

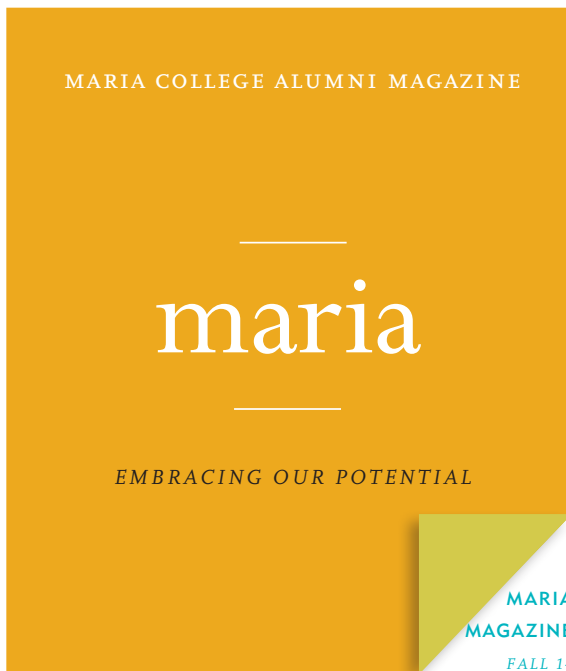
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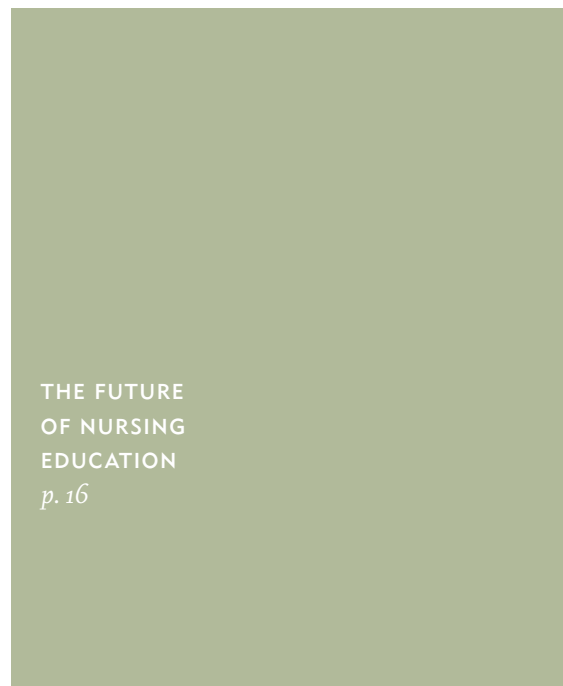


MARIA COLLEGE ALUMNI MAGAZINE

maria


EMBRACING OUR POTENTIAL

MARIA
MAGAZINE
FALL 14



THE FUTURE
OF NURSING
EDUCATION
p. 16



An aerial photograph of a courtyard at Maria College. The courtyard is paved with light-colored bricks in a circular pattern. In the center, there is a small, octagonal fountain with water spraying upwards. Several students are visible: one student stands near the fountain, while a group of four students are gathered on a wooden bench. The courtyard is surrounded by a brick building with arched windows and lush green trees and shrubs. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

"OUR PLAN WILL SERVE AS A ROADMAP AS WE BUILD MARIA INTO THE AFFORDABLE CHOICE FOR A PRIVATE BACCALAUREATE EDUCATION. IT IS BOLD, FRESH, AND IMAGINATIVE. IT IS MARIA COLLEGE."

LEA JOHNSON, PRESIDENT

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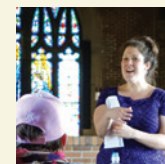
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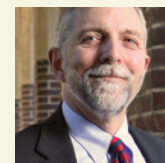


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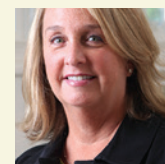
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FROM THE
PRESIDENT

DEAR ALUMNI, Friends, and Members of the Maria College Community,

While many organizations delegate strategic planning to a closed-door group of administrators, at Maria College we made it an exciting community-wide process. As part of my commitment to growing and improving the college experience, and in conjunction with our accreditation review, the Maria College community spent several months sharing their ideas on what we could and should become. The end result is nearly 50 pages in length, but this issue of *Maria Magazine* gives you a quick glimpse into our plans for the future. I believe it is a gigantic step in the right direction, and if we are able to accomplish all that our strategic plan proposes, Maria College will be in a very strong competitive position in the years ahead. Congratulations to everyone who worked so hard on developing this plan, and to those who spent hours sharing their ideas during our visioning days. It was a job well done!

Our last issue of *Maria Magazine* celebrated the strength of our OTA program, so it is only fitting that we place the emphasis in this issue on nursing. Our nursing program is known far and wide for its excellence, and its strong reputation simply improves with each passing year. We recently completed our new three-room nursing lab in Marian Hall. It functions well as a mini mock hospital and teaching area, and best of all, the initial reviews from students and faculty are very positive.

One of the highlights of my week is to take the elevator to the new liberal arts and sciences wing on Friday afternoons and listen to faculty as they plan the future. Maria faculty are energized, committed, and their positive, upbeat tone translates into a warm and engaging experience for our students. They have dedicated great effort into developing curricula for a number of new bachelor degree programs, and their proposed Bachelor of Science degree in healthcare management recently received New York Department of Education approval. Our entering class for this new major will officially begin in the fall of 2015. Many years ago, our management degree held the largest enrollment at the College. Reflecting on the importance of business majors, we are currently discussing new directions for this degree and the end result should mark the beginning of an exciting new chapter for Maria College.

My best wishes to you as we enter this holiday season.




LEA A. JOHNSON
PRESIDENT

FROM THE
EDITOR

TWICE EACH YEAR, we reach out to you via *Maria Magazine (MM)*, a publication designed to keep you connected to the Maria community and informed about the amazing things that are happening at the College these days.

In this issue, for example, we share highlights from our strategic plan (page 12) and give you a glimpse of the exciting technology—including avatars and a new high fidelity SIM lab—that will keep us at the forefront of nursing education (page 16). We also introduce you to our new campus minister (page 10).

Because this is your publication, we want your input on the stories we've covered in past issues and suggestions on topics to consider for future editions. After the spring '14 *MM*, we were delighted to receive a letter from Sister Mary Magdalen, OP, at the Queen of Peace Monastery in Vancouver, British Columbia. It turns out that she was pictured in the photo of the "cell" that accompanied our story "We're Here for the Bodies." She and her Dominican Sisters described the story as "joyful" and helped us identify other Sisters in the photos. We have reprinted her letter (page 5) so you can enjoy it too.

We also have reached out to alumni and asked them to share their news and accomplishments via email so we can include them in our Class Notes (pages 36-37). If you have not heard from me, I probably do not have your most current contact information. Please send it to me, along with your news, at communication@mariacollege.edu.

I hope you enjoy this fall '14 issue and that you are as excited as we are about the transformation underway at Maria. Most of all, I thank you for being part of the Maria community and for embodying our mission of education to serve others—in your work and your daily life.



BETH WALES
EDITOR



LETTERS

HISTORY OF THE MONASTERY



I was delighted to receive a black and white printout of your spring newsletter some weeks ago, featuring the history of Marian Hall. I was one of the nuns who left the former

Monastery of the Immaculate Conception in 1970 to become a member of Monastery of the Blessed Sacrament in Farmington Hills Michigan. I had just turned 30 when we left, and I am now a member of a new foundation in British Columbia Canada, (my native land.) There are actually seven of those who departed by the end of April that year, still living in various places.

It was a joy to read the article: I can name the two lay nuns in white veils on the cover in our beautiful provincial Gothic chapel; my sister on the lawnmower; me in the cell; Sister Mary of Jesus in the crypt, Mother Mary Aquinas in the parlour visiting with Catherine Dillon, who worked for us as a receptionist.

I think I can speak for all of us to say that we were so happy that our monastery evolved into Marian Hall. Wishing God's blessings on all your endeavours.

—Sister Mary Magdalen, OP, Dominican Nuns,
Queen of Peace Monastery

MARIA MAGAZINE

FALL 2014

Editor Beth Wales

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PHOTOGRAPHERS/ILLUSTRATORS

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Editorial offices: 700 New Scotland Avenue, Albany, NY 12208.
tel: 518.438.3111, fax: 518.453-1366, email: mm@mariacollege.edu.

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NEW BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE:

Healthcare Management

The demand for healthcare managers is growing at an above average rate. This 4-year degree is designed to prepare graduates with a broad foundation for entry to mid-level management careers in the healthcare arena including:

Corporate health and wellness departments

Pharmaceutical manufacturers

Nursing homes

Hospitals

Assisted living and rehabilitation centers

Learn more about this program and how you can enroll; be equipped with the knowledge to succeed in today's healthcare environment and be job ready when you graduate.

MARIA

COLLEGE

For information contact:

The Office of Admission

700 New Scotland Ave., Albany, NY 12208

518.861.2517 | admissions@mariacollege.edu

IN BRIEF

The Madonna with angels on the stained glass inside Marian Hall provided the perfect back drop to this year's Mercy Day Celebration. Upper left: Rose Hobbs, RSM, middle: Dr. Stephanie Hutchins, below: Virginia Sposito, RSM.



