

EXPANDING
OUR BACHELOR'S
PROGRAMS *p. 12*



MARIA COLLEGE ALUMNI MAGAZINE

maria

BUILDING ON OUR CORE STRENGTHS

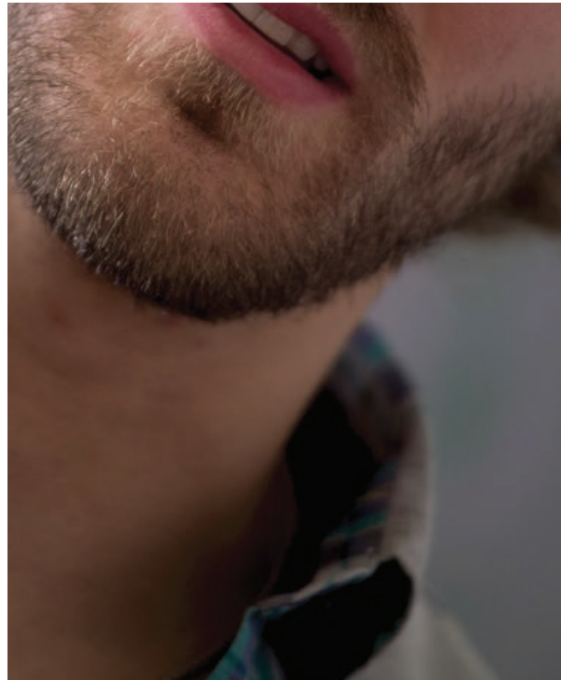
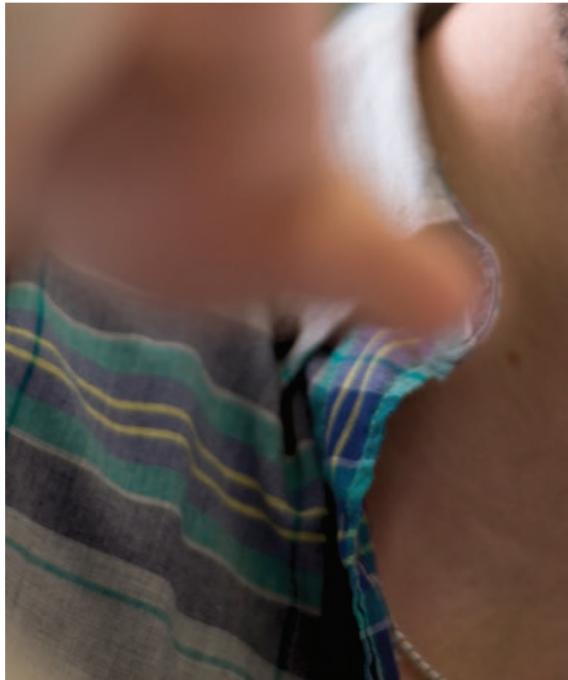
MARIA
MAGAZINE
WINTER 16




ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

40-YEAR ANNIVERSARY
OF OTA PROGRAM
p. 10

NEW PROGRAM
FOR STUDENT SUCCESS
p. 24





A woman with short brown hair, wearing a brown sweater, is leaning over a dark, reflective table. She is looking down at a virtual anatomical model of a human leg, which is displayed in a purple and white color scheme. The model shows the muscles, bones, and joints of the leg. The table is part of an Anatomage system, as indicated by the word "Anatomage" visible on the table's edge. Other people are partially visible around the table, suggesting a classroom or laboratory setting.

MARIA CONTINUES ITS LONG HISTORY OF LEADERSHIP IN THE AREAS OF NURSING AND OTA EDUCATION BY BEING THE FIRST IN THE REGION TO OFFER VIRTUAL DISSECTION TECHNOLOGY TO STUDENTS WITH ANATOMAGE TABLES.

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FROM THE
**BOARD OF
TRUSTEES**

DEAR ALUMNI, Friends, and Colleagues,

On January 15, 2016, before the spring semester started, Maria's Board of Trustees accepted Dr. Lea Johnson's resignation. She was sworn in as Maria's fourth president in 2012 and felt that it was time for new leadership to take Maria College to the next level of excellence.

In keeping with common practice, the Maria Executive Committee voted unanimously for me, the Chair of the Board of Trustees, to assume the responsibilities of *Transitional Leader*. To learn more about me, please visit www.mariacollege.edu/meet-leadership. A committee composed of representatives from faculty, staff, Board of Trustees, the Religious Sisters of Mercy (RSM) who sponsor the College, and the Maria student body is being formed for the interim (temporary) president search. After the interim post is filled, the search for the permanent president will begin.

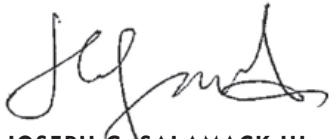
Our future has never been brighter. The college's foundress, Reverend Mother Mary Borromeo Warren, RSM, is probably smiling down at us at what Maria has accomplished since 1958. We are building on Maria's core strengths and creating new pathways for students and alumni. In addition to enrolling students in the four newest bachelor's degrees—psychology, health and occupational sciences, health care management and liberal arts—we are also proposing degree programs, such as the accelerated BSN degree for those with bachelor's degrees in other areas.

Maria College is committed to academic excellence and we have steadfast faith as our alumni continue to be catalysts for positive change in the world. Our vision as set forth in the strategic plan, *Embracing Our Potential*, is to provide quality education at an affordable price while preparing students for meaningful careers of leadership and service in our global society.

Please consider helping us continue the Maria momentum and transformation by joining our annual fund campaign. A gift envelope is enclosed for your convenience. Your contributions will help us serve an increased number of first-generation college students and improve and expand our technology, labs and infrastructure. We've made tremendous strides, such as the renovations of the two lecture classrooms in Marian Hall and the Main Building, but we have a long way to go.

Our students and alumni possess the values of our Mercy heritage which embraces integrity, service, respect for others, compassion, and community. We all care deeply about the success of Maria. With your continued support and dialogue, we will stay committed and focused on Maria's core values and mission of educating students for lives of leadership and service.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees,



JOSEPH G. SALAMACK III
CHAIR, MARIA BOARD OF TRUSTEES
TRANSITIONAL LEADER
EMAIL: TRANSITION@MARIACOLLEGE.EDU
PHONE: 518.861.2514



FROM THE
EDITOR

AS MARIA CONTINUES the transition to a four-year institution, we hope you share our excitement about recent changes and benefits. The new, stronger Maria builds on our proud tradition as a Mercy college, committed to graduating students who are prepared for lives that are enriched by service to others. Our alumni are central to this tradition and to our continued success. Our hope is that your connection with Maria will grow stronger every year—that you will serve as a resource to students and that you will take advantage of all Maria has to offer.

In this issue, we introduce new staff and faculty (page 9) and extend best wishes to Barbara Palumbo and Sister Rose Hobbs on their retirement. We'd like to publish your memories of these beloved staff members in the next *Maria Magazine*, so please send recollections to communications@mariacollege.edu.

Our main feature (pages 12-17) showcases the bachelor's degree programs that have been added since Maria received state approval to become a baccalaureate institution. In response to the needs of our students and the Capital Region, all of our four-year degrees are in high-demand majors. The new degrees also provide a seamless path to advancement for associate degree students who wish to continue their education.

Now in its second year, our Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP) already is making the dream of higher education possible for 15 students. On page 35, we highlight Sein Than, whose journey has taken him from Burma to a refugee camp in Thailand to Idaho and, now, to Maria.

Can you believe that Maria's Occupational Therapy Assistant program is 40 years old? We celebrated this milestone with a dinner in October and will include photos in the next issue. The dinner was one of the first events organized by Helen Adams-Keane, Director of Development and Alumni Engagement (page 29), who is thrilled to be putting her expertise to work for us. Helen has big plans for the College's future. To make sure you don't miss anything, check our new alumni calendar frequently. Go to www.maria.edu, click on Alumni & Friends and then Alumni Events.

Finally, I remind you of the many ways to stay connected to Maria: on Facebook ([mariacollegealbany](https://www.facebook.com/mariacollegealbany)), Twitter ([@mariacollege](https://twitter.com/mariacollege)), and our website (www.mariacollege.edu/alumni-friends). Please feel free to send feedback and tell us what you'd like to see in future issues of *Maria Magazine*.



BETH WALES
EDITOR



LETTERS

FALL 2014 MAGAZINE



Thank you for my copy of your fall '14 alumni magazine. I want to say how excellent I think it is. The graphics, the layout, the content, the photos are all great. The balanced attention

to past and future is also just right. You have projected a dynamic and forward-thinking institution. Congratulations and thanks!

—Sister Martha, RSM

SUBMIT A LETTER

Maria Magazine welcomes letters about articles or items published in recent issues. Please submit your letters to Beth Wales, Editor at bwales@mariacollege.edu or Maria College, *Maria Magazine*, attn: Beth Wales, editor, 700 New Scotland Avenue, Albany, NY 12208.

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NEW BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE:

Liberal Arts

This four year bachelor's degree program is designed to provide a unique perspective of the world and prepare graduates for their role as global citizens. You will be challenged to learn and think about ideas and beliefs that have shaped civilizations through the expression of art, language, mathematics and communication.

Students will select one of the following concentrations, which will provide a rich and useful education for career entry or continued study at the graduate level:

Communication Studies

Professional Writing
Technical and Professional Communication
Introduction to Organizational Communication
Strategic Communication
Social Media: Theory and Practice
Internship in Communication Studies
Capstone in Communication Studies

Government Studies

Advanced Composition
The American Political System
International Relations
Constitutional Law
Research Methods
Internship in Government Studies
Capstone in Government Studies

Learn more about this program and enrollment next steps; be equipped with the knowledge and competitive edge to succeed in today's global economy and be job ready when you graduate.

