningful way, use your skills to benefit others and see the results, and work with bright and talented people like yourself.

Get involved today! Contact Martha Fashouer at 518.438.3111, x249 or mfashouer@mariacollege.edu.

Special Thanks!

to **Susan Lahue** for her memories and creativity, and **Walter Rockenstire** for his wonderful video presentations: *A Nurse's Prayer* and *My Hands!*





The EVENING'S SPEAKERS



Susan Lahue, RN, MS



Linda Millenbach, RN, PhD



Walter Rockenstire



Holly Evans Madison, RN, PhD



"It is the caring and commitment to our fellow man created through a simple act of touch that exemplifies the truest nature of the practice of nursing."

Walter Rockenstire, Nursing '75

The AWARD RECIPIENTS



Esther K. McEvoy received the President's Award.



Barbara Bonificio visited us from Texas via Skype during the ceremony to accept the Alumni of Distinction Award.

Maria's alumni win big...

Cathleen Daley, RN, MS '79, Nursing, a nursing leader in St. Peter's Hospital's award-winning Cardiac & Vascular Center, was recently presented with St. Peter's Nurse of Excellence Award. She leads the St. Peter's Transitional Heart Failure Care program, a program which she helped create and which has quickly become a patient care model, promoting patient support across the continuum and improving participant quality of life.

Barbara (Daly) Bonificio, RN, MS '75, Nursing, received the Kathy Brodbeck Nursing Leadership award at St. Peter's Hospital. For the second time, she has helped St. Peter's and its nurses gain national recognition from the American Nurses Credentialing Center, and St. Peter's was

once again recognized as a "Magnet Hospital," which is considered the gold standard for nursing care in United States hospitals. Recently, Barbara has been appointed Director of Nursing Excellence at UTMB, Texas.

Maria (Simeone) Edwards, RN II '03, Nursing, was recognized for consistent achievement over a sustained period of time, as well as for specific outstanding contributions at St. Peter's Hospital's Cardiac Care Unit (Brady Farrell). She is a role model for other nurses, as well as for students who have reported that she is an outstanding mentor and teacher, offering an excellent clinical rotation.

New at Maria...

Alumni Events *Save the dates!*

Nursing Alumni Events

- **TUESDAY, MARCH 29 • 6:30PM • MARIAN HALL**
"DIGNITY IN OLDER ADULTS, A PROGRAM OF RESEARCH" – A discussion on the *topic* and the *science* of the older adult. Presented by Cynthia S. Jacelon, PhD, RN, CRRN, FAAN, Associate Professor, Director of Departmental Honors, UMass Amherst. RSVP to Robin at robinp@mariacollege.edu or (518) 438-3111, ext 213, by March 25.
- **WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7 • 6:30PM • MARIAN HALL**
"PALLIATIVE CARE SUPPORT FOR PATIENT AND FAMILY MEMBERS" – Identifying ethical issues, goals of care and psychosocial assessments. Presented by Elizabeth Kirby Walsh, LCSW, Palliative Care Specialist, Clinical Social Worker, Palliative Care Partners under the umbrella of Community Hospice.

General Alumni Event

- **NOVEMBER (Date and time to be announced.)**
FORT ORANGE CLUB, ALBANY, NEW YORK.
WINE TASTING AND AUCTION

Visit MariaCollege.edu for more information on these and other upcoming events.



Maria College prayerfully remembers the following faculty and alumni:

Sister Angela M. Baniak, RSM
Professor of Language/French and Russian 1963-73

Rev. Nicholas Campagnone
Associate Professor
Theology/Psychology 1975-90

Carol Winkler
Nursing Instructor 1978-81

Sister Maureen Joyce, RSM, '65
Liberal Arts

Lynn Riley Brown '71
Nursing

Donna (Michaud) Foley '79
Physical Therapy

Eileen Patterson Grimes '71
Early Childhood Education

Dwayne Hopkins '90
Early Childhood Education

Frances Peterson '74
Nursing

Mary (Brown) Watso '76
Nursing

Angelia McKinley '83
Nursing

Christina (Snyder) Tallman '85
Business

Joanne Vallee '86
Physical Therapy

Kathleen McDonnell '87
Nursing

Margaret R. Noviczki '92
Nursing

Susan DeCapria '94
Nursing