Celebrating Mercy Day

On September 24, Maria joined the Mercy community world-wide in celebrating Mercy Day. The Maria program included reflection, prayer, and the sharing of recent experiences. Assistant Professor Stephanie Hutchins, PhD, recounted highlights from the recent study abroad trip, including a visit to Mercy International Centre in Dublin, where Sisters of Mercy founder Catherine McAuley opened the first House of Mercy. Virginia "Ginny" Sposito, RSM, '67, recited the Suscipe of Catherine McAuley, and Rose Hobbs, RSM, '61, read "The Quality of Mercy," from William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*.



Welcome, New Board of Trustee Members

SEVEN NEW MEMBERS recently have joined the Maria Board of Trustees:

Kathleen Pritty, '66, RSM, is the local coordinator of the Religious Sisters of Mercy Northeast Community. Pritty received her MA in religious studies from Providence College in Rhode Island and served 24 years as an elementary school principal. She has participated in the Sisters of Mercy Justice Network for more than 25 years.

Dennis R. DePerro brings almost 20 years of enrollment management experience at Catholic colleges, including Le Moyne College in Syracuse, NY, where he served as vice president for enrollment management. Currently, he is dean of the Le Moyne School of Graduate and Professional Studies. He has a Doctor of Education degree from the University of Pennsylvania.

Hilton Hallock is special advisor to New York University's Office of Global Programs, in the Provost's Office. Previously, she was vice president of academic affairs and vice president for enrollment and student engagement at New England College in New Hampshire. She holds a doctoral degree in cultural foundations of education from the Syracuse University School of Education.

Jeffrey Weiss is president and CEO of Glennpeter Jewelers and a stalwart supporter of the Capital Region. Weiss serves on numerous boards, including those of Northeast Ballet, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and Schenectady Jewish

Community Center. A graduate of St. Lawrence University in Canton, NY, Weiss holds a bachelor's degree in economics.

Joseph G. Salamack III is head of school at Bishop Maginn High School in Albany. A lifelong educator, he received his MA in Educational Leadership from St. Mary's College in California, and the MS in Special Education from the College of St. Rose. He has served in key administrative roles in both New York and California educational systems and has been credited with expanding technology in the classroom and promoting the use of online learning.

Maureen E. O'Brien is the director of government affairs for Motorola Solutions. A graduate of Notre Dame University, she earned her master's degree from New York University. O'Brien serves on numerous boards, including those of Double H Ranch and Albany Medical Center Children's Hospital.

Michael E. Pizzigrillo is superintendent of schools for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany. Previously, he was the associate superintendent for strategic planning, government programs and public policy in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn. Pizzigrillo has been honored with the Thomas C. Giordano Award for Diocesan Leadership. He earned his master's degree from St. John's University in Queens, NY.



SISTER RENEE CUDHEA

In Memoriam

THE MARIA COMMUNITY lost a friend and dedicated member with the death of Renee Cudhea, RSM, on April 9, 2014. Sister Renee was a Sister of Mercy for 54 years. She ministered at many area institutions, including Catholic Central High School in Troy, St. Patrick's in Johnstown, Our Lady of Mercy in Colonie, St. Mary's in Oneonta, and St. Mary's in Waterford. At Maria, she served as director of admissions and, later, of career services. Graduates remember Sister Renee for her guidance and encouragement. She would coach students to set their goals high, and many made life-changing decisions as a result.

UPDATES

2 NEW MEMBERS joined the President's Cabinet.



MICHELLE THIVIERGE,
ThM
Director of Campus Ministry

Before joining Maria, Thivierge served as associate director of youth ministry for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany, associate campus minister at Siena College in Loudonville, NY, and, most recently, as campus minister and teacher at the Academy of the Holy Names in Albany.



MARK HATLEE, MS
Director of Information Technology

Hatlee earned his MS in educational communications from the University at Albany. He serves as a program evaluator for the Accrediting Council of Independent Colleges and Schools and teaches Networking & Security at ITT Technical Institute.



KATHLEEN PRITTY



DENNIS R. DEPERRO



HILTON HALLOCK



JEFFREY WEISS



JOSEPH G. SALAMACK III



MAUREEN O'BRIEN



MICHAEL E. PIZZIGRILLO

IN BRIEF

Serving Our Neighbors

The Maria community raised significant in-kind and cash contributions for area non-profit organizations and donated countless hours of service during the 2013-2014 academic year. Over 30 organizations—including the City Mission, Wounded Warriors, Hope House, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany, Mercy House, and Homeless Veterans—benefited from the College's mission to serve others. Many of the donations were from service learning projects that are part of the Contemporary Moral Issues course.

Strategic Partnership with Albany Medical Center

In keeping with its commitment to nursing education, Albany Medical Center (AMC) has partnered with Maria College on a program that encourages RNs at AMC to earn a bachelor's degree from Maria. AMC employees also may pursue other Maria degrees, including the new Bachelor of Science in Healthcare Management. More information is available from the AMC Center for Learning and Development and the Maria College Admissions Office.

Community Turns Out for Fall Fest '14

An estimated 400 members of the Maria community and surrounding neighborhoods turned out September 17, for the College's second annual Fall Fest. Activities included a rock climbing wall, face painting by Art Smarts, pony rides, and a bouncy bounce. Guests enjoyed cider and donuts from vendors, including Buhrmaster Farms, and had their pick of specialty foods and handcrafted goods.





New Bishop Hubbard Service Scholarship

In honor of Bishop Howard Hubbard and his many years of service, starting in fall 2015, Maria will offer the Bishop Hubbard Service scholarship for students pursuing a baccalaureate degree at the College. Four \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded each year, to a college-bound senior from each of the four Catholic high schools in the Albany Diocese. Scholarships are renewable for four years. The deadline to apply is March 15, 2015.

Nurses in War

MARIA COLLEGE, AMC, and Saratoga Hospital teamed up to bring the authors of *Nurses in War: Voices from Iraq and Afghanistan* to the Capital Region April 17 and 18. The authors, Elizabeth Scannell-Desch, PhD, RN, and Mary Ellen Doherty, PhD, RN, CNM, presented their research and shared stories of the courage and resilience of combat nurses. The first session focused on the results of the research describing the emergent themes of nurses' personal and professional growth as they learned to work in

difficult conditions while missing family and caring for the soldiers and citizens of the country. The second session addressed the reconstruction of the method of phenomenology research as an exciting and valuable contribution to the body of nursing knowledge. The research presented demonstrated the heroism, determination and dedication of nursing teams serving in the Middle East. To be placed on the mailing list for future events, please contact communication@mariacollege.edu.



NEW TO MARIA

2014 STAFF HIRED

FULL-TIME

Priscilla Armsby, MS, *Director of Financial Aid*

Paula Bernardoni, BA, *Admissions Counselor*

Jenna Boland, BA, *Assistant Director of Admissions*

Kathleen Curtin, BA, *Nursing Administrative Assistant*

Elijah Foulkes, MA, *Call Center Support*

Pamela Hind, AAS, *Assistant to the President*

Kelli Johnson, M.Ed, *Director of HEOP*

John Ramoska, MS, *Director of Admissions*

Amber Tatnall, PhD, *Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs*

PART-TIME

Mary Edgerton, MLS, *Librarian*

Meagan Masti, MAT, *Graphic designer*

2014 FACULTY HIRED

FULL-TIME

Carla Theimer, PhD, *Assistant Professor, Liberal Arts/General Studies (Chemistry)*

Mary Harknett-Martin, MS, RN, *Instructor, Nursing*

Sandra Montest-Hoff, MS, RN, *Instructor, Nursing*

Maria nursing students with the book authors at the New York State Nurses Association on April 17 (shown in front of military nursing exhibit).



FULFILLING MARIA'S MISSION OF SERVICE

NEW CAMPUS MINISTER CONTINUES MERCY TRADITION

**“FOR ME, MINISTRY
MEANS MEETING
PEOPLE WHERE THEY
ARE AND WALKING
WITH THEM—NO
MATTER THE SETTING,
THEIR RELIGION, OR
BACKGROUND.”**

MICHELLE THIVIERGE, TH.M.

MARIA’S NEW CAMPUS MINISTER, MICHELLE THIVIERGE, has been called to service ever since she graduated from Marist College 15 years ago. Thivierge devoted the early years of her career to assisting seniors, those with disabilities, the homeless, and the mentally ill. In 2004, after earning a master’s in theology from Catholic Theological Union at Chicago, Thivierge shifted her focus to young people and campus communities.

She has since served as associate director of youth ministry for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany, associate campus minister at Siena College in Loudonville, N.Y., and most recently, as campus minister and teacher at the Academy of the Holy Names in Albany. At Maria, Thivierge provides pastoral care for students, faculty, and staff and develops Christian programming. She also provides support for new and existing service opportunities.

In the following Q & A, Thivierge shares some thoughts on ministry, service, and the College.