MARIA
COLLEGE

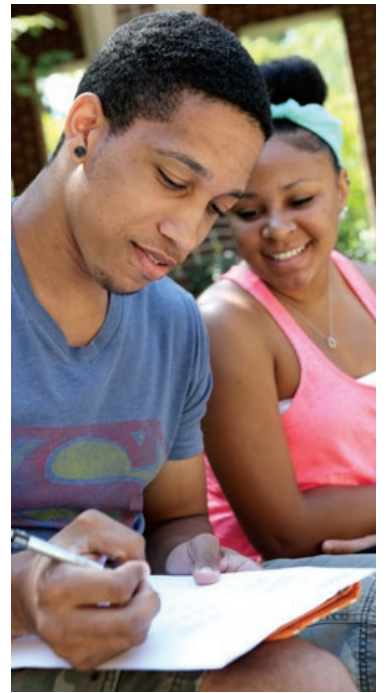
For information contact:
The Office of Admission
700 New Scotland Ave., Albany, NY 12208
518.861.2517 | admissions@mariacollege.edu

IN BRIEF

Strong Start for First SGA at Maria

Faculty, staff, and students began laying the foundation last spring for Maria's first Student Government Association (SGA). Students cast ballots and elected President Ron Dyess, Vice President Emily Mansfield, Treasurer Meghan Hayes, Secretary Maureen Simmons, and Social Media Manager Mary Beth O'Connell. SGA participated in the fall 2015 student picnic hosted by Maria Student Services, complete with free food and ice cream and some friendly competition: a staff vs. students volleyball game.

Top left: SGA President Ron Dyess with Board of Trustees Chair Joseph Salamack III and Dr. Lea Johnson.



Graduate Fair: Passport to Commencement

Soon-to-be grads turned out in force for our Graduate Fair, a daylong event that made it easy and enjoyable to take care of commencement details. Each student was given a "passport" to help guide them through the process. Passports were stamped at each stop—check-in, graduation information, Registrar's Office, caps and gowns, and fun activities. More than 100 students had all boxes stamped and, therefore, were entered in a drawing for Yankee tickets and other prizes.



Brandon Molloy: In the Vanguard

NURSING STUDENT Brandon Molloy '15 was one of eight students honored statewide with a Vanguard award for pursuing a career considered non-traditional for his gender. The award is administered by the New York State Nontraditional Employment & Training (NET) Program, which promotes gender-neutral educational strategies and practices.

Molloy chose a career in nursing because, "Growing up, I always wanted to help people in any way and to assist them through rough times in their lives." At age 18, he began working as a patient care associate at Albany Medical Center and soon realized he'd found his



passion. He completed the practical nursing certificate (LPN) program at Maria and, while working on the cardio-pulmonary unit at Sunnyview Rehabilitation Hospital in Schenectady, continued to pursue his AAS in nursing.

He acknowledges that he's faced obstacles and prejudice as a male in a female-dominated field. His approach has been to educate those who question his choice. "I simply explain to them what the career entails," Molloy says. "It's about taking care of people, and the gender of the caregiver does not matter. What matters is to have a caring heart and to be at the bedside of someone who is suffering."

UPDATES

2 NEW MEMBERS joined the President's Cabinet.



JOHN BECKVOLD, BA
Interim Chief Financial Officer

An experienced financial executive, John Beckvold has held leadership positions in the nonprofit sector, professional services industry, and at higher education institutions including Harvard Business School and Dartmouth College. John has a bachelor's degree from Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania.



ANN REIS, MS
Human Resources Director

Ann Reis comes to Maria with 25 years of experience as founder, president, and director of Capital District Human Resources Professionals. She has a bachelor's degree from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and a master's degree from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York.



Rose Hobbs

SISTER ROSE HOBBS '61, RSM, MLS, M.Ed.

Sister Rose Hobbs retired June 30 after 24 years at Maria, including 16 as director of the library. A member of Maria's first graduating class, she returned to her alma mater after serving as a teacher and principal. In 2015 she was honored with the Hudson-Mohawk Library Association Distinguished Service Award.



Barbara Palumbo

BARBARA PALUMBO, MA

As assistant director of the Learning Resource Center, Barbara Palumbo, MA, provided invaluable support for Maria students. Her 15 years at Maria were the final stretch of a career marked by determination to provide students from all walks of life with the reading, writing, and learning skills necessary for success.



Phi Theta Kappa Graduates

The Class of 2015 included a record 52 members of Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. Founded in 1918, Phi Theta Kappa is the world's oldest, largest, and most prestigious honor society for two-year colleges. Phi Theta Kappa recognizes outstanding academic achievement and is reserved for students with a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 or higher. The Beta Rho Kappa Chapter at Maria College was chartered in January 2009. Since then, the College has inducted more than 200 members.

IN BRIEF

Stephanie Hutchins Scales Mount Hood



Assistant Professor Stephanie Hutchins, Ph.D., is one mountain closer to achieving her goal of scaling the highest peak in each of the 50 United States—and on all seven continents. In May, the avid hiker crossed her 10th U.S. high peak off the list by climbing Oregon's Mount Hood, which has an elevation of 11,240 feet. Next on her list: Africa and the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro.

David Hoffman Co-Authors White Paper

Adjunct Professor David Hoffman, M.Ed., co-authored a white paper citing immediate need for a national focus on chronic disease prevention. The paper was issued by the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD). Hoffman serves on the NACDD Board and as Chairman of its Government Affairs Committee.

The Master Plan at Work



REMEMBER the old wooden seats in the second-floor lecture hall in the Main Building? Some were broken, others were easy to become wedged within, and many had splintered seats. Last summer old was replaced by new, as Main Building Room 204 received new seating, LED dimmable lighting, and carpeting. The renovations were completed in keeping with Maria's campus facilities master plan. In recognition of the need for facility upgrades and renovations, the Maria College Board of Trustees contracted the services of

outside vendors in 2012 for the development of a campus facilities master plan. As part of the planning process, faculty and staff were interviewed regarding long-term space needs and campus priority upgrades. Projects began in the spring of 2013 and have included the conversion of space for the liberal arts faculty, the replacement of seating in Marian 105, and the renovation of the Fitzgerald Court—including carpeting, lighting, and new furniture. What a difference!

Student Awards

THE FOLLOWING AWARDS were presented to students at the commencement dinner May 15:

Outstanding Academic Achievement, BSN:
Cathy Robertson

**Outstanding Academic Achievement, Liberal Arts/
General Studies/Business/Paralegal:**
Belynda Zigrest

Outstanding Academic Achievement, Nursing:
Alicia LeBuis
Alicia McFee

**Outstanding Academic Achievement, Clinical
Nursing:**
Samantha Harvey (Day)
Bridget Bottita (Evening)

**Outstanding Academic Achievement, Occupational
Therapy Assistant:**
Laura Newman
Carol Sherrin

Beardean B. Burke Award, OTA:
Presented to the student who has shown sustained academic achievement throughout the program, who has persevered through challenges, and who embodies the caring spirit of the profession.
Paryese Becker

2015 ANA-New York Future Nurse Leader Award:
Laura Chamberlin

Renaissance Scholars
Thirteen students were named 2014-15
Renaissance Scholars:
Augustina Addo
Denise Angle
Lloydie Bruno
Jessica Deans
Yvon Dimiyo
Chelsa Gaillard
Jontia Jones
Kaiya Keeler
Jill McGrew
Rakeya Melton
Frederick O'Neil
Joshua Roche
Danielle Singh

The Renaissance Program, a partnership of Renaissance Corporation of Albany, Albany County Department of Social Services, and Maria College, provides support for promising, determined students who are pursuing careers in nursing or other healthcare professions.

Welcome, New Board of Trustees Members

SEVEN NEW MEMBERS recently joined the Maria Board of Trustees:

Virginia Arbour is director of finance for The Community Hospice, St. Peter's Healthcare Services. She has 35 years of experience in finance and administration, serves as a mentor to other leaders and managers, and is active in a number of professional organizations. Arbour has a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Siena College in Loudonville.

Michael Cassidy is a senior advisor at the government relations firm of Brown & Weinraub PLLC. Previously, he held positions with the Governor's Office, Office of General Services, and State Senate. Cassidy earned bachelor's and master's degrees from the University at Albany's Rockefeller College of Public Affairs & Policy. He is a member of the college's Advisory Board.

Stephen Dautel, DDS, has been practicing dentistry in Clifton Park for nearly four decades. He is involved in several professional organizations, including the Fourth District Dental Society, where he coordinates the Children's Dental Access Program. A graduate of Bucknell University, Dr. Dautel earned his Doctor of Dental Surgery degree from New York University College of Dentistry.

Andrew Kaufman is president of Aurora Incorporated Insurance Agency in Albany. He has held leadership positions with numerous professional organizations and chairs two annual events

for the Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York. Kaufman earned BA and BS degrees from the State University of New York College at Oswego and an MBA from the University at Albany.

Robert Manfredi is an associate in the law firm of Bond, Schoeneck & King, PLLC, in Albany. He serves on the Board of the Capital Region Human Resource Association and is a member of the Double H. Ranch Human Resources Committee. Manfredi is a graduate of Siena College in Loudonville and Albany Law School of Union University.

Joseph McDonald is vice president of finance and operations at Union Graduate College in Schenectady. He also serves as an adjunct professor at three Capital Region colleges. McDonald has a BS from the University at Albany and an MBA from Union College. In 2014, the Albany Business Review named him CFO of the Year.

