In this issue

Take a look back at the colorful history of Alvernia College

Carolyn and Jerry Holleran make an impact on community engagement

Explore Catholic social teaching and the 2008 Elections with Father William J. Byron, S.J.
President’s Message

“I thank Alvernia and those who educated me. Alvernia has had a lasting and profound impact on my career and life.”

So said Walter Biondi ’75 in a congratulatory email he sent the College in May of 2008.

And what a memorable year 2008 will be! We celebrate our golden anniversary, a testament to the vision and values of the Bernardine Sisters who founded Alvernia.

Our anniversary began with the Spring Commencement and continued with June’s biennial National Symposium of the Association of Franciscan Colleges and Universities and a summertime alumni picnic—the return of a tradition from years gone by. By the time you read this, the celebration will have resumed in grand style with Founders Day weekend. And much more is to come!

This special anniversary issue includes a whirlwind tour of Alvernia’s history by Sr. Rosemary Stets, OSF ’71, Vice President of Mission, and a nostalgic salute to our participation in the Pennsylvania Athletic Conference (PAC). With all the marvelous archival materials and photos, it seemed fitting to turn to College Archivist Gene Mitchell for his reflections on our collection.

We welcome a distinguished guest columnist for this issue’s “Mission Moment,” William J. Byron, S.J., Past President of the Catholic University of America and the University of Scranton. His column is a synopsis of a stimulating presentation, “Conscience, the Common Good, and the Campaign,” from the 2008 Spring Lecture Series. He presents the tenets of Catholic Social Teaching through the lens of the Beatitudes as a guide for us to evaluate our pols before we head to the polls!

The year has opened with by far the largest new class in history—almost 500 first-year and transfer students. A renovated student center awaited them, bounded by the Campus Commons, an idyllic new green space at the centre of campus. Twelve new faculty have joined other good colleagues, many of whose accomplishments are chronicled in this issue. The Holleran Center is building great energy on campus and in our community. A potentially historic announcement regarding university status is anticipated soon.

Looking forward to the future is more rewarding when we are proud of the past. At Alvernia, educating students of all ages has always involved application as well as learning for learning’s sake. Our graduates contribute greatly to the economic vitality of our city and county and to many communities well beyond. They are active in civic and social service, whether professionally or as volunteers. And they are inspired by values modeled by the Sisters and many lay women and men who have served as faculty and staff. Walter Biondi has spoken for our alumni: the Alvernia experience is life-changing.

In just the next two months, besides on-campus events, we will have eight regional alumni events, from Lehigh to Lancaster, New York to Tampa! I hope you’ll join me and many others on these or other occasions as we honor the past, celebrate the present, and envision the future.

Peace and all good,

Thomas F. Flynn
President
Alumni are invited to check out the new alumni Website with a user-friendly interface at www.alumni.alvernia.edu.

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More than 370 graduating seniors walked across the Reading Eagle Theatre stage on May 17, 2008, marking the first official event in Alvernia’s 50th anniversary celebration.

This year’s spring commencement (successfully moved to Sovereign Center’s Reading Eagle Theatre) featured Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr. as the guest speaker. Most Rev. Edward P. Cullen (Bishop of Allentown) celebrated Baccalaureate Mass on Alvernia’s campus earlier in the day. Both speakers were awarded doctoral degrees of Humane Letters. Janice Miller, Wyomissing, and all the Bernardine Franciscan Sisters who served as board members were awarded Trustee Emerita, and education graduate Lynsey Treadwell delivered a student address.

Senator Casey congratulates a new Alvernia graduate.

Bishop Cullen, President Flynn, and Senator Casey applaud Alvernia graduates at the 2008 Spring Commencement.

Sr. Jacinta Kimaro of Tanzania, East Africa (master of arts) was the ceremonial tassel turner.

Justin Ludwig (bachelor of science in math & communication, cum laude) received an award for excellence in video and television production.
Avernia’s chapter of the Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) organization partnered with all four inner-city Reading middle schools to hold the third annual Olympic Day at Alvernia College in April.

More than 120 Reading middle school students spent the day competing in team sports such as kickball, dodgeball, tug-of-war, and relay races, and individual competitions like football punting and softball distance throwing. Olympic Day is the culmination of a 10-week SIFE program in which middle school students learn the business side of athletics and how to run a major sporting event.