Q: Why did you choose a career in ministry?

A: I honestly feel that I did not choose a career in ministry, but rather that it chose me. When I graduated from college, I felt called to start giving back because of all that I had been given. I applied to the Jesuit Volunteer Corps and was placed in San Francisco. That yearlong experience of service, community, spirituality, and simplicity really solidified my Catholic faith. Both during and after this experience, I felt that I was truly owning my faith because of my choices, decisions, and career path. I was living simply, being a person for others, and working for nonprofits that supported the poor and marginalized. This path has presented many difficulties, but through it all I have felt that God was calling me to ministry.

For me, ministry means meeting people where they are and walking with them—no matter the setting, their religion, or background. This is what Jesus did and what we are all called to do.

Q: What drew you to Maria?

A: I feel certain that all students, faculty, and staff at Maria—regardless of their faith or religion—are about something more than themselves. This institution cultivates the desire to serve and show mercy. It consistently sends caring, compassionate professionals out into a working world that so desperately needs these qualities. How could I not want to be a part of that?

Q: The College’s mission is rooted in educating to serve others. How can the campus minister support this mission?

A: Campus ministry, like faith, should not be compartmentalized. Instead, it should be integrated throughout everything we are and do.

As campus minister, I feel a deep responsibility to further Maria’s vision to educate students to serve others. That responsibility includes not only providing pastoral care, but also sharing advice and insights on curriculum development, freshman and transfer initiatives, faculty and staff development days, and other programming.

Q: What are some of your goals as campus minister?

A: Mother Catherine was often referred to as “the connector.” A campus minister needs to be a connector as well, building relationships, meeting needs, and developing an atmosphere of servant leadership that extends beyond the campus to the wider community. Maria already has a proud tradition of service, and I want to build on that and take it to the next level. I want to do my part to help Maria deliver on its call to aspire, achieve, and become.

Q: Maria students already participate in many service learning projects and activities. Will you support these or develop new initiatives?

A: I hope to do both. Certainly I want to support the many wonderful ways our students already serve the community. I also look forward to introducing initiatives that continue the Sisters of Mercy’s vision of service in the 21st century. One example is the Bridges Out of Poverty program, which brings people from all sectors and economic classes together to improve job retention, build resources, and support those who are moving out of poverty. I see this program as an extension of many of the efforts that Maria students are already engaged in.

I’d also like to help develop a service-learning curriculum that eventually could result in a service-learning or social justice certificate. Another goal is to develop a spring break service trip. Ideally, that would offer both local and national opportunities. And I’d like to reach out to local hospitals to develop a program that would include pastoral care and visits with the sick.

On the campus itself, I’d like to work with students, faculty, and staff to organize a voter registration drive and develop a composting program. I’d also like to see us have a Crop Walk to fight hunger, bring in guest speakers to discuss critical issues, and host a “movie with a message” event.

To some, this may sound ambitious, especially since I’ve been here such a short time. But everything I’ve seen and learned about Maria tells me that so much is possible here.



OUR VISION

MARIA COLLEGE WILL BECOME A
COLLEGE OF FIRST CHOICE FOR THE CAPITAL
REGION, PROVIDING HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION
AT AN AFFORDABLE PRICE WHILE PREPARING
OUR STUDENTS FOR MEANINGFUL CAREERS OF
LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE IN TODAY'S GLOBAL
SOCIETY. MARIA GRADUATES WILL BE
GROUNDED IN THE VALUES OF OUR MERCY
HERITAGE, EMBRACING THE IMPORTANCE OF
INTEGRITY, SERVICE, RESPECT FOR OTHERS,
COMPASSION, AND COMMUNITY.

EMBRACING OUR POTENTIAL



More than 70 members of our community came together recently to chart a new course for Maria. During two days of visioning exercises, faculty, staff, administration, trustees, students, and alumni shared their thoughts, hopes, and dreams for the future of the College. The result is “Embracing Our Potential,” a shared vision and strategic plan derived from all major constituents’ input.

Our plan takes the College to a new level of engagement and will serve as a roadmap as we build Maria into the affordable choice for a private Catholic baccalaureate education. The plan is bold, fresh, and imaginative. **It is Maria College.**



8

VISION STATEMENTS THAT WILL GUIDE OUR GROWTH

1

ACHIEVING ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Maria College will strive to create a climate of excellence in all academic endeavors, and will enhance and develop processes and structures to facilitate and recognize exemplary academic achievement. This includes the expansion of honors programs, offering additional student support services, initiating student research opportunities, and designing new academic programs that are mission centered, yet innovative and responsive to societal needs in terms of content and mode of delivery.



2

PREPARING STUDENTS TO TAKE THEIR PLACE IN OUR GLOBAL SOCIETY

Maria students will embrace their role as global citizens and engage in learning activities designed to heighten their global experiences. This will require an expansion of study abroad opportunities, the development of international internship or service offerings and an increase in curricular offerings infused with learning activities specific to global issues.



3

ENGAGING STUDENTS AND ALUMNI

Maria College will build a vibrant alumni association beginning with the hiring of our first alumni director. Their charge will be to develop an alumni network that actively supports the immediate and long-term college priorities in addition to networking with and mentoring current Maria students. The College will also hire a student activities director to develop a co-curricular program that includes both student activities and athletics.



4

MAINTAINING FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

While keeping tuition the lowest of any private baccalaureate college in New York, Maria College will maintain financial sustainability by increasing the percentage of full time, day students while continuing to offer high demand evening and weekend options for nontraditional students that incorporate a variety of delivery systems. A director of development will be hired to begin to address the growing need for student scholarships and long-term capital improvements.

5

BECOMING A COLLEGE OF FIRST CHOICE FOR CAPITAL REGION STUDENTS

In order to become a college of first choice, Maria College will offer undergraduate degree programs in high demand, develop a co-curricular experience that begins to address the needs of a traditional day college student, increase student housing options, revitalize the campus physical plant, and continue to offer quality programs at an affordable price.



6

DEVELOPING STATE OF THE ART FACILITIES AND PROCESSES

Maria College has been successful in offering a unique environment featuring historic facilities and technology suited for the curriculum being offered. The College will evaluate the aging infrastructure and technology offerings and implement changes to position the institution for future growth and stability.



7

LIVING OUR MISSION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Maria College graduates will be well prepared for service to others, thereby fulfilling the mission of a Maria College education. Implementing on and off-campus service events and integrating them into our curriculum will empower students to honor the community and raise global awareness. The College will also work to strengthen ties with the Sisters of Mercy and incorporate our Mercy heritage into the Maria College experience.



8

MAKING MARIA A BETTER PLACE FOR FACULTY AND STAFF

Our College will be a community where everyone feels valued and rewarded for their work and contribution to the student experience. We will work to enhance our sense of community and provide a work environment that reflects our respect and support of all college employees. We will accomplish this through strong employee recognition and activities program, improved physical surroundings, and the development of a benefits program comparable to that of other colleges in the region.

An observation room in the new lab plays a critical role in allowing the Instructor and student observers to view the student team address the simulated patient conditions.



MARIA NURSING: AT THE FOREFRONT OF TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION

When students step into Maria's new high fidelity nursing simulation (SIM) laboratory, they are immediately transported to an acute-care setting, where "patients" await treatment for conditions such as broken bones and cardiac arrest. In truth, the patients are lifelike SIM mannequins that can breathe, cough, and even foam at the mouth. They also have heart tones and palpable pulses.

The mannequins and SIM lab are among the latest examples of Maria's investment in state-of-the-art technology to prepare the region's future nurses and provide them with a competitive edge. The College is also pioneering a sophisticated interactive computer training program that gives nursing students 24/7 access to virtual patients or avatars. Together, the high-tech hardware and software provide opportunities for students to practice procedures and techniques while honing their diagnostic and communication skills. ▶



◀ Student nursing teams perform an assigned lab simulation to address their “patient’s” well-being.

Lab Coordinator, Marcy Shultes, reviews the lab scenario with students in the post-conference session. ▶



AN IDEAL HANDS-ON ENVIRONMENT

The SIM lab, which occupies 1,600 square feet of renovated space on the first floor of Marian Hall, is designed for maximum hands-on experience, collaboration, observation, and assessment. In addition to critical care, labor and delivery, and medical-surgical settings, the lab includes a SIM control center, conference and observation space, and videotaping equipment.

According to Nursing Lab Coordinator and Instructor Marcy Shultes, MS, RN, the SIM lab design and equipment reflect best practices and Maria’s goals for nursing students. “We chose technology that would enhance our nursing curriculum and build student confidence and experience through simulated clinical scenarios and hands-on exercises,” she says.

Starting with the fall 2014 semester, Maria revised its Student Assessment Lab Time (SALT) curriculum to give students more hands-on time with SIM patients. One of the objectives is to improve students’ response time to better prepare them for their clinical rotations and, ultimately, for their nursing careers.