Carol Sherrin '15 is a recent graduate of Maria's OTA program, is a certified occupational therapy assistant at Bethlehem Commons at Good Samaritan Village in Delmar. A former science teacher, she has a BS from Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs and an MS in education from The College of Saint Rose in Albany. At Maria, she was class treasurer and a member of Phi Theta Kappa.



VIRGINIA ARBOUR



MICHAEL CASSIDY



DR. STEPHEN DAUTEL



ANDREW KAUFMAN



ROBERT MANFREDO



JOSEPH MCDONALD



CAROL SHERRIN

NEW TO MARIA

2014-2015 STAFF HIRED

FULL-TIME

Helen Adams-Keane, M.Ed.,
Director of Development and Alumni Engagement

Eileen Clinton, MS, *Bereavement Coordinator*

Jonathan Coller, ABD, *Peer Tutor Coordinator*

Kristin Connor, MBA, *Senior Accountant*

Marisa Gitto, MS, MA, *Director of the Library*

Sandra Grady, BA, *Coordinator of Annual Giving and Alumni Programs*

Matthew Muller, MS, *Assistant Director of Admission*

Donna Myers, MS, *Director of Financial Aid*

Desiree Ryan, *Computer and Network Support Technician*

PART-TIME

David Covey, MA, *Career Services Specialist*

Nichole Rogers, BA, *HEOP Counselor*

2014-2015 FACULTY HIRED

FULL-TIME

Victoria Battell, RSM, MA,
Instructor, Religious Studies/ Criminal Justice

Joshua Malone, BSN, RN, CCRN,
Instructor and Lab Co-Coordinator, Nursing

Top Workplace 2015!

Maria has been named a Times Union Top Workplace in the Capital Region for 2015. We were one of 20 organizations

recognized, in the medium-sized company category, for qualities such as leadership, career opportunities, workplace flexibility, compensation, and benefits. We are honored to rank among the top employers and, even more, to know that our employees consider Maria a great place to work.





CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF OTA LEADERSHIP

Alumni, faculty, and other friends of Maria came together on October 24 to celebrate the 40th anniversary of a program whose impact is felt in healthcare, rehabilitation, and educational facilities throughout New York State and the nation. Since 1975, 884 students have graduated from Maria's Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Program, prepared to use their skills to fulfill the College's mission of service. Our OTA graduates have helped countless individuals become more independent, regain their dignity, and rebuild their lives.



Scott Homer, Meghan Malone, and Lisa Deserre

When Bearldean B. Burke, OTR/L, FAOTA, founded Maria's OTA program in 1975, she had two overriding objectives: to meet the occupational therapy needs of the Capital Region and to prepare OTA graduates for meaningful careers. Those goals have remained central to what has become one of New York State's most successful OTA programs—and the only Capital Region program accredited by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE).

Through rigorous coursework—and the support of dedicated, experienced faculty—today's Maria OTA students graduate with more options than ever. OTA graduates can put their skills to work helping clients overcome challenges, such as traumatic brain injury, stroke, mental health issues, developmental disabilities, and more. Graduates can also use their OTA education as a springboard to more advanced degree programs, including Maria's BS in health and occupational sciences designed, in part, to provide OTA students with a pathway to graduate study in occupational therapy (OT).

Three Exceptional Leaders



BEARLDEAN B. BURKE was a therapist, teacher, and mentor. She began her career as many of her students would: as an OTA. She went on to become an occupational therapist, hospital OT supervisor,

assistant director of OT services for the New York State Department of Mental Hygiene, and chief of the department's Bureau of Standards and Evaluation. Her memory lives on at Maria through the Bearldean B. Burke Award, which recognizes a graduating OTA student who embodies the caring spirit of the profession and has persevered despite hardship. As part of the recent 40th anniversary celebration, Maria unveiled a plaque that will hang, in Burke's honor, in the OTA Activities of Daily Living Lab.

A former president of the New York State Occupational Therapy Association, Burke was a staunch supporter of efforts to set professional and educational standards for OTAs. She pursued ACOTE accreditation for Maria's OTA program early on, and it has maintained accreditation ever since.

The program was just a year old when its next leader would join the team.

SANDRA JUNG, BS, OTR/L, began her Maria career as an adjunct instructor in 1976 and came on board full time a year later.

During her 38-year tenure at Maria, Jung held virtually every key OTA program position, including student advisor and OTA academic fieldwork coordinator. When Burke stepped down as chair in 1987, Jung was appointed to the top post. Burke helped ease the transition by remaining on the faculty until 1988.



Jung served as chair from 1987 to 2010 and receives much of the credit for the OTA program's long-term success. She developed an option for working adults to complete their OTA degree by attending class every other weekend—one of only two such programs in the nation. Like her predecessor, Jung continued to teach at Maria after ending her time as chair. She retired in 2014.



"Sandy taught students in every OTA graduating class through 2014," recalls **SCOTT HOMER** '95, MS, OTR/L, who succeeded Jung and now serves as only the third chair in the

OTA program's history. Homer regards Jung as a mentor. Like Jung and Burke, Homer is an excellent steward of the OTA program, keenly aware of—and responsive to—the changing needs of OTA students and their clients.

Since becoming chair, Homer has reinstated the weekend OTA program for working adults, increased enrollment, and revamped fieldwork experiences to incorporate student-driven projects that give back to the community. He sees enormous potential for OTAs to help transform the lives of children and adults who are on the autism spectrum, veterans who return home with physical and emotional wounds, and seniors who are determined to age in place.

"The OTA profession offers a unique, holistic approach to help people realize their potential and use their gifts in society," Homer says.

"And Maria's program, with its proud history and its emphasis on the Mercy value of service, is poised to remain a leader in OTA education—and the preferred choice for OTA students—for the next 40 years and beyond."

OTA alumni take their place among Maria faculty

It's a testament to the OTA program's strength that, when seeking qualified instructors, Maria often turns to alumni. Seven of 10 current faculty members and teaching assistants, including the program chair, laid the foundation for their OT careers at Maria.

FULL-TIME FACULTY

Scott Homer '95, MS, OTR/L, Assistant Professor and OTA Program Chair. Homer has been involved with all aspects of the OTA curriculum. He has extensive clinical experience as a COTA and registered occupational therapist (OTR), is a regular presenter at the New York State Occupational Therapy Association annual conference, and teaches workshops on anatomy, kinesiology, and neurology. Homer has a master's degree in OT from Utica College of Syracuse University. His chapter, "Ensuring Purposeful and Meaningful Interventions," is featured in the textbook, *Foundations of Theory and Practice for the Occupational Therapy Assistant*.

Meghan Malone '99, '00, BS, COTA, Academic Fieldwork Coordinator. An experienced COTA, vision rehabilitation therapist, and fieldwork educator, Malone teaches at Maria, coordinates all fieldwork, and works as a COTA in pediatrics. She has a bachelor's degree in liberal studies and psychology from Excelsior College.

Lisa Deserre '79, BS, COTA, Instructor. Deserre has over 25 years of OTA teaching experience and has worked in a variety of inpatient mental health settings. She has a BS in health science from Excelsior College.

ADJUNCT FACULTY

Nancy Matusiak '07, BS, COTA, Adjunct Instructor, Weekend Program. Matusiak is a COTA for Ichabod Crane Central School District. She has a bachelor's degree in physical education and draws on her knowledge of human anatomy and physiology during therapy sessions and teaching.

Kelly Reed '12, COTA, VRT, Adjunct Instructor, Weekend Program. Reed is a vision rehabilitation therapist and COTA at Lighthouse Guild Healthcare in Albany. She works with adults who are visually impaired and have chronic medical conditions.

TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Jennifer Carr '00, MS, OTR/L, Teaching Assistant, Weekend Program. Carr's OTR experience includes providing rehabilitation for geriatric patients and for children and young adults with significant disabilities. She earned her MS in OT from Sage College.

Adrienne Whelly '11, MS, OTR/L, Teaching Assistant, Weekend Program. Whelly is an OTR at Capstone Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Amsterdam, New York. She has an MS in OT from Utica College.

LIBERAL ARTS
BA

PSYCHOLOGY
BS

ACCELERATED
NURSING
BSN
UNDER
DEVELOPMENT

NURSING
COMPLETION
RN-BSN

HEALTH
& OCCUPATIONAL
SCIENCES
BS

HEALTHCARE
MANAGEMENT
BS



NEW MAJORS
BUILDING
ON OUR CORE
STRENGTHS

In two short years after becoming a baccalaureate institution, Maria has launched bachelor's degree programs in four high-demand majors: psychology, healthcare management, health and occupational sciences, and liberal arts. All four programs are rooted in the College's core strengths and the needs of New York's Capital Region. All fulfill the dreams of our founders, who envisioned Maria as a four-year educational institution. Perhaps most important, by providing clearly defined academic and career pathways, all deliver on Maria's commitment to prepare students to succeed and to serve. ▶

STRATEGIC CHOICES

Take a closer look at Maria's new four-year degree programs, and a common theme emerges. In every instance, the College is drawing on a fundamental strength to meet the needs of today's students and employers.

The bachelor's degree in health and occupational sciences (HOS) is an excellent example. An outgrowth of Maria's associate degree program for occupational therapy assistants (OTA), the HOS major taps the College's 40 years of experience in preparing OTA students for careers in education and healthcare settings. The resulting curriculum, which includes theoretical and applied science and classroom and internship experience, positions students for a variety of opportunities. For OTA graduates, the BS in HOS also is the next step in preparing for an advanced degree in occupational therapy.