SIFE standouts, Stan Jasper (communication major) and Amanda Fenkner (double sport management and marketing major), were on-hand to coordinate the event with a large group of Alvernia student-athlete volunteers. Several athletics staff members also spent time talking to the kids about college and athletics.

“This was such a great opportunity for all our students along with the youth of our community,” said Nicole Rhoads, Student-Athlete Services Coordinator at Alvernia. “About 30 student-athletes volunteered time to help run the SIFE activities, and this really helped run things smoothly.”

Alvernia students visit Cumru Elementary School

Several Alvernia students visited a local Governor Mifflin school to decorate and take part in a special elementary education program last week, as part of Jennifer Michalak’s ED 314 class, “Teaching the Arts.”

The program helped second-graders understand what it was like to walk in the footsteps of colonial-time slaves, traveling on the Underground Railroad from Maryland to Canada. Students, dressed in ripped “slave” clothing and bandanas, danced, traveled through water and over mountains, ate typical food from the period, and took part in many learning discussions. They also made projects and took a virtual trip, as runaway slaves, in the school’s computer lab.
The Alvernia College business department has selected Justin Grube of Denver, Pennsylvania, as this year's William G. McGowan Scholar. Grube, who is majoring in sport management, receives a full scholarship for his senior year at Alvernia.

Established in 1995 by MCI Communications' founding Chairman, William G. McGowan, the Charitable Fund provides select colleges and universities with a program to identify and support outstanding students who are pursuing degrees in business and who contribute to their communities. Students are selected based on excellent academic performance, community service, leadership, exemplary character, and entrepreneurial potential.

This year's Alvernia College recipient, Justin Grube, is an excellent student (maintaining a 3.69 GPA) and is a member and Treasurer of Alvernia's Lambda Zeta Chapter of the Delta Mu Delta International Business Administration Honor Society. A leader on campus, Grube is also Treasurer of the Sport Management Association (SMA) and the Sports Editor, Layout Manager, and writer for the Alvernian newspaper. In addition, Grube has organized and participated in numerous volunteer activities, including assisting Cocalico High School's wrestling team and participating as a fundraiser and walker in a recent 24-hour Relay for Life event.

About the award, Grube said, “I am very excited to benefit from William G. McGowan’s innovation and entrepreneurship represented by the McGowan Fund’s awards to college students such as myself. This award allows me additional opportunities to network with professionals in my field, and its prestige affords me greater credibility.” He continued, “It is a humbling experience to receive this award and to be included in the company of other excellent students who have received this award in the past.” Grube plans to pursue a career as a Sports Information Director.

Grube will be awarded a tuition scholarship at Alvernia College of up to $18,000 for the academic year 2008-09. The maximum scholarship received is equal to tuition less institutional, federal, state, or private grants and/or scholarships.

Founder of MCI Communications, William G. McGowan led the company until his death in 1992. As a student, McGowan built upon a working class upbringing in Pennsylvania coal country, worked his way through an undergraduate degree at King’s College in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., and attended Harvard Business School, where his second year was funded by a Baker Scholarship. His experience led him to establish the McGowan Scholars Program. More information on McGowan is available on the foundation’s web site at www.mcgowanfund.org.

The purpose of the William G. McGowan Scholars Program is to:

1. Recognize academic achievement and excellence of performance of students majoring in business.
2. Encourage leadership ability, interpersonal skills, and significant involvement in academic, campus and community activities.
3. Reward excellence of character and other exemplary qualities including intellectual curiosity, a spirit of innovation, and entrepreneurial potential.
4. Increase the awareness of the contribution made by William G. McGowan, founder and Chairman of MCI Communications Corporation, to the fields of business, telecommunications, and entrepreneurship.

Alvernia’s stirring spring production of Romeo and Juliet was a fully participating show in the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival system. As a result, two respondents (working professionals with experience with academic theatre) visited the College to view separate performances.

For their excellent performances, David Lloyd (Romeo), Mark Molchaney (Lord Capulet), and Andrew Wedlock (Friar Laurence) were nominated for participation in the upcoming Irene Ryan scholarship competition. Sarah Heckman (Benvolio) and Richard Fields (Tybalt) were selected as alternates.

Both respondents commented very favorably about the performances of graduating seniors Rachel Penny (Juliet) and Donald Diliplane (Mercutio), but noted that the Irene Ryan competition is for undergraduates.