Currently, students in all Maria nursing certificate and degree programs—from PNC to AAS to the RN Baccalaureate degree completion program—practice on the SIM patients. In keeping with the College’s multidisciplinary approach, students in the occupational therapy

assistant (OTA) program eventually will join their nursing classmates in the lab. In true clinical settings, nursing and OT professionals often collaborate to improve patient outcomes. Shultes is determined to include that experience as part of Maria students’ education.

SAMPLE SCENARIOS

A typical SALT session lasts two hours and starts with a briefing on what students can expect during that day’s simulation scenarios. Students then separate into two groups. One group is assigned to practice on the SIM mannequins, while the second group observes. Later, the two groups trade roles. All sessions are taped so students can review their performance to identify what they did well and target areas for improvement.

The SIM technology allows Shultes to create customized scenarios. For a recent SALT session, Shultes designed a scenario in which Maria’s most advanced SIM-man, Howard, presented as a 68-year-old patient who was having a heart attack. His situation was complicated by numerous other health issues. Another SIM patient, a 34-year-old with a fractured femur, was in the medical-surgical area, awaiting a decision on detoxification to treat his alcoholism.

Student nurses routinely check their SIM patients’ vital signs, insert IVs, and perform other essential tasks and procedures. For labor

“THE COLLEGE IS COMMITTED TO ADVANCING HEALTHCARE EDUCATION IN THE REGION AND THE SIM LAB INVESTMENT IS A CRITICAL COMPONENT.”

PRESIDENT JOHNSON AND MARIA BOARD OF TRUSTEES





Maria nursing students sharpen their diagnostic and health assessment skills with innovative teaching tools, such as the virtual patient, Brian Foster, shown right. ▶



and delivery scenarios, students tend to mother and child. (Maria has two SIM infants.)

Since nurses are integral members of a healthcare team, the scenarios require Maria students to work as a cohesive unit. Students take turns assuming the different roles of RN, LPN, and unlicensed assistant professional, recreating the patient care teams that are deployed in actual clinical settings. Scenarios are introduced rapidly, requiring students to respond almost reflexively.

"It challenges me to think on my feet and respond quickly with the skills that I learned from the textbook and in class," one student says. "Thanks to this lab, I will be more confident during the clinical rotations in real healthcare facilities."

The lab offers significant training advantages. Students can practice and become proficient at the technical procedures that are part of almost every patient exam. Once they master those techniques, student nurses can focus on more advanced clinical, critical-thinking, and decision-making skills. Students also gain experience with the psychological aspects of providing patient care.

For Shultes, the lab is invaluable for another reason. "There are many wonderful educational tools that can be used during simulation," she says, "but one of the best things is that you can stop at any time and train the students, thus building their confidence and skills. This is not the case in real life."

Already, Maria's nursing faculty members are seeing a difference in the College's nursing students. "The new lab is challenging them to collaborate as a nursing team and improve their problem-solving and decision-making skills," Assistant Professor Doreen DeCorah, RN, MS, says. "And they are responding."

DIAGNOSING VIRTUAL PATIENTS

Students are also responding to the virtual patients that add a new dimension to the nursing courses such as, Health Assessment, Promotion, and Diagnostic Reasoning. "Tina Jones" was the students' first *virtual* patient. She came in because she injured her foot while climbing the stairs, and Maria students quickly diagnosed other problems.

"Well, my foot still really hurts," Tina told them, "but I'm also here for an overall checkup. I know I'm due for one."

By asking the right questions, students discovered that Tina's foot was infected, she has asthma, and her diabetes is not well-controlled. Based on these findings, students recommended that Tina have regular health screenings and receive education on how to manage her diabetes.

Tina is one of four avatars, created by educational software developer Shadow Health, to help nursing students improve their diagnostic skills and become more comfortable interacting with patients.

"Many complex medical conditions that require skilled and thorough diagnosis techniques can now be reinforced using these four virtual patient models or avatars," says Nursing Instructor, Christal Saffee, MSN, RN, FNP-C, who teaches the course. "Each case posed by this innovative software is a mystery waiting to be solved through extensive, methodical, patient assessment techniques."

To conduct interviews, students type questions, and the patient responds. Students can also use their keyboards to perform the exams necessary to address the patients' symptoms. In Tina's case, for example, an eye exam is essential.

AVATARS OF ALL AGES

Together, the four avatars give students experience with patients that span the spectrum, from childhood through young and middle adulthood to old age.

- Daniel "Danny" Rivera is an 8-year-old boy who has been coughing for several days. Students perform a respiratory exam and gain experience interacting with a pediatric patient.

- Tina Jones is a 28-year-old woman who works as a shift supervisor at a local copy and print shop, enjoys watching documentaries, and is active in her community. She comes in complaining of foot pain, but, as with many patients, there is more to discover.

The Maria Nursing Department led by Interim Chairperson, Elizabeth Heywood, PhD, RN (front left), oversaw record student enrollment growth and new healthcare partnerships this fall '14. ▶



- Brian Foster is a 58-year-old man who is recovering from routine surgery. Students apply clinical reasoning skills and choose how to examine him safely for adverse effects.

- Esther Park is a 78-year-old woman who is experiencing stomach pain and difficulty going to the bathroom. Students perform an abdominal exam and practice communicating with a geriatric patient.

When students evaluated Foster during a recent class, he reported chest pain. They examined him for carotid stenosis, or narrowing of the carotid arteries. Students listened for “S3” heart sounds, which can be a symptom of certain cardiac conditions, and for rales, or rattling, in the patient’s lungs.

These are important skills for all nurses. One student, in particular, expects to draw on this classroom experience in the coming weeks. She is preparing for a new assignment in a cardio-thoracic unit. “I will

be using this information with my patients soon,” she says.

Because communication skills are critical, students are encouraged to ask questions, such as, “Have you lost weight?” “Are you allergic to any medications?” and “When did you last have these inoculations?” The answers often surprise students and provide insight into the avatar patients’ rich medical histories.

Among the advantages of the Shadow Health software is the opportunity to practice time and time again. Students can access the program on their computers, anytime, anywhere. The more the students practice, the more skilled they become. One student “showed the Shadow Health software to my mother, who is a nurse. She wishes it were available when she was in school.”

OUTPERFORMING THEIR PEERS NATIONWIDE

The Shadow Health program includes features that enable students to track

their progress and faculty to evaluate their students’ evolving diagnostic skills. After each patient interaction, students receive immediate feedback to help them learn from their mistakes. Faculty members are provided with class-wide metrics that help target areas for improvement.

For Saffee’s class, those metrics are a source of pride. In some key areas, her students are outperforming Shadow Health national group averages for both undergraduate and graduate students.

“Our bachelor’s degree students found more complex respiratory findings on the simulation patient than BSN and MSN students, scoring almost four percentile points above the national average,” Saffee says. “They also scored better than the national group on performing auscultation, palpation, percussion, and special respiratory testing.

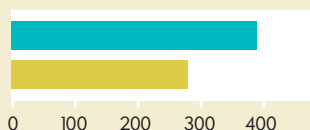
“Our students are amazing,” she adds, “especially when challenged.”

"WE PREPARE GRADUATES TO PLAY A KEY ROLE IN COORDINATING PATIENT CARE AND SUPPORTING HEALTHCARE ACCESS, QUALITY, AND COST CONTAINMENT."

INTERIM NURSING DEPARTMENT
CHAIRPERSON, ELIZABETH
HEYWOOD, PHD, RN

MARIA COLLEGE NURSING PROGRAM ENROLLMENT GROWTH

■ 2014 ■ 2008



PREPARING GRADUATES FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE

Percentage working in nursing or continuing education within one year

Education Level

Practical Nurse Certificate*	94.17%
Associate Degree Nursing*	98.61%
RN-BS**	100%

Survey response rates: *78%, **100%

THE FUTURE OF NURSING: CALLS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Maria stands ready to respond

In New York State and across the nation, there is increasing recognition of the link between higher education and quality nursing care.

In its 2010 report, "The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health," the Institute of Medicine called for 80 percent of U.S. nurses to hold at least a baccalaureate degree by 2020." More recently and closer to home, in June the New York State Assembly overwhelmingly approved legislation—by a vote of 126-8—that would require new nurses to earn a bachelor's degree in nursing within 10 years of becoming a licensed RN. Efforts are continuing in the New York State Senate to pass the legislation.

Maria stands ready to help New York's nurses meet these more rigorous requirements. The College has offered a RN Baccalaureate degree completion program degree since 2010. The curriculum is continually updated to keep pace with the demands of an ever-changing healthcare delivery system.

"We are preparing our graduates to play a key role in coordinating patient care and supporting healthcare access, quality, and cost containment," says Interim Nursing Department Chairperson Elizabeth Heywood, PhD, RN.

She offers these words of advice to nursing students: "Graduates must understand that education is a continuous process. You will learn, unlearn, and relearn for as long as you practice nursing. In many ways, graduation is just the beginning."

Katherine Urban, '06, '14, BSN, RN, has experienced this firsthand. She originally came to Maria to pursue her Associate in Applied Science in Nursing. Six years later, Urban returned and earned her BSN. "I really like Maria's close-knit community and the individualized, supportive learning environment," Urban says. "For me, earning a bachelor's in nursing is an important stepping stone on my educational path and in my career."