Ultimately, Maria expects to offer about a dozen bachelor's degree programs, all in areas where the College provides a distinct advantage. Already, Maria is well on its way, with four new degree programs since 2013, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing launched in 2010 with other programs under consideration.

A STRONG CASE

The bachelor's degrees, closely aligned with Maria's associate majors, provide students with greater placement power in the work force. As employer studies demonstrate, a four-year degree can help open doors at every stage of a career. Maria's flexible schedule formats for day, evening, weekend and online provide higher education consumers in the region options whether they're starting or continuing their education.

Maria is determined to offer these advantages to students without losing sight of the financial pressures that so many families face. Maria leadership feels strongly that the College will remain in tune with the demands of a new business model for higher education. Affordability and accountability are paramount in the eyes of the student, the parent, and the federal government.

As a result, Maria's bachelor's degree programs focus on fields that anticipate significant growth nationally and in the Capital Region, where so many Maria students will continue to live and work. The curricula combine theory and practical experience to help give Maria graduates a competitive edge, and support services help students persevere. Equally important for many students, financial aid programs—and tuition that has earned Maria a national reputation for affordability—help place the new degrees within reach.

"I FOUND THE MATERIAL INTRIGUING AND FELT THAT IT COULD BE A POTENTIAL CAREER PATH. THE CLASS SCHEDULING IS VERY FLEXIBLE, AND THE STAFF IS A PLEASURE."

NIINA OHVANAINEN '18

THE NEW MAJORS

BS IN PSYCHOLOGY, APPROVED 2013

Niina Ohvanainen '18 traces her interest in psychology to a high school class that offered college credits through Syracuse University's Project Advance. "I found the material intriguing

and felt that it could be a potential career path," she recalls.

Ohvanainen applied to Maria's psychology program as an incoming freshman and was among the first to be awarded the Presidential Psychology Scholarship. She also is the first to serve as vice president of Maria's Psychology Club. Her long-term goal is to pursue a doctoral degree and work with children as a clinical psychologist, and she is confident that her Maria education will provide an excellent foundation.

Laying that foundation is one of the goals of the BS in psychology program—to prepare students for the advanced education required for careers in specialty areas such as clinical psychology, forensic psychology, and industrial-organizational psychology. The program also equips graduates with the skills necessary for employment in social services, government, business, research, the health professions, and the criminal justice system.

With 21 credits in electives and a required internship or cooperative education experience, Maria's BS in psychology also encourages students to pursue their own interests and provides real-world experience. Like most Maria programs, the psychology major accommodates students who "want to pursue their education but have other responsibilities to tend to," Ohvanainen says. "The class scheduling is very flexible, and the staff is a pleasure."

BS IN HEALTHCARE MANAGEMENT, APPROVED 2014

As the U.S. population ages, forecasters anticipate increased demand for long-term care, rehabilitation, and other healthcare-related services. In fact, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics forecasts a growth rate of 22 percent in healthcare management jobs in the next decade—and graduates of Maria's healthcare management program will be well-positioned to fill these openings.

The new degree program prepares students for mid-level management positions in settings including corporate health and wellness departments, pharmaceutical manufacturers, nursing homes, hospitals, assisted living facilities, and rehabilitation centers. Courses are taught by full-time faculty as well as working healthcare management practitioners. Internships provide students with the work experience needed to strengthen students' skills and career prospects.



Niina Ohvanainen

PSYCHOLOGY
BS



HEALTH
& OCCUPATIONAL
SCIENCES
BS

OCCUPATIONAL
THERAPY ASST.
AAS

“NO MATTER WHICH EDUCATIONAL PATHWAY YOU CHOOSE AT MARIA COLLEGE, EACH WILL PUT YOU ON A CHALLENGING BUT REWARDING JOURNEY THAT WILL GENERATE LIFELONG OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL GROWTH.”

DR. JOHN KOWAL, VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND ACADEMIC DEAN



Zachary Nieffer

Zachary Nieffer '18 transferred from Ulster County Community College this past fall '15 and is enrolled full time in the BS in Healthcare Management. He is hoping to use his degree to manage an organization, such as the Ulster-Greene ARC, where prior to his full time student status, he had been working. The HCM curriculum includes managerial accounting, health information systems, microeconomics, and others that, according to Nieffer are making him career ready for administrative duties in a healthcare facility, such as a hospital or nursing home. He stated, "I'm confident with each and every step I take, there will be a better future for me because of what I've done here."

BS IN HEALTH AND OCCUPATIONAL SCIENCES (HOS), APPROVED 2015

This new bachelor's degree program serves two purposes: It extends the career path for our Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) students and prepares others for a variety of opportunities in healthcare-related careers.

For many OTA students, the long-term goal is to become a licensed occupational therapist, a position that requires a master's degree. The new BS in HOS offers a streamlined process for Maria OTA students to complete their associate degree requirements and transition to the four-year program. They also have the added bonus of being able to work as a certified occupational assistant after passing the national exam certification, while continuing their undergraduate education. The overwhelm-

ing majority of Maria OTA graduates—97 percent pass rate in 2014—receive their national certification.

The new HOS degree also has much to offer students who wish to work in health services. The BS in HOS provides excellent preparation for those who would face health-related issues in the workplace. Examples include coordinators for programs that serve the elderly or those with disabilities, medical or pharmaceutical sales representatives, and entry-level professionals in fields such as medical informatics. The HOS program offers a solid foundation in the natural sciences, making the BS in HOS a good fit for students who intend to pursue graduate study in the allied health fields like physical therapy, speech therapy or medical school.

David Moon '19 is a case in point. He plans to pursue a medical degree and, ultimately, to become a dermatologist. Moon chose the HOS program because it compares favorably with pre-med offerings at other colleges, enables him to remain in the Capital Region, and offers the personal touch that sets Maria apart from larger institutions.

BA IN LIBERAL ARTS, APPROVED JULY 2015

Maria's first Bachelor of Arts degree program provides a well-rounded education by combining broad learning in multiple disciplines with specialized study and work experience in one of two concentrations.

Liberal arts students will develop and sharpen essential skills in critical thinking, problem-solving, strategic planning, teamwork, and communications. As a result, students will graduate ready to pursue professional careers or graduate-level education and, perhaps most important, to engage in lifelong learning. Two concentrations—in communications or government—target fields of particular interest to the Capital Region. Required internships ensure that students graduate with real-world experience that can set them apart from the competition.

This new degree reflects the demands of today's global marketplace, which requires higher levels of education. The program recognizes the increasing value of a liberal arts education—and the need to make that education available to more students. To encourage students who'd previously set their sights on a two-year degree, the new BA program provides a seamless transition from Maria's AA in liberal arts and accepts transfers from non-Maria programs.

ADVANCED NURSING OPTIONS

Nursing education has long been one of Maria's signature strengths, with more than 40 percent of alumni graduating from the nursing program. These graduates can be found in the leadership and staff ranks of virtually every Capital Region healthcare organization—and in hospitals and healthcare facilities throughout the nation.

It's only natural, then, that Maria would take the lead in meeting increased demand for higher education within the nursing profession. Studies link higher nursing education levels to better patient outcomes and to evidenced-based practices that benefit both organizations and patients. Furthermore, the Institute of Medicine has called for 80 percent of U.S. nurses to hold at least a baccalaureate degree by 2020.

Maria has responded with significant investments in nursing education and with two options to help existing registered nurses—including Maria AAS graduates—earn their Bachelor of Science Degree in nursing (BSN).

BSN DEGREE COMPLETION PROGRAM

Kirsten Jesaitis '16 came to Maria to earn an AAS in nursing. She had a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University at Albany and wanted to change her career path. Jesaitis applied to several programs in the Capital Region and says she chose Maria "because of its competitive

nursing program and NCLEX (National Council Licensure Examination) pass rate.”

Equally impressive is that Maria’s program is ranked in the top 10 nationwide on a list of “Great Small Colleges for an RN-BSN Degree” by Master of Science in Nursing Degrees, an online resource of accredited programs.

The College has similarly high job placement rates, and Jesaitis has experienced that firsthand. A preceptorship during her final semester led to a job offer at Albany Medical Center, where she now works in the Children’s Hospital float pool.

Jesaitis quickly realized the value of continuing her education and, with the AAS under her belt, enrolled in Maria’s BSN degree completion program. “Education is extremely important in the field of nursing as research in medicine is changing the way we look at and implement quality patient care,” she says. “I also have plans to further my education beyond a bachelor’s degree as either a clinical nurse specialist or nurse anesthetist.”

Because she is an RN, has an AAS from an accredited program (Maria’s), and has a bachelor’s degree in a non-nursing discipline, Jesaitis qualified for Track 2 of the College’s BSN degree completion program. That means she can earn her BSN by taking the required 45 credits over three semesters. “Many hospitals and employers are looking for nurses who have higher degrees,” she says. “This bachelor’s degree will lay the foundation for future employment and opportunities.”

If she were an RN and had an AAS from an accredited program, but did *not* have a bachelor’s degree, Jesaitis could still earn a BSN through Track 1 of Maria’s program. In that case, she would have to complete 60 credits over four semesters. Both tracks prepare students for today’s changing nursing environment and position them for continued success.

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Maria is poised to introduce more baccalaureate programs in the near future including an accelerated nursing program for career changers.

ACCELERATED BSN

Maria’s proposed accelerated BS in Nursing has been submitted and is awaiting New York State approval. Students who enroll in this program would already have a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree in a non-nursing field of study. Therefore, they would enter the program with advanced standing of 60 credits and—provided they met the requirements for prerequisite courses—could complete their BSN in 16 months by attending Maria full-time. Successful completion would qualify students to take the NCLEX-RN exam and become licensed as a professional registered nurse (RN).