In addition to performer honors, Melissa Guyer was nominated for an award for Outstanding Design for her set and lighting design.

The lead cast of Romeo and Juliet, (from left to right) top: Anthony Amado, Daniel Hartung (a Kennedy Center student), bottom: Rachel Penny, Bryan Otruba, and Donald Diliplane, performed the show for more than 500 High school students.
EL SALVADOR

Sixteen students and three Alvernia staff members spent their 2008 spring break in El Salvador, lodged at a volunteer house in San Salvador and working in the villages of Las Delicias and Las Granadillas.

The volunteers helped with the construction of a library and provided before and after school programming for children in Las Delicias. In Las Granadillas, the group helped construct buildings and paint a local church.

While in San Salvador, Alvernians also had the opportunity to learn about a lot of the country’s tempestuous history. After working at the Malnutrition Clinic for infants, they visited the hospital where Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero lived and was murdered; the University of Central America where six Jesuits, their housekeeper and her daughter were murdered; an orphanage; and the Cathedral in downtown San Salvador.

HELPING HANDS CLOSE TO HOME

This first-ever Reading Alternative Break was held from May 18-23 throughout the City of Reading. Participants stayed in a downtown church and did service work at many different organizations throughout the area. Besides giving back to the city that Alvernia calls home, the goal of the trip was to orient Alvernia’s students to downtown Reading.

The group stayed busy helping out at places like Mary’s Home, Central Park United Methodist’s Soup Kitchen, Kennedy House, Centro Hispano, St. Peter the Apostle’s Cemetery, Opportunity House, and Holy Cross United Methodist. They also had the chance to see some of the sights of Reading, including the Pagoda, the Fire Tower, a Reading Phillies game, and the GoggleWorks. The group was also treated to a complimentary last supper at the Peanut Bar.

Overall, the students enjoyed their experience, and hope that this new Alternative Break trip can continue in the future, so that more students experience Reading at its best.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Two Alvernia student-athletes represented the Pennsylvania Athletic Conference during the first week of March helping to build homes for low-income families in York. The group of twelve PAC athletes worked on a section of five town-houses that had been damaged in a fire more than 20 years ago. Alvernia’s Christy Yousaitis and Charlie Hughes helped to place fire retardant drywall between the houses.

Alvernia freshman Christy Yousaitis (field hockey) and sophomore Charlie Hughes (basketball) spent their Spring Break helping the Pennsylvania Athletic Conference fulfill its 15th Anniversary Year of Service project by lending a hand to a Habitat For Humanity project in York, Pa.

Pictured at top: (from left to right) Camille Cloutier, Joclyn Drum, Danielle Fitzpatrick, and Kim Stoudt. Left: Courtney Renshaw worked with children in a San Salvador Orphanage. Right: Volunteers worked hard during their trip to El Salvador.

Alvernia students (from left to right) Camille Cloutier, Bryan Otruba, Christopher Fake, and Danielle Fitzpatrick spent the first week of their summer break doing service in downtown Reading with staff members Jessica Umbenhauer (CCE) and Joanna Pressimone (campus ministry).
Alvernia hosts Association of Franciscan Colleges and Universities Conference

Alvernia College hosted more than 235 delegates from 23 Franciscan colleges and universities across the United States during the 2008 Franciscan Symposium from Thursday, June 5, to Saturday, June 7.

The event was co-sponsored by the Bernardine Franciscan Sisters and the Neumann Institute for Franciscan Studies at Neumann College, and included dozens of stimulating sessions, panel discussions, networking and social events, and entertainment. It was the largest such gathering since the Association of Franciscan Colleges and Universities began meeting in 2004.

Conference planning was led by Sr. Rosemary Stets in collaboration with Provost Shirley Williams and an AFCU task force.

“Franciscan institutions have a unique story to tell as well as a mission that has value for students and the local and global communities in which they work and serve. It was also a fine opportunity to showcase Alvernia among our Franciscan peers,” said President Thomas F. Flynn, and a member of the AFCU Board.

“Alvernia’s faculty played prominent roles as planners and presenters. And the event showcased the exceptional team work and service of our staff in Facilities and Operations, Public Safety, Food Service, Marketing, Campus Ministry, Information Technology, and the Library. Student Ambassadors were indispensable to the success of the event.”

Sr. M. Pacelli, Alvernia College