Heywood predicts that Urban's decision will become the norm. She expects the next generation of nurses to pursue their BSN degrees and draw on their education to "maintain an environment of quality and safety by knowing what is important, communicating what is pertinent, and doing so in a timely fashion. This is the nexus of quality nursing care," she says.

RN-BS Program Director, Ellen J. Argust, MS, RN, CNOR, agrees and believes that Maria's baccalaureate program provides excellent preparation. "Our students gain extensive knowledge and experience in areas including research, evidence-based practice, and community health," she says. "They strengthen their critical thinking and communication skills—and they become our future nursing leaders."

MARIA NURSING: A HALF-CENTURY OF LEADERSHIP IN NURSING EDUCATION

The early history of nursing at Maria College is the story of two Sisters of Mercy institutions joining forces to transform nursing education while meeting increased demand for nursing professionals in the Capital Region. Through a carefully choreographed—and some would say heroic—effort, the organizations transitioned nursing education from St. Peter’s Hospital to Maria College without missing a beat.

Maria graduated its first class of nurses in 1970, the same year that St. Peter’s awarded its last nursing diplomas. The torch was passed, and Maria College was on its way to becoming a leader in nursing education. “The nursing faculty and the College leadership moved heaven and earth to launch the new program,” recalls Esther McEvoy, MS, RN, a graduate of St. Peter’s Hospital School of Nursing and founding faculty member of Maria’s Department of Nursing. McEvoy retired as Nursing Chairperson in 2003 and remained at the College teaching until 2008.

Circa 1974, Maria nursing student under the supervision of Catherine H. White, Assistant Professor of Nursing.



A Proud History of Mercy and Nursing Service

Sisters of Mercy and other nurses have been on the front lines of care since the mid-19th century. Through their efforts on the battlefield, in hospitals, and in college classrooms, nurses have been instrumental in ensuring that high quality care remains available to those in need.

1832 Cholera

Cholera epidemic in Ireland. Although Sisters of Mercy founder Catherine McAuley fears contagion and death, she rarely leaves the hospital. She and the other Sisters work tirelessly around the clock. After their shifts, the Sisters come home and fall asleep on the stairs, overtaken by exhaustion.¹

1850s Crimean War

Florence Nightingale and Sisters of Mercy nurses work side-by-side, tending to those who fall in combat.²



1860s: Civil War

Nurses minister to the wounded from North and South alike, earning praise from President Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis.³

Post-Civil War

The Sisters prove infinitely resourceful. "Whenever there was a need, the Sisters of Mercy would be called upon to help. When they did not know what to do, they asked, they learned, they developed standards of quality, shared human and financial resources, and developed one of the first Catholic healthcare systems in the United States."⁴

1857

The world's first Mercy hospital opens in Pittsburgh, PA.⁵



FROM HOSPITAL SCHOOL TO AAS PROGRAM

When St. Peter's Hospital decided to close its school of nursing after nearly 70 years, Maria College was the logical choice to take on the responsibility of educating nurses for St. Peter's and other area facilities. At the time, Maria had recently received permission to broaden its mission of serving as a Sister formation college and open its doors to the general public. Equally important, since St. Peter's and Maria trace their roots to Catherine McAuley, founder of the Religious Sisters of Mercy (RSM), both organizations shared an overriding commitment to public service.

Even so, the task was monumental.

"We built a program from scratch that, just five years after it opened, would meet the accreditation standards of the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission," McEvoy says. "We did all of this with no technology and no computers, moving at the pace necessary to keep up with rapidly changing nursing education reforms at the state and national level."

The move from St. Peter's to Maria was part of a national shift away from three-year hospital-based nursing education to AAS degree programs, as advocated by Mildred L. Montag, EdD, RN. She is credited with changing nursing education in America. In her dissertation, "The Education of Nursing Technicians," published in 1951, Montag maintained that two-year college degree

🕒 Esther McEvoy, RN and Sister Gail Waring, '63, RSM, M.Ed., RN, helped to found the Maria nursing program.

1863:

Four Religious Sisters of Mercy (RSM) bring the Mission of Mercy to Rensselaer, NY.

1869:

RSM founds St. Peter's Hospital (SPH), which is financed by a generous donation of \$15,000 from the family of Peter Cagger. The hospital is named for him.⁶



1900:

SPH School of Nursing opens.⁶

1903:

SPH School of Nursing graduates first class of nurses.⁶

1958:

RSM in the Albany Diocese found Maria College.

1966:

SPH School of Nursing and Maria College join forces to create a college-based nursing curriculum. First-year students take courses such as anatomy and physiology.



programs, built on proven principles of technical education, would improve training, reduce costs, and bolster the ranks of nursing throughout the United States. In 1958, with funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Montag launched pilot programs based on her thesis at seven colleges. By 1994, there were 868 nursing degree programs at U.S. community and junior colleges.⁷

Montag played a role in the creation of Maria's program in another way, as well. Once the decision was made to close St. Peter's Hospital School of Nursing, the Sisters of Mercy instructed a young faculty member at St. Peter's to enroll in Montag's program at Teachers College, Columbia University in New York City, in preparation for the Sister's eventual role at Maria.

The faculty member was Gail Waring, '63, RSM, M.Ed, RN. At the time, she was 28 years old and had been teaching at St. Peter's Hospital School of Nursing for two years. Like McEvoy, Waring reported to Kathleen Nolan, RSM, Director of St. Peter's Hospital School of Nursing.

A TEAM EFFORT

Both McEvoy and Waring have high praise for the St. Peter's School of Nursing team, which worked with Maria College to develop a nursing program that integrated liberal arts and science curricula. They referenced Nolan's contributions, experience, and willingness to ease the transition in the new Maria program.

The inaugural class consisted of 39 students, who entered Maria in September 1968.

McEvoy was on hand as an assistant professor, ready to welcome the new students and begin their nursing education. Waring was still at Columbia, finishing up her master's degree.

"My most vivid memory of creating the Maria College nursing program was being sent by the Sisters of Mercy to Teachers College, Columbia University, in 1967," Waring recalls. "I earned an M.Ed in the Teaching and Administration of an Associate Degree Nursing Program, under the advisorship of Mildred L. Montag."

Waring completed the M.Ed program in 1969 and returned to Albany to teach nursing at Maria. She was charged with developing two critical, early courses: Medical-Surgical Nursing I and 2. She was promoted to professor of nursing and left Maria in 1978.

McEvoy's tenure at Maria spanned more than three decades. Among her accomplishments was the creation of an innovative evening, weekend, and day program. The first of its kind in the Capital Region, the program helped students balance the demands of school, work, and home by providing a more flexible schedule for classroom and clinical education.

McEvoy's 38 years at Maria had an indirect impact on generations of patients and residents throughout the Capital Region. The College is also deeply appreciative of the nursing leadership that has followed

McEvoy; Dr. Linda Millenbach, Chairperson from 2003 to spring '14 and Dr. Elizabeth Heywood, who currently serves as Chairperson.

Under their guidance, the Maria program graduated thousands of nurses who shaped the way care is provided in virtually every setting, from hospitals, long-term care facilities, and rehabilitation centers to patient homes, private practices, and school systems. Each Maria nurse has been an ambassador for the College and a reminder of what the Mercy mission can mean to a community. That, above all, has been and will continue to be the legacy of Maria and the former St. Peter's Hospital School of Nursing.

- 1 *The Path of Mercy: The Life of Catherine McAuley*, by Mary C. Sullivan, RSM. The Catholic University Press, Washington, DC, 2012. Pages 106-121
- 2 *The Friendship of Florence Nightingale and Mary Clare Moore*, edited by Mary C. Sullivan, RSM. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, PA, 1999. Pages 5-15
- 3 *Angels of Mercy: An Eyewitness Account of Civil War and Yellow Fever*, by Mary Paulinus Oakes, RSM. Cathedral Foundation Press, Baltimore, MD, 1998. Pages xii-xiii and 69-70
- 4 *Beyond Measure: A Legacy of Mercy*, by Elizabeth Mary Burn, RSM. Gold Leaf Press, Detroit, MI, 2009. Pages xi and 1
- 5 *Mercy Quick Facts*, www.mercy.net/newsroom-mercy-quick-facts
- 6 <http://www.sphcs.org/ourhistory>
- 7 <http://www.tc.columbia.edu/news.htm?articleID=4717>

1968:

Maria announces NYS approval of the College's AAS in nursing degree program. SPH announces the closure of its School of Nursing.

1970:

Maria College awards first AAS in nursing degrees in May. SPH holds last School of Nursing graduation; school closes on June 14.

1973:

National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission accredits Maria AAS degree program.



1979:

Maria offers evening option for AAS nursing students.

2005:

Maria adds LPN Certificate Program.

2010:

Maria launches RN Baccalaureate degree completion program.







IRELAND EXPERIENCE

INAUGURAL STUDY ABROAD TRIP EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS



Twenty-one students, faculty, and friends of Maria immersed themselves in the history and culture of the Emerald Isle this summer during the College's first study abroad program. The trip was so successful that Maria is offering a second study abroad opportunity—this time, to Italy—in August.