THE MARIA DIFFERENCE

Although every Maria degree program—baccalaureate and associate—is customized to meet specific educational and professional objectives, all have common denominators that make the programs “uniquely Maria.” Students from all disciplines cite a commitment to their success that is evident in the design and delivery of College programs, the involvement and experience of faculty, and the emphasis on student support.

BSN student Jesaitis is a case in point. “After attending several colleges, I’ve learned that it’s important to choose a school that is supportive and has

resources for your success. I have definitely found that in Maria College,” Jesaitis says. “The biggest difference I’ve noticed is each professor’s involvement in each student’s success—in school and our future careers.”

When asked to describe Maria and the Nursing Program, Jesaitis responds with three words: “Challenging, supportive, encouraging.”

Maria’s small class sizes provide the personal attention that makes an enormous difference in developing faculty student connections. Flexible scheduling meets the needs of traditional and non-traditional students, and affordable tuition makes a private college education accessible to students who otherwise might not have that option.

In addition, Maria’s emphasis on graduating students who are work-ready provides an excellent return on students’ investment in their education. A survey of 2014 graduates found that 99 percent were either employed in their field or continuing their education within one year of graduation.

While at Maria, students benefit from the College’s values as a Mercy institution: integrity, compassion, respect, justice, and service to others. Upon graduation, the former students share those values with others. As graduates and

ambassadors of the College, alumni draw on their Maria experience to improve the lives of individuals and the community as a whole. That is, and always will be, the legacy of Maria College.

**“HEALTHCARE EMPLOYERS
ARE LOOKING FOR
PROFESSIONALS WHO
HAVE HIGHER DEGREES.
MARIA’S BACHELOR’S
DEGREES IN HEALTH
SCIENCES LAY THE
FOUNDATION FOR
FUTURE EMPLOYMENT
AND OPPORTUNITIES.”**

KIRSTEN JESAITIS, RN, '16



Kirsten Jesaitis

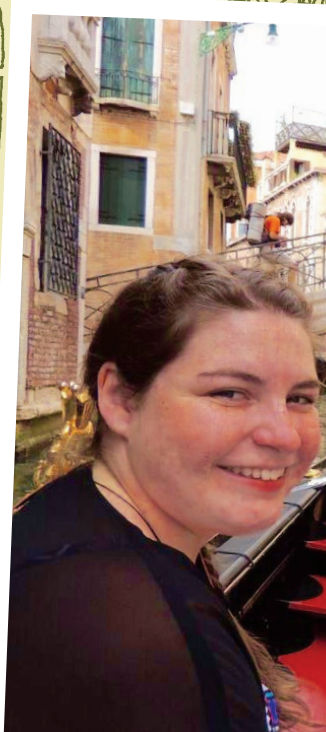
DEGREE
COMPLETION
PROGRAM

BSN

CIAO, MARIA!

DISCOVERING THE WORLD WHILE STUDYING ABROAD IN ITALY

For our second study abroad destination, Maria chose a country that has unparalleled cultural, historic and religious significance: Italy. The traveling party included students, faculty, and friends of Maria, including an alumna and her family, who enjoyed their “best vacation to date.” The group covered 8 cities, with stops at world-famous attractions from the Vatican Museums in Rome to the Galleria dell’ Accademia, home of Michelangelo’s David, in Florence. At every location, the Maria travelers immersed themselves in the Italian experience. As for the cuisine: *delizioso!*



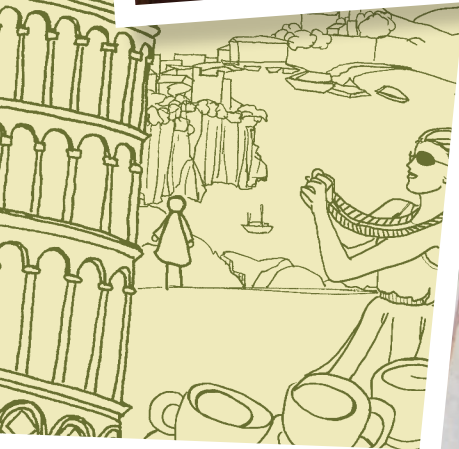


WHERE WE WENT

ASSISI ROME
FLORENCE SIENA
PISA SORRENTO
POMPEII VENICE

WHAT WE DID

Gazed in awe at Michelangelo's frescoes in the Sistine Chapel, explored the ruins of Pompeii, stood transfixed before Renaissance masterpieces, visited piazzas and basilicas, rode gondolas in Venice, sampled authentic Italian pizza, and leaned against the famous tower of Pisa.



"The Italy trip was all I had dreamed it would be. No words or pictures can express the wonderful experiences we enjoyed together on our nine day tour!"

GEORGIA VANZUTPHEN '82



The Maria community turned out in force to celebrate the College's 53rd commencement and the accomplishments of the Class of 2015. Highlights included the traditional White Tea Ceremony for nursing graduates, Commencement Mass, the second annual Commencement Dinner, and the awarding of 223 associate and bachelor's degrees and certificates during the Commencement Ceremony.



COMMENCEMENT 2015



5.14.2015

WHITE TEA



AAS graduates were officially welcomed into the nursing profession during the White Tea Ceremony that is among Maria's most treasured rites of passage. Pins were blessed and presented to each new nurse. The graduates then lit the customary white candles and, together, formally committed to their patients and profession by reciting the International Council of Nurses' Pledge.





5.15.2015

COMMENCEMENT DINNER



Some 200 graduates, family members, and friends gathered for the second annual Commencement Dinner and Awards Ceremony. The event celebrated the Class of 2015 and recognized honor students, Phi Theta Kappa members, standouts in each academic department, and Spirit of Maria award recipients. In anticipation of their 20th reunion, graduates helped fill a time capsule that will remain sealed until 2035.





5.16.2015

COMMENCEMENT



During her commencement address, Patricia Deirdre Mullan, Ph.D., RSM, called on graduates to do their part to repair a world that is “broken and sore.” She has traveled the globe, promoting social justice and meeting basic human needs. Graduates and all of those who supported them in their educational journey were congratulated. Bishop of Albany Edward B. Scharfenberger, DD, presented the diplomas.





NEW STUDENT
SUCCESS
PROGRAM
TARGETS
RETENTION &
GRADUATION

ACADEMIC
SUPPORT AND WELL
BEING

LAST FALL'S FRESHMAN CLASS IS THE FIRST TO BENEFIT from a new "Student Success" program designed to increase student engagement, retention, and graduation. Through a combination of early intervention, academic support, mentoring, and extended advising, Student Success will encourage students to remain at Maria and fulfill their goal of earning a college degree.

Retention and graduation rates are widely regarded as indicators of success—for colleges and students alike. As Maria continues to transition to a four-year institution, it becomes increasingly important to create and sustain connections that keep students engaged in campus life through graduation.

A multipronged system of support mechanisms is key to retaining students. Everyone is confident that this ambitious plan will succeed with everyone pulling together as a cohesive team.

For 2015-2016, Student Success will be a pilot program that incorporates best practices gleaned from proven programs nationwide. Each component will be evaluated and adjusted as necessary, depending on first-year results. It is hoped that by fall 2016, a new Student Success Center will be created and services will be centralized under one roof.

The pilot Student Success model builds upon Maria's existing retention and support efforts—including the Learning Resource Center and the First Year Experience and Peer Tutoring programs. Student Success also acknowledges and formalizes the faculty involvement that so many students cite as a reason for choosing and remaining at Maria.

"Every faculty member serves in an advisory role," explains Dr. John Kowal, Vice President, Academic Affairs. "The Student Success pilot recognizes this, provides additional structure, and reinforces what we've already been doing well."

STAR EARLY INTERVENTION

A key component of Student Success is the new Students At Risk, or STAR, system, coordinated by Dr. Bobby Bui, Assistant Professor of Psychology. STAR is a central communications platform that makes it easy to share information on students and identify, early on, those who might need help.

High-risk students typically wait too long to request assistance, decreasing the likelihood that they'll be able to recover lost ground. With STAR, faculty can report concerns about poor attendance, late or missing assignments,

behavioral or emotional problems, and other issues that can affect academic performance. Equally important, faculty can see if their colleagues have noticed similar difficulties.

"By creating a database where faculty can enter and share information, we'll be able to flag at-risk students immediately, mobilize the necessary resources, and track students' progress," Bui says. Because it promotes communication among the students' professors, the STAR system also improves coordination of services.

Even in cases when early intervention is not enough, STAR still acquires valuable information. "If we understand why a student feels they have to leave Maria," Bui says, "we can work with them on a plan to come back—and, ultimately, to succeed."

Maria staff have also been instrumental in working with Bui and faculty to help STAR succeed. They have submitted STAR reports/referrals and provided many of the resources to support students.

COMMITTED MENTORS

Another new Student Success initiative matches 50 first-year students with mentors from staff, administrative, and faculty ranks to increase students' connection and commitment to Maria. Mentors provided brief biographies—job titles, interests, and other bits of personal information—to help students decide on their mentors of choice. The program was in place by August 24, the start of the fall '15 semester.

"Mentors are in addition to students' academic advisors—and serve a very different function," explains Dr. Thomas Iwankow, Dean of Enrollment Management. "Essentially, the mentor is another person the student can turn to with questions about everything from how to access services on campus to how to handle social situations."

The primary goal is to strengthen the student's links to Maria, thereby increasing the likelihood of retention. "Other institutions that have implemented these types of programs have found that mentored students are more likely to be engaged with their college community and to be successful," Dr. Iwankow says.

The program is meant to be informal so students feel free to contact their mentors as needed. Mentors will reach out to students several times a semester to maintain the personal connection.

ONE-ON-ONE PEER TUTORING

Student Success also expands Maria's Peer Tutoring Program, making it available to students in all majors. The program was launched two years ago for nursing and occupational therapy assistant (OTA) program students. Last summer, Maria hired a full-time peer tutoring coordinator who recruited 12 student tutors to work one-on-one with their classmates.

Tutors are trained to help with study methods, test-taking tactics, time management, effective organization, locating and using outside resources, brainstorming and invention techniques, critical thinking strategies, and alleviating academic anxiety. Tutors help students tackle difficult assignments and master coursework. Perhaps even more important, they serve as an example of what's possible.

"When peers work together, the situation feels less judgmental," says Dr. Jonathan Coller, Peer Tutoring Coordinator. "The message is, 'You are not alone. I've been there, and it is possible.' Too often, fear and anxiety can get in the way. Working with a peer who has experienced success can go a long way in reducing these emotional obstacles."

A major goal of the program is to encourage students to become motivated, self-confident learners. That includes having the confidence to recognize that they need help—and to ask for assistance early on, when it can make the greatest difference. Therefore, students are encouraged to take the initiative in contacting the Peer Tutoring Program and can do so easily, online.

STRIVING FOR LIFELONG IMPACT

Maria's Student Success program was developed by a working group of faculty and staff from throughout the College. Together, they reviewed retention efforts at other U.S. higher education institutions, selected the most effective components, and combined them in a comprehensive program designed not only to improve retention but also to lay the foundation for lifelong success.

In addition to mastering their coursework and earning their degrees, students participating in the program will gain organizational and management skills that will serve them well long after graduation. They will also gain invaluable experience in how to persevere—how to set a goal, chart a course to achieve it, and make the inevitable necessary adjustments.



ON THE CUTTING EDGE

VIRTUAL DISSECTION TECHNOLOGY COMES TO MARIA



“THE ANATOMAGE UNITS ARE CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY THAT... WILL PREPARE MARIA COLLEGE STUDENTS FOR CAREERS IN RAPIDLY GROWING AND CHANGING HEALTHCARE FIELDS.”

LESLIE CHEU, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
THE TROY SAVINGS BANK
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

YOU ARE READY FOR TODAY'S LAB

QUIZ, and although slightly nervous, you've studied for days and are confident of the muscular system. Each member of your lab team draws a card out of a box. Your card instructs you to step over to the cadaver and begin dissection, identifying the following three muscles and explaining their function: trapezius, latissimus dorsi, and infraspinatus. You move toward the cadaver table feeling confident as you began your dissection—cutting through the skin and focusing on the muscular system. But then you realize something is wrong. The muscles you need to identify are located on the back of the male cadaver, not the front. Fortunately the problem is easily fixed. With a flick of your finger the cadaver quickly flips from front to back, and the identification of those three muscles takes no time at all.

You may have seen it on PBS television, ABC, or at a TEDTalks, and now we have it at Maria College. Courtesy of a generous grant from the Troy Savings Bank Foundation, Maria College is the only college in the region with the Anatomage Virtual Dissection table.

What is a virtual dissection table? At first glance it resembles an operating room table, but it is actually similar to a life-size iPad. The Anatomage is a technologically advanced anatomic visualization system that is used for the teaching of gross anatomy and anatomy and physiology. The system is also used by medical schools and major medical centers throughout the United States as physicians prepare for surgery. Maria received two Anatomage units in October and will begin offering gross anatomy using the Anatomage in January 2016.

For hundreds of years, gross anatomy has been taught through the use of cadaveric dissection—the dissection of actual human bodies. Medical, dental, and allied health students have traditionally worked in teams to dissect a body that can only be used once. Bodies must be donated or purchased, and there is usually a shortage of available cadavers. Cadavers are kept in a special refrigeration unit, treated with preservative, and require a respectful disposal—often with a memorial service once all dissection is completed.

The Anatomage virtual dissection table can change or enhance the teaching of human dissection depending on the preference of the instructor. Imagine having the ability to look beneath one's skin and study muscles, blood vessels, the nervous system, the organs of the digestive system, or a particular bone in the body,

and then to put everything back in place with no sign of dissection. The Anatomage provides this ability to both teacher and student. The virtual dissection table also allows the user to zoom in on a particular area and isolate an organ for greater study, and to project what is being studied on the table for examination by an entire classroom.

Through virtual dissection, students can study human anatomy—system by system, again and again. Because they were taken from actual frozen cadavers, the images represent the human body in accurate anatomical realism. A virtual scalpel makes dissection as easy as moving your finger across the screen. In addition, the Anatomage will enable Maria faculty and students to study anatomy in greater depth than was previously possible through models and individual computer programs. A library module, included with the Anatomage table, features over 120 pathological examples. This allows Maria students to dissect normal gross anatomy and to experience abnormal pathologies.

Assistant Professor Stephanie Hutchins, Ph.D., has been working with the Anatomage units since their arrival. “I think the Anatomages are a great addition to the science curriculum at Maria College. They will be particularly useful for courses such as Gross Anatomy and Anatomy and Physiology, as well as for courses such as Neurobiology and Human Biology,” she says. “The tables will allow the students to learn normal human anatomy, while also providing intriguing case studies on abnormal anatomy.

“With the Anatomage, the students can quickly access the anatomy they are looking for, without having to go through the process of actual dissection,” Dr. Hutchins adds. “This allows us more time to cover abnormal anatomy and to apply the knowledge they are learning to real life cases they may see when they enter their respective healthcare fields.”

Virtual dissection is an important addition to Maria College, and the College is excited to be the first in the Capital Region to integrate this advanced technology into the classroom experience. The new Anatomage units are another example of Maria's commitment to the future of healthcare education. Maria continues its long history of leadership in the areas of nursing and OTA education by being the first in the region to have the Anatomage units.

A GROWING NEED

MARIA COLLEGE JOINS OVER 200 COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES THAT OFFER CAMPUS FOOD PANTRIES FOR THEIR STUDENTS

WHAT DO SUNY ALBANY, ALFRED, NASSAU COMMUNITY COLLEGE, AND MARIA COLLEGE HAVE IN COMMON? Answer: They are part of a growing network of over 200 colleges and universities that offer campus food pantries for their students.

In 2008, Maria College began offering food to hungry students through a small food pantry that was located in the yellow OTA kitchen in Marian Hall. The food pantry was stocked through College food drives, and those students needing extra help could go to the Dean of Students for food vouchers at Thanksgiving and Christmas. In the beginning the Maria College food pantry served approximately 15 students each year. Eight years later, the concept of the food pantry has evolved, and the College now provides food to over 300 students on a regular basis.

In 2014 it became apparent that the yellow kitchen was not large enough to meet the needs of Maria students, as financial aid data indicated that 33 percent of Maria's students were food stamp eligible. With support and sponsorship from Trustee Sister Gail Waring, the College applied for a Northeast Mercy Ministry Fund grant to help sponsor an expanded food pantry. Maria College was approved for the grant and received a \$5,000 donation from the Sisters of Mercy to make the expanded food pantry a reality.

Finding the perfect location provided an immediate challenge. How large should the food pantry be? How much food would the \$5,000 buy? How often should the pantry be stocked, and who would do the shopping? The College was on a steep learning curve in this area, but the challenges were also an opportunity to better understand the needs of the student body.

The food pantry was relocated to the Main Building basement area that formerly housed the faculty offices of Professors DeLorenzo, Ruslander, Hope, Hartigan, and Sposito. Faculty moved upstairs to the renovated area over the library. After Maria's maintenance team removed the office partitions, it was obvious the open space would be the perfect location. Sister Rose donated extra shelving from the library,



and a local philanthropist provided a commercial freezer and refrigerator. The food pantry was renamed "Catherine's Food Closet" in honor of Catherine McAuley, founder of the Sisters of Mercy.

WHAT TYPES OF FOODS ARE FOUND IN THE PANTRY? The Maria administration decided to survey student classes to see what foods were in greatest demand. Now in the second year of operation, the College understands the need and is pleased to support heavy use of the pantry by both day and evening students. High-demand foods include fruit cups, soup, cereal, oatmeal, peanut butter and jelly, pasta and sauce, tuna, rice, macaroni and cheese, baked beans, salad dressing, frozen vegetables, and pizza. There is also an ongoing need for paper and personal products, including Kleenex, toilet tissue, paper towels, toothpaste, deodorant and infant diapers.

Shopping for the pantry has quickly become a community activity. Due to the high demand for basic food supplies, the pantry can easily become depleted within a week. Administrators, faculty, students, and staff take turns shopping for the pantry, and shoppers are also responsible for stocking the shelves. During the first nine months in the new location, Catherine's Food Closet provided more than 3,400 food items from local supermarkets.

In addition to providing groceries, the College also planted a garden behind Marian Hall so there could be fresh vegetables for the pantry. Tomatoes, corn, green peppers, eggplant, and onions topped the list of the successful harvest, and plans are in the making for a larger garden this year.

As the first year of the expanded pantry came to a close, the Maria College administration is very pleased with how the needs of students are being met and also providing an activity where administration, faculty, and staff feel they are truly living the mission of service to others.

“What I enjoy most is building a community of people who bond through their college experiences.”



CREATING A VIBRANT ALUMNI COMMUNITY

AS MARIA'S DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT and alumni engagement, Helen Adams-Keane serves as a critical link between the College's past and future. Think of her as the glue that will bind alumni not just to each other and their alma mater but also to the Maria students of today and tomorrow.