▲ LEFT TO RIGHT: Fireplace in the Kylemore Abbey; Margaret Henry's Memorial made in his wife's memory after her tragic passing (exterior and interior views).



▲ Tabernacle decorated with the dowry jewels.

► Maria group with Carita Irwin, RSM in front of the Mercy International Centre and Catherine McAuley's statue.

DUBLIN TOURISM
 CATHERINE McAULEY
 WOMAN OF MERCY
 BUILT THIS HOUSE
 AND LIVED HERE
 1827 - 1841



▲ LEFT TO RIGHT: A walking tour in Waterford with Jack Burtchaeil, Guide, describing the history of the Vikings in this city's port of entry; a bridge in Galway City.



▲ LEFT TO RIGHT: Bowl from "The Americas" used in 1994 re-dedication ceremony; Memorial Chapel containing Catherine McAuley's grave; Stephanie Hutchins and Charlene Busman (faculty chaperone).

The trips are offered in conjunction with a three-credit world culture course that provides students with firsthand knowledge of a country or region's architecture, art and literature, geography, history, customs, traditions, and political system. The course includes pre-trip planning and lectures, travel itinerary, trip journals, study and research, and post-trip assignments. Other members of the Maria community, including alumni, faculty, and friends and family of students, are invited but do not receive the course credits. The Ireland trip included eight students, two faculty members, three alumni, six family members of students, and two friends of students.

The study abroad opportunities are in keeping with Maria's new status as a four-year baccalaureate institution that prepares students for today's global community.

"Study abroad programs increase our students' cultural competence and encourage them to be global citizens," says Assistant Professor Stephanie Hutchins, PhD, who

developed the course and serves as faculty advisor for the trip. "Now that we are a four-year college, we need to offer our students the same opportunities they would find at other four-year institutions."

TRACING MARIA'S ROOTS

Hutchins chose Ireland for the first international excursion after traveling to Dublin last year and visiting Mercy International Centre. Also known as Catherine's House, the Centre is the first House of Mercy built by Sisters of Mercy founder Catherine McAuley to meet the needs of the poor in Dublin. Today, Sisters of Mercy are in over 40 countries, continuing McAuley's work around the world. Maria is one of 17 U.S. colleges and universities that trace their heritage to McAuley and are sponsored by the Conference for Mercy Higher Education.

"Visiting the Mercy International Centre definitely made me feel even more committed to living a merciful life



▲ LEFT TO RIGHT: Trinity College: the “long room”, a beautiful wood construction with “mile high” books on all sides; artwork depicting The Book of Kells; outside Ireland’s premiere university in Dublin.



▲ Connemara Marble Factory tour with the proprietor showing the Maria group various cut samples with their unique and brilliant colors.

“VISITING THE MERCY INTERNATIONAL CENTRE DEFINITELY MADE ME FEEL EVEN MORE COMMITTED TO LIVING A MERCIFUL LIFE BECAUSE CATHERINE MCAULEY’S WORK CONTINUES WITH EACH INDIVIDUAL WHO CHOOSES TO CARRY ON HER TEACHINGS.”

NICOLE FLETCHER, A STUDENT IN THE WORLD CULTURES COURSE



▲ LEFT TO RIGHT: The Dingle Peninsula in Kerry where the group enjoyed the beach and spectacular scenery including the opal blue Atlantic coastline; replica ship in Waterford, city founded by the Vikings.

because Catherine McAuley's work continues with each individual who chooses to carry on her teachings," says Nicole Fletcher, a student in the Maria World Cultures course.

The Maria travelers spent two days in Dublin. In addition to touring the Mercy International Centre, they visited Trinity College to view the Book of Kells, a beautiful depiction of the four Gospels, believed to have been written in the early ninth century. Other Dublin destinations included the Guinness Storehouse, the Famine Memorial, and Saint Patrick's Cathedral.

From Dublin, the travelers headed south to Kilkenny and Waterford. They then journeyed along the coast, through Dungarvan and Youghal, to the Heritage Centre in Cobh for a history lesson on Irish emigration. In the little village of Blarney, the group kissed the Blarney Stone and toured the Blarney Woollen Mills. Later in the trip, they visited the Dingle Peninsula and Killimer in County Clare, explored the magnificent Cliffs of Moher, and toured Rathbaun Farm in County Galway. The final days included visits to the Connemara Marble Factory and Kylemore Abbey, where Benedictine nuns remain in residence.

"The World Cultures course had covered all of the places that we would be visiting and the significance of those places," Fletcher says. "When we arrived at certain landmarks, I knew exactly what I was looking at. The course gave me a base of knowledge to build upon while abroad, and that allowed me to have a more valuable experience."

She acknowledges that "I knew so little about Ireland prior to taking the Dr. Hutchins' class." The course and trip "satisfied my initial curiosity about Ireland's history and inspired me to want to learn more," she adds.

Over the course of eight days and seven nights, Fletcher and her fellow Maria travelers gained a better understanding of Ireland's geographic diversity and often tragic history. They traced Maria's roots, saw amazing sights, and experienced both rural and urban Ireland. That's exactly what Hutchins intended when she developed the trip itinerary.

"I wanted the trip to provide the greatest educational opportunity possible," she says. "Therefore, destinations were chosen for the value that would be taken away from the experience."

COMING SUMMER 2015: AN ITALIAN ADVENTURE

Hutchins plans a similarly educational experience for the 2015 world culture trip, which will be an excursion to Italy August 9-17. The destination reflects input from the Maria community. In surveys conducted during information sessions about the Ireland trip, Italy was most frequently mentioned as the preferred next destination.

Since Maria is a Roman Catholic institution, Hutchins considers Italy to be a fitting choice, especially given that the itinerary includes Rome and Vatican City. Travelers will also visit Assisi, Florence, Pisa, Pompeii, Siena, Sorrento, and Venice. Highlights will include the Vatican Museums, Sistine Chapel, and St. Peter's Basilica in Rome; Palazzo Vecchio, Piazza della Signoria, Basilica di Santa Maria del Fiore, Giotto's Campanile, and Galleria dell'Accademia in Florence; and Piazza dei Miracoli and the Leaning Tower in Pisa.

As she did with members of the 2014 World Cultures class, Hutchins will lay the foundation for students ahead of time by providing historical and cultural information, as well as invaluable insights about the different perspectives, values, and customs that travelers encounter while abroad. Throughout the trip, she will make connections between the coursework and real-world experiences.

For more information about World Cultures (CUL 201/HUM 201) or the trip to Italy, contact Dr. Hutchins at hutchinss@mariacollege.edu. To see more photos of the Maria Ireland Study Abroad trip: godslopephotography.wordpress.com



2014 COMMENCEMENT

52ND CELEBRATION IN MARIA'S HISTORY

The celebration began Thursday, May 15, with the nursing program's traditional White Tea Ceremony. A commencement mass and the first annual graduation dinner followed on Friday, May 16. The pièce de résistance—the 2014 Commencement Ceremony—was held Sunday, May 18, in the Empire State Plaza Convention Center in Albany.



5.15.2014

WHITE TEA

Approximately 100 AAS graduates received their nursing pins and recited the International Council of Nurses' Pledge May 15, during the candlelight White Tea Ceremony. Speakers included Elizabeth Heywood, PhD, RN, Interim Nursing Chair; John Kowal, PhD, Vice President for Academic Affairs; and four nursing graduates—Lorie Jablonski, Deb Vanderbilt, Lynette Williams, and Jessica Lescarbeau—whose remarks prompted tears and laughter.





5.16.2014

SENIOR DINNER

The Class of 2014, friends, and family dined in elegance May 16, following the commencement mass. Graduates wrote down their dreams and aspirations. The notes will be buried in a time capsule, which will be unearthed and opened during the class's 25th reunion in 2039. A photo booth delighted guests and captured the spontaneity and excitement of this inaugural event.





5.17.2014
COMMENCEMENT



For the 38th year, Bishop Emeritus Howard J. Hubbard, DD, presided over Maria's commencement. He was honored by Frederic M. Stuzman, Chair, Maria Board of Trustees, who bestowed upon Bishop Hubbard an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters. President Lea Johnson, EdD, congratulated the more than 200 graduates and encouraged them to live out the Maria ideal of "service to others."



CLASS NOTES

1974

Susan (Frank) Lahue recently began a new position as an education specialist in the Department of Learning and Development at Albany Medical Center. Previously, she was a faculty member for 25 years in the Nursing Department at Maria. Susan has one daughter, Sarah, who lives in Queens, NY, and has a master's degree in American literature and film studies. She teaches online courses in those subjects for Ashford University, while pursuing her love of theater. Sarah has credits for stage managing *off, off Broadway* productions and hopes to soon obtain her Equity Card. Susan looks forward to crossing things off her bucket list, starting with a trip to Ireland and England.