Adams-Keane's job at Maria is full of firsts. She is the first to hold the newly created position and the first to reach out to alumni in any official capacity. She is launching the first annual fundraising campaign—currently underway—and the first homecoming celebrations. She also is creating the infrastructure that will enable Maria to tap the enormous potential of the College's more than 8,500 alumni.

“Our alumni play an important role in offering students the personalized attention that Maria College is proud to provide and that our students have come to appreciate,” Adams-Keane says. “Alumni offer valuable expertise, mentoring, financial support, and career advice. When it comes to recruiting future generations of students, Maria alumni are the College's number one ambassadors.”

Adams-Keane sees enormous potential at Maria and is thrilled to be part of what she considers one of the most exciting transformations in Capital Region higher education. She has more than 25 years of experience in higher education management, including nine years as vice president for advancement at Albany Law School. She will put that experience to work “to bolster a sense of belonging where Maria alumni generously contribute their time, talent, and financial resources to help ensure the future well-being of their alma mater.”

Adams-Keane was drawn to alumni relations and development work by the prospect of forging and sustaining essential relationships. “What I enjoy most is building a community of people who bond through their college experiences,” she says. “These experiences lay the foundation for long-term relationships that will benefit alumni and prove critical to Maria's continued growth.”

She looks forward to creating opportunities to bring alumni back to Maria to discuss their challenges and successes with today's students. She expects many visiting alumni to have the same reaction she did the first time she toured the campus.

“I was surprised by the modern technology housed within the classrooms and learning laboratories of Maria's historic buildings,” Adams-Keane says. “As our alumni tour the beautifully renovated facilities and high-tech labs, I want them to share in our excitement as the College transforms, develops, and grows.”

She also wants as many alumni as possible to take a more active role—to consider supporting the transformation by making a gift to the inaugural campaign for the Maria Fund. The Fund will provide vital support for student aid and scholarships, academic programs, enhancements to student life, facility and campus maintenance, and state-of-the-art technology. Because gifts to the Fund will help narrow the gap between operating costs and what each student pays for tuition, contributions also will enable Maria to maintain the distinction of being the most affordable private college in the Capital Region.

CONNECT WITH US

We want to hear from alumni, so we've made it easy to connect. Simply go to www.mariacollege.edu and click on Alumni & Friends. You can update your address, send us your news, and make a gift to the Maria Fund. If you'd rather not donate online, simply use the envelope in this edition of *Maria Magazine* to make a pledge or mail in a contribution. Thank you!

A HELPING HAND

HOW 21 VOLUNTEERS SPENT 5 DAYS OF THEIR SPRING BREAK

People are inspired to serve for a variety of reasons. Through Alternative Spring Break, Maria provides opportunities for students not only to serve but also to create common ground and understanding. When a student enters into service with a mindset of “doing with” not “doing for,” something wonderful happens: solidarity. And that creates community. Solidarity says there is no difference between “me” and “you”—there is just “we.” At Maria, we describe this as aspire, achieve, become: a community in service to others.



WHERE:
 SR. MAUREEN JOYCE
 CENTER
 Schenectady, NY

WHAT:
 Served in the food
 pantry: stocked shelves,
 filled client orders
 and smaller bags for
 individuals, prepared
 carry-out bags.

“Although saddened by how many need food and necessities, I was amazed by the compassion and understanding of those at the food pantry.” ANNE DEVLIN,
 ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH



WHERE:
CITY MISSION
Schenectady, NY

WHAT:
Prepared and served
community meals at
the soup kitchen, sorted
donated clothing, filled
plastic eggs with treats
for Easter dinner.

*"To be there during lunch
and see staff and volunteers
interact with clients,
residents, and walk-ins was
really powerful."*

JENIFER WYGANT '17



WHERE:
MERCY FARM
Benson, VT

WHAT:
Helped feed the
chickens, planted
starter seeds, spruced
up the retreat space,
prepared a Saint
Patrick's Day feast.



CLASS NOTES

1970

Patricia Underwood went on to earn a BA in math from The College of Saint Rose in Albany and to found Underwood Services. The successful bookkeeping business marks its 25th anniversary in February. "I am fast coming up on retirement but planning to keep my business going for at least a few more years." Patricia enjoys being an aunt and great-aunt to her brother's and sister's children and grandchildren. She is very involved with the Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks (BPOE) and serves as Lodge Secretary for Lodge #141 in Troy.

1971

Carole Montepare was named vice president for client engagement at MVP Health Care.

1974

Lisa Tobin serves as director of development at Academy of the Holy Names in Albany.

1981

Robert Rider has been an RN for 34 years, loves his profession, and is "eternally grateful to the school for helping me fund my education."

1995

Ellen G. Smith Stanzone attended Utica College on weekends and attained her occupational therapist registered (OTR) credential in 2000. She and her husband live on the Zuni Reservation in western New Mexico, where they work with Native American students. Ellen says, "Having the opportunity to observe cultural events and engage with the Zuni people is really a highlight of living in this beautiful area."

1999

Renee Eleby Mejias works part time as a director of clinical services in Florida. She comes to Albany every year and visits Maria "where dreams come true."

2000

Jenifer Wygant works as a post anesthesia care unit (PACU) nurse at Memorial Hospital and is enrolled in Maria's RN to BSN program. She and her husband, Alex, have been married for 11 years and have two children, 8-year-old Ian and 3-year-old Luna.

Nga Malpezzi went back to school and earned her bachelor's degree in accounting from Sage College of Albany. She will receive her master's degree from Sage Graduate School this May and is working at the NYS Department of Tax and Finance. She shares: "I enjoyed my times at Maria College. The teachers and advisors were always available to lend a helping hand and an ear. It took me 10 years to earn my associate degree in accounting, but I did it. I have a lovely son, 14 years old, and I enjoy my times with my family."

2001

Patti Clickner is president and CEO of Clickner Security Inc. and has served as an adjunct instructor at Maria for the past 10 years.

Alisa R. Guyotte works in the PeriOperative Department at Ellis Hospital and is preparing for the CNOR exam to become certified as a perioperative nurse. After graduating from Maria in 2001, she was hired immediately by Albany Medical Center Hospital as a cardiac perioperative RN. She then worked for MVP Health Care as a transplant RN case manager and earned her certified case manager (CCM) and certified professional in healthcare management (CPHM) credentials.

2003

Mary MacDonald is a registered nurse case manager in the surgical intensive care unit (SICU) and neuro ICU at Albany Medical Center. She is enrolled in Maria's BSN program.



Hickey



Nancy and Alisa

2004

Linda Kindlon has been the baker/owner of Bake For You bakery on Delaware Avenue in Albany for the past six years.

Sandra Sankowski is having a wonderful time as an RN in the PACU at Ellis Ambulatory Surgery and shares: "Although I can retire at any time, I am finding it very hard to give up a career that I love."

2005

Diane Quinn has held many jobs, including orthopedics nurse at St. Peter's Hospital, substitute school nurse in the Bethlehem district, private home-care nurse for a friend's mom suffering from lung cancer, and endoscopy nurse at Albany Memorial Hospital. Currently, she is a case manager for Aetna insurance company—her "favorite job thus far."

2006

Meghan Hendrickson Hickey works in the SICU of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Durham, NC. She obtained her critical care registered nurse (CCRN) certification in 2013 and is pursuing her BSN at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, with an expected May 2016 graduation date. Meghan lives in Cary, NC, with her husband of six years, Chris, and sons Gunner (13) and Elliot (3).

Amanda Koennecke is pursuing her MS in neonatal health to become a neonatal nurse practitioner. She works at Albany Medical Center as an assistant nurse manager in the neonatal intensive care unit.

2008

Kim DeNitto is an occupational therapy assistant at the Center for Spectrum Services, where she was named the 2014 Ruby Rose Award winner for her exceptional job performance. A professional artist and photographer, Kim shares her creativity with her students in a therapeutic setting. She feels "so fortunate to have found a career that is both so gratifying and such a perfect fit."

2009

Adaya Young had a great experience at Maria. Now, she is embarking on a new career: running her own day care program in West Palm Beach, FL.

Alexandra Zimmerman credits Maria with helping her succeed in a career that has included working with Hospice and in hospital case management. She also reports that, due to a rare disease, she has been unable to participate in many of the activities she loves. Currently, Alexandra runs support groups for those suffering with Ehlers-Danlos syndrome.

2012

Cheryl Baruch lives in Lenox, MA, and splits her time between Berkshire Medical Center and Albany Medical Center.

Kori Tomelden was enrolled in Mercy College's online program but is taking the year off to "focus on blogging, chasing after my toddler, and starting a home-based business." She also is looking into home-schooling in the future. "When/if I do go back to college, I am definitely considering Maria."

2014

Marcel Cerny reports that she is working at the Albany Medical Center Emergency Department.



Tomeldon

IN MEMORIAM

**Sister Anne Lawlor, RSM
1922-2015**



A bit of Maria history slipped away June 11, with the passing of Sister Anne Lawlor, RSM. A Sister of Mercy for 62 years, Sister Anne dedicated her life to healing others. She founded the Maria College Physical Therapy Assistant program in 1971. Hundreds of students graduated and enjoyed careers as physical therapy assistants as a result of this well-respected program.

A licensed physical therapist, Sister Anne also established the physical therapy department at St. Peter's Hospital, where she was chief physical therapist and coordinator of rehabilitation medicine. At St. John's/St. Ann's parish, Sister Anne served as a pastoral associate responsible for outreach to the elderly.