1975

Mary C. Dytko Foley, RN, has worked as an RN for 32 years. Currently, she is a cardiac rehabilitation coordinator at Ochsner Hospital in New Orleans, LA. Mary has been ANCC board certified as a nurse executive since 2009 and is taking certification courses in diabetes education. She earned an AAS in nutrition from Maria in 1975, an ASN from Louisiana State University (LSU) School of Nursing in New Orleans in 1982, a BSN from Loyola University in New Orleans in 1997, and an MSN from Loyola in 2006. Her 28-year-old son followed in her footsteps, becoming an RN and earning his MSN. He is a nursing instructor at LSU School of Nursing. Her husband is retired from the Navy and works for the Army Corps of Engineers in New Orleans.

1976

Elizabeth Bouchard, is responsible for the beautiful new curio cabinet in the Maria College Library reference room. She received the New York Library Association Excellence in Library Innovation Award for 2012 and donated the honorarium to Maria so the College would have a place to display items from its archives and special collection. Elizabeth earned an AA in liberal arts from Maria, a BA in English from Siena

College in Loudonville, NY, and an MLS from the University at Albany. She has worked as a librarian in the Capital Region for nearly 30 years. Currently, she is the catalog librarian at Bethlehem Public Library and a part-time librarian at Maria.

1982

Linda Boomer, RN, who earned her AAS in nursing, is now 72 and living in Florida. Even so, she continues to renew her NYS RN license.

Cassandra Dunbar passed the credentialing exam in health information technology in November 2012 and is now a registered health information technologist (RHIT). At Maria, she earned her medical secretary certificate.

1983

Tina. M. (Young) Wensley earned her AAS in management and works at Alexander W. Cruden & Co, Certified Public Accountants in Albany. She is pursuing her bachelor's in management at Empire State College and expects to graduate in June 2015.

1993

Louis VanZutphen, RN, retired from a nurse manager position and now works per diem at Capital District Psychiatric Center in Albany.

2001

David Alan Curry, in paralegal, is now retired. He is a licensed notary and twice-published author.

Jenene (Ellis) Pabon, has been working at Barnwell Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Valatie, NY, for 10 years. Most of her co-workers also are Maria alumni, employed with Barnwell for 10 years or more. Jenene also works per diem at Good Samaritan Village in Delmar, NY.

2002

Jean Marotta, RN, is a pre-admission testing nurse at St. Peter's Hospital in Albany,

clearing patients for anesthesia. She enrolled in Maria's AAS program in 1998, after witnessing the birth of her granddaughter—and at the urging of the nurse who assisted with the labor and delivery. After graduation, Jean's first nursing experience was in labor and delivery; her preceptor was the very nurse who encouraged Jean to enroll in nursing school. "Full circle. I loved it." Jean is married with three children and four grandchildren. The author of *Momma Jean's Kitchen Cookbook*, she held a book signing at The Book House at Stuyvesant Plaza in Albany and taught a Lunch and Learn cooking class at the Price Chopper Market Bistro Cooking School. She remains in touch with Sister Jean, "a dear friend and wonderful source of encouragement and support during my tenure at Maria."

2004

Sandra (Foss) Sankowski, RN, earned her AAS from Maria on the 10th anniversary of her graduation from LPN school. "Going back to college was the best decision that I could have made to further my nursing career." Sandra now works in ambulatory surgery at Ellis Health Center in Schenectady, NY, where she spends most of her day in the Post Anesthesia Care Unit. "I simply love my job."

William Whalen RN, works at the National Institutes of Health / National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease Vaccine Research Center. Currently, he is conducting phase 1 vaccine clinical trials for malaria, Ebola, chikungunya, H7N9, HIV, and human monoclonal antibodies.

2005

Laura K. Fay, received an AAS degree in occupational therapy from Maria and, after working for several years in a sub-acute long-term care facility, earned an MS from Utica College. Now, at Ellis Medicine in Schenectady, NY, she once again works with sub-acute, long-term care residents. Laura loves having students and teaching them about the profession. She is looking

into becoming a certified field work educator, certified aging-in-place specialist, and adjunct professor. Laura devotes her spare time to photography, especially photos of landscapes and nature.

2006

Katherine Urban, RN earned both of her nursing degrees from Maria: an AAS in 2006 and her BSN in 2014. Now, she is enrolled in Stony Brook School of Nursing's online Neonatal Nurse Practitioner Program. Katherine has worked in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Albany Medical Center since becoming an RN in 2006. "I have a rewarding, but challenging job, which I love."

2007

Paul Busman, RN, is an OR circulating nurse for St. Peter's Health Partners at St. Mary's Hospital in Troy, NY. His wife, **Charlene Busman**, is now a member of the Maria nursing faculty.

2008

Jennifer Navarette, RN, spent six years as a critical care nurse and helped develop a congestive heart failure clinical pathway for nurses and patients at Ellis Medicine in Schenectady, NY. She left Ellis this summer after the birth of triplets Wesley, Estelle, and Zachariah. Jennifer now lives with her family in the Catskills and works as a visiting nurse for Basset Healthcare Network in Delaware County. Once the babies start kindergarten, she plans to continue her education and become a nurse practitioner.

Jami Passaretti graduated from Maria's LPN and AAS in nursing programs and works in the Albany Day Habilitation Program of Warren, Washington & Albany Counties Chapter of NYSARC.

2009

Grace Coons, RN, is nursing supervisor at Teresian House, a 302 bed nursing home facility, in Albany. She has devoted most of her nursing career to providing women's health and infertility services. Grace



Triplets of Jennifer Navarette '09



William Whalen '04



CAN YOU IDENTIFY THESE STUDENTS?

Maria College librarians would like your help in identifying the students in the archived photo above. The picture, of a physical therapy (PT) class, dates back to the 1970s. The instructor is Anne Lawlor, RSM, who founded the Maria PT program. Please send the names of students to Elizabeth Bouchard, '76, at boucharde@mariacollege.edu. A reminder, too, that alumni are welcome to use the Maria Library. Hours are posted on the website.

Sherisa Moore, RN, recently was promoted to nurse case manager II at WellPoint in Albany. Previously she worked in Albany Medical Center's Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Sherisa graduated with honors in 2012 from Kaplan University's BSN program. Now, she is a member of the class of 2016, enrolled in the Family Nurse Practitioner MS Program at SUNY Polytechnic (formerly SUNYIT) in Utica, NY.

Jennifer A. Stratman, RN, serves as a preceptor in the Post Anesthesia Care Unit at Albany Medical Center. She has had a fascinating, varied career, including positions as a hospital corpsman in the Navy and a clinical research coordinator at the University of San Diego, CA. She holds master's degrees in forensic science and health science, and has a Doctor of Health Sciences from A. T. Still University Arizona School of Health Sciences.

2012

Catherine "Kate" Brennan, works for Advanced Therapy Service in Albany, helping school-age patients.

Mariah Yoworsk, COTA, works per diem for St. Joseph's Nursing Home in Utica, NY, while pursuing her MS in occupational therapy full time at Utica College. She will complete her last Level 1 placement in December, at Tampa General Hospital in Florida.

2014

Mehreena Ahmad, Paralegal Certificate Program, recently was promoted to procurement clerk at Capital Region BOCES in Albany. Along with 20 other travelers to Ireland, Mehreena made Maria history this summer by participating in the College's first study abroad program. "And boy, was it fun!"

Cindy M Beaulac, is a per diem certified occupational therapy assistant for Capital Living and Rehabilitation Centres in Schenectady, NY. "Every day is an opportunity to learn something new and meet amazing individuals."

Rachelle Cotugno, Bereavement Studies, was honored by St. Mary's Institute in Amsterdam, NY, for her 25 years of teaching. She has recorded and produced four record albums and performs at St. Mary's Church services and events throughout the region. "My greatest blessing is my Guiding Eyes dog, Oriole."

Monica Hill, RN, is working for Community Hospice and is the first newly licensed RN to be hired there.

Lorie Jablonski, RN, works in labor and delivery at Ellis Medicine's Bellevue Women's Center in Schenectady, NY. Lorie was hired full time before graduating. "I was well-prepared for my boards and couldn't have had a better experience."

Alyssa Leonardo, passed her boards on the first try, just three months after graduation. A week later, she began her job at Hudson Park Rehabilitation and Nursing Center in Albany. Alyssa hopes to pursue her master's in Occupational Therapy from Utica College, starting weekends.

continues to advance her education and is enrolled in the Family Nurse Practitioner MS Program at SUNY Polytechnic (formerly SUNYIT) in Utica, NY.

David Faas, RN, has been promoted to RN Clinical Supervisor at Maxim Healthcare Services of Albany, where he has worked as a visiting nurse for the past four years.

Jason Rosenberry is a member of the senior team for TaxMatrix, serving as director for New York. Since graduating with an AAS in accounting, he has gotten married, bought a house, and started a family. His first child was born in October 2013.

Elizabeth Tuttle, RN, works for St. Peter's Health Partners in St. Mary's Hospital in Troy, NY. She is a detox/rehabilitation nurse, has earned her national certification in homeopathy, and is a member of the Homeopathic Nurses Association.