In all of her ministries, Sister Anne was a source of spiritual, social, and educational support for so many. We mourn our loss but take comfort in knowing that her legacy lives on at Maria and in the surrounding community.

James Liptak '73, U.S. Navy medical corpsman and retired physician assistant; May 17.

Janet Becker '81, registered nurse at St. Peter's Hospital for 45 years, October 21.

Kimberly Edwards '86, registered nurse case manager at St. Peter's Hospital; April 3.

Marilyn Gray Briggs '87, labor and delivery nurse at several Capital Region hospitals, including 10 years at Saratoga Hospital; April 28.

Robin Burkhardt '06, emergency medical technician, cardiovascular technologist, and cardiac/coronary care unit (CCU) nurse; co-founded Cardiomentors group and worked to increase awareness of brain tumor symptoms; June 11.

Janney McMillan '12, AAS in management, worked at Morgan Linen Service; May 5.

Joseph Anthony Emma '13, award-winning bodybuilder; as LPN, worked with the elderly and those with disabilities; October 22, 2014

SUBMIT A NOTE

We would love to hear from you! Please specify your graduation year in your note and submit to alumni@mariamagazine.edu or Maria College, *Maria Magazine*, attn: Office of Development, 700 New Scotland Avenue, Albany, NY 12208.



CAN YOU IDENTIFY THESE PEOPLE?

Maria College librarians would like your help in identifying the individuals in the archived photo above. The picture is from a student/faculty dinner from the late 1960s-early 1970s. 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.



SOLVING THE MYSTERY

Our thanks to **Debbie Shea (Stevens) '73** and **Jo Ann (Burke) Clute '72** who helped us identify three of the four students in an archived photo included in the fall 2014 issue of *Maria Magazine*—and reprinted here. We now know that **Jackie O'Brien '73** is on the left; the late **James Liptak '73** is using the walker; and **Paul Mango '74** is on the right. We're still missing the name of the young woman to the right of Sister Lawlor. Can you help? If so, please send the answer to boucharde@mariacollege.edu.

FACULTY PROFILE

Anne Jung, Ph.D.
Chair of Liberal Arts



Providing a Pathway

BUILDING ON A STRONG LIBERAL ARTS FOUNDATION

WHILE COMPLETING her doctoral degree in English Studies at the University at Albany, SUNY which focused on 19th Century American Literature, Anne Jung, Ph.D., first came to Maria in 2012 and served as coordinator of the Peer Tutoring Program and instructor. In 2014 she was named chairperson of Liberal Arts and General Studies and was involved in developing the BA in liberal arts curriculum. Heading the BA program is the natural next step in a career that includes extensive experience as lecturer and researcher in Writing, Rhetoric and Composition, Cultural Studies, and American Literature, advisor and internship supervisor. The appointment also reflects her personal commitment to supporting others achieve their educational goals.

Dr. Jung, who also serves as an assistant professor, is determined to provide individuals with the tools they need to move forward. That determination is one of many reasons Dr. Jung is an excellent choice to head Maria's new baccalaureate degree program in liberal arts. Approved by the New York State Board of Regents in July, the program helps prepare students for today's workplace by equipping them with a solid foundation in critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills.

Students will specialize in one of two tracks—communications studies or government studies—and complete an internship that provides real-world experience and a competitive edge. “Research showed that both concentrations, in combination with internships, would be more likely to prepare our students for successful and fulfilling careers in this region,” Dr. Jung explains.

“I’m looking forward to placing our students in important internships,” she adds. Already, she’s having some success. For the first time, Maria students have been invited to apply for internships with the New York State Senate and Assembly.

To Dr. Jung, one of the most appealing aspects of Maria's BA in liberal arts program is that it provides a pathway—both for associate degree students who decide to continue their education and for bachelor's degree students who have a more advanced degree in their sights.

“The bachelor's degree is becoming the minimum standard for entry into well-paying jobs,” Dr. Jung says. “We've purposely designed our program to make it easy for our AA students to transition to the next level—to provide an opportunity that they otherwise might have been hesitant to pursue.

“For those who want to take their education even further,” she adds, “this program lays the necessary foundation for graduate-level study. I am very excited to build the BA on Maria's rich tradition as a liberal arts college.”

FULFILLING THE PROMISE OF HEOP

The five-year grant offers new opportunities for students.



SEIN THAN

THROUGH ITS participation in the Higher Education Opportunity Program (HEOP), Maria is opening doors for students like Sein Than, who previously could only dream of a college education.

Sein's path to Maria has been winding and often difficult. Now, with help from the College and HEOP, the Burma refugee is optimistic that his journey will end in a degree.

He joined the program last year, as part of Maria's second class of HEOP students. As such, he receives financial assistance, one-on-one counseling, and academic support. The goal is to make a college education possible for students who show promise despite economic and educational disadvantages.

HEOP is a partnership between the New York State Education Department (NYSED) and independent higher education institutions. Maria

received its first HEOP grant in fall 2014, and funding will continue for five years. During that time, Maria expects to support 35 students.

HEOP Director Kelli Johnson, M.Ed., designed and implemented Maria's HEOP initiative, including a required pre-freshman summer program that introduces students to Maria's opportunities—and expectations.

She also instituted programs to help students realize the maximum benefit of study groups. Because Maria is a commuter college, Johnson reached out to members of students' external support systems, emphasizing and applauding their role in the students' success.

"To start this type of program from scratch is very challenging—and very rewarding," Johnson says.

Sein came to Maria at the recommendation of John Harden, JD, Ph.D., whom Sein considers his adopted father. The two met in November 2012 at the Writing Partnership, a nonprofit program that Dr. Harden founded to promote literacy. Sein was new to Albany, needed a place to live, and the Hardens opened their home to him.

A member of Burma's Karen ethnic minority, Sein was smuggled out of that country at age 12 after the military set fire to his village. He spent eight years in a refugee camp in Thailand before the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants relocated Sein to Idaho. There he learned of Albany's Karen community. Sein traveled to the Capital Region and has been taking advantage of educational opportunities ever since.

At the Capital District Equal Opportunity Center, Sein completed the highest level course in English as a second language and was named Student of Distinction and Student of Excellence. His first experience at Maria was as a part-time student enrolled in two classes, in 2013. "When a position opened up in the HEOP program," Dr. Harden says, "I knew this was a good fit for him." Dr. Harden is familiar with HEOP because of his role as a faculty member and assistant director of student success and academic advising at Siena College in Loudonville.

Months after joining the HEOP program, Sein sees a difference. As a part-time student, he'd struggled in part because he was unfamiliar with the resources available at Maria. That changed after the pre-freshman summer program—not just for Sein but also for his classmates. At the end of four weeks, students who originally were assessed as needing extra help no longer required remediation.

"The summer program had prepared them for a challenging, full-time college curriculum," Johnson says. "They'd met the first of many goals."

"To start this type of program from scratch is very challenging—and very rewarding."

KELLI JOHNSON,
HEOP DIRECTOR



ALUMNA PROFILE

Carmen Duncan '05
Mission Accomplished
Transition Services



Mission Accomplished

HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE NAVIGATE THE
PATH TO SUCCESS

IN JUST 11 YEARS, Maria alumna Carmen Duncan '05, made the transformation from homeless teenager to founder and CEO of Mission Accomplished Transition Services, a nonprofit organization that helps young people navigate the path to success.

The transformation process was often difficult, and Duncan gives credit to all who encouraged her to aim high and persevere, starting with her parents. Their example—of entrepreneurship, dedication, and work ethic—still guides her today.

At Maria, one of Duncan's staunchest supporters was Barbara Palumbo, who recently retired as assistant director of the Learning Resource Center. "Certain individuals come into your life for a reason, and Barbara was one of those for me," Duncan recalls. "She always told me, 'Carmen, you have a right to get a degree.' She never got frustrated even though, at times, it must have been exasperating trying to keep me focused."

Duncan received an associate degree in liberal arts from Maria in 2005 and a Bachelor of Science in psychology from Sage Colleges of Albany in 2008. She went on to earn a Master of Social Work from the State University of New York at Albany (UAlbany) in 2012. That same

year, Duncan completed a certificate program in nonprofit management and leadership at UAlbany's Rockefeller College of Public Affairs and Policy—and founded Mission Accomplished.

Today, in addition to heading that organization, Duncan is an adjunct professor in the graduate program at UAlbany's School of Social Welfare and a curriculum design and training specialist at Parsons Child and Family Center in Albany. Duncan also volunteers and serves on the boards of several human services organizations. She is most proud of her appointment to New York State's Runaway and Homeless Youth Advisory Committee.

Her current situation is a far cry from that in 2001, when she was 17 with no place to live. Through the Equinox Transitional Living Program, she was placed in an apartment and assigned a caring, committed caseworker. The case worker, along with Duncan's best friend and a guidance counselor at Albany High School, insisted that Duncan pursue a college education.

Maria proved to be the perfect choice. "It was a very positive experience," Duncan says. "Maria provides a small, intimate environment where students can flourish instead of getting lost in the crowd."

She creates a similar experience for those who turn to Mission Accomplished. The organization is Duncan's way of "paying it forward"—something she plans to do at Maria as well. As a Maria student, she was encouraged to seize every opportunity. Now, as a successful alumna, Duncan is determined to do the same for others, serving as a resource for alumni, students, and the entire Maria community.

MARIA COLLEGE BOOKSTORE

Books and supplies, including those required for nursing program
Clothing | Jewelry | Diploma Frames | Blankets | Snacks | Assortment of gift items



AAS Nursing Pin
1.25" pin with Maria College seal and Florence Nightingale symbol



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