2010

Ronnel Cervantes, RN, works in Loma Linda University Medical Center-Murrieta, CA, in the MS Telemetry/Cardiac Progressive Care Unit. Ronnel has completed PCCN training; has worked as a psychiatric nurse, skilled nursing facility nurse, and adult day health care nurse; and hopes to pursue an MSN.

Suzanne Desnoyers, RN, is director of nursing at Wingate Health Care in West Springfield, MA. She earned her BSN from Grand Canyon University, AZ.

Robert J. Garofallou-Hogan is assistant registrar for transfer articulation at The College of Saint Rose in Albany, where he has completed over 75 transfer agreements to build strong relationships with community colleges nationwide and abroad. He also is pursuing a graduate degree in higher education leadership and administration, from Saint Rose.

FACULTY PROFILE



David Hoffman, M.Ed: Shaping U.S. Health Policy and Education at Maria

FOR TWO DECADES, Maria students have benefited from the insight and expertise of adjunct Professor David Hoffman, M.Ed, one of the nation's leading health policy experts.

Hoffman has more than 25 years of experience in public health management and advocacy, chronic disease prevention and control, bioethics, and clinical ethics. Currently he is director of the Bureau of Community Integration and Alzheimer's Disease, Office of Health Insurance Programs for the New York State Department of Health. Hoffman also serves on numerous state and national advisory panels. He is a clinical associate professor in the Health Policy, Management, and Behavior Department at the University at Albany's School of Public Health.

At Maria, Hoffman teaches two classes that tackle some of today's complex health issues: Health Care Ethics and Medical Sociology, which Hoffman developed specifically for Maria.

"This is an exciting time to be part of this institution as we grow and evolve," Hoffman says. "With an aging population and growing need for competent professionals in healthcare, Maria College is perfectly situated to address the needs of our society with high quality programs in nursing, psychology, and occupational therapy, and the newly approved major in healthcare management."

Amanda Benacquisto, RN, '13 is pursuing her bachelor's degree in nursing at Maria and has

taken Hoffman's Medical Sociology course. "The class often discusses the issues and concerns that we face during our day-to-day work as nurses," she says. "His classes have completely changed the way I view the news and current events. Now, I am able to look at them from a sociological and ethical perspective."

Hoffman is a member of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) National Advisory Council on Alzheimer's Research, Care, and Services; the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Healthy Aging program's expert panel on cognitive impairment; the New York State Geriatric Mental Health Planning Council; and the American Society for Bioethics and Humanities, Sub-Committee on Public Health Ethics. He chairs the Legislative and Policy Committee for the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors, and is a peer reviewer for HHS and CDC journals.

Hoffman also is a frequent presenter on health care policy and ethics. His article on "Alzheimer's Disease Legislation and Policy—Now and in the Future" is featured in the April 2014 issue of *Health Affairs*, the leading journal on health policy thought and research. A graduate of the University of New Haven, Hoffman holds a Master of Education from Springfield College and a Certificate of Clinical Ethics from the Alden March Bioethics Institute at Albany Medical College.

HEOP GRANT OPENS DOORS FOR MARIA STUDENTS



MARIA COLLEGE has been awarded an Arthur O. Eve Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) grant to help make a college education possible for students who are economically and academically disadvantaged. Already, 15 students are benefiting from the program, receiving a combination of financial aid and academic support.

Maria is one of approximately 50 private institutions statewide to be selected for the current grant period, which runs from 2014-2019. During that time, the College expects to expand the program to support 35 students.

"We have already exceeded our expectations for student participation for fall 2014," says Thomas D. Iwankow, Dean of Enrollment Management, "and we look forward to steady growth over the next five years."

HEOP is a partnership between the New York State Education Department (NYSED) and participating institutions. The program is named for former New York State Assemblyman Arthur O. Eve, who is credited with expanding educational opportunity programs to private, nonprofit New York colleges and universities. HEOP grants are awarded by NYSED, and participating organizations provide matching funds to support their students.

"We are proud to partner with New York State to meet the needs of underserved students, and we are confident that our shared commitment will open new doors for first-time college students who apply to Maria," says Lea A. Johnson, Maria President.

Since its inception in 1969, HEOP has helped more than 36,000 New Yorkers earn college degrees. According to NYSED, the graduate rate for HEOP students is 6.5 percent higher than the graduation rate for college students nationwide.

Central to the program's success is its emphasis on reaching out to students the summer before their first semester and remaining engaged with them throughout their college years. This August, for example, Maria HEOP students attended a pre-freshman program designed to familiarize them with the opportunities and expectations at Maria, acquaint them with their peers, and set the stage for a successful college experience. Students attended information technology, math, reading, and writing classes and took a tour of Albany. In addition, students worked on a group project, received tutoring and counseling, and honed their study and test preparation skills. During a fall semester course, students build on the foundation laid during the summer, continuing to strengthen their study skills and participating in cultural and social activities that cement their connection to the campus community.

Nicholas Bouck, '16, of Schenectady, NY, considers himself "very fortunate to part of HEOP at Maria. The program is greatly helping me financially," he says, "but even more important, I would argue that the program has also helped prepare me for college. Along with learning vital techniques for success, I've met several other students, and we've already begun helping each other with homework and various projects. Hopefully, this is a great sign of things to come."

Bouck believes in the promise of HEOP and intends to use the program "as the foundation upon which to build a very successful college career." A liberal arts major, Bouck hopes to pursue a career in filmmaking or production. He chose Maria for its small class sizes and sense of community, and is the second member of his family to attend the College. His mother,

Sandra Bouck, '85, earned her Maria degree in early childhood education.

Program director for HEOP at Maria is Kelli Johnson. Johnson brings extensive experience in student mentoring and HEOP program management. She comes to Maria from Union College in Schenectady, where she served for over five years as assistant director of HEOP and the Academic Opportunity Program. Prior to that, Johnson served as a counselor and interim director for Upward Bound, a federally funded pre-college program at the University of Arkansas at Monticello.

At Maria, Johnson relishes the opportunity to "build a program from the ground up. It's exciting and gratifying to be part of an organization, like Maria, that is committed to investing in this program and in student success," she says. "I love being able to shape, mold, and promote the program—and to support students and help them realize their dream of a college education."

She believes that Maria's smaller size and emphasis on personal attention make the College a good fit for HEOP students. "Maria's intimacy is certainly an advantage," Johnson says. "It allows the students to have close relations with both faculty and staff. It also allows me to reach out and ask for help on behalf of the program students."

HEOP students are selected during the admission process. To be eligible, students must be full time (taking 12 or more credits) and must meet strict state income and academic eligibility requirements. Students who meet those criteria are then invited for one-on-one interviews. More information about HEOP is available from the Maria Admissions Department at 518-861-2517 or admissions@mariacollege.edu.

ALUMNA PROFILE

Mary Picerno, RN, '81, '83: Maria Education Lays Foundation for 'Dream Job'

FOUR MONTHS after she was named to the top nursing position at Cigna, Mary Picerno, RN, '81, '83, was back at her alma mater, encouraging Maria students to follow her example and pursue their dreams.

Picerno was a panelist during an August presentation for students participating in Maria's new Higher Education Opportunity Program. She shared the story of her more than 30-year journey from two-time Maria graduate to chief nursing officer (CNO) at Cigna, where she is responsible for 2,000 nurses and other health professionals. Picerno was appointed to what she describes as her "dream job" in April.

She came to Maria College while a student at nearby Mercy High School, taking advantage of a program that allowed Mercy seniors to attend classes at Maria for college credit. When it was time to decide on a college, Maria was her top choice, and Picerno enrolled as a business



major. A cooperative work experience during her second and final year changed her perspective—and her career path.

The co-op assignment was in an Albany doctor's office, where she was to shadow the office manager and learn the business of maintaining a private practice. A nurse called in sick, and Picerno was asked to assist with lower level patient care duties. From that moment, she felt the pull of nursing.

Picerno graduated with an AAS in business in 1981 and became a medical assistant at Albany Medical College's Family Practice Clinic. While helping physicians and residents prepare for case discussions and medical reviews, Picerno again was drawn to health-care. This time, she heeded her inner voice and enrolled in the evening nursing program at Maria College. For two years, she pursued her nursing degree full-time at night and worked

as a medical assistant, also full-time, during the day. In 1983, she graduated with her second Maria degree, an AAS in nursing.

Picerno worked as a registered nurse in a variety of settings, from a hospital-based clinic and large full-service family practice to the spinal trauma unit and neurosurgery floor at a major medical center. Then, in November 1985, she had an opportunity to tap her clinical, financial, and operational expertise as staff vice president at Empire BlueCross BlueShield/Wellpoint.

Now, as CNO at Cigna, once again Picerno is drawing on her leadership skills and clinical nursing experience—this time, to improve care and value for Cigna customers worldwide. "Making a difference in the lives of people who need help has been the driving force behind my entire career," she says.

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Maria College Bookstore

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DAYS

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FACULTY,
STAFF, ALUMNI,
FAMILY AND
FRIENDS ARE
WELCOME**

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT: DR. STEPHANIE M. HUTCHINS hutchinss@mariacollege.edu phone: 518.861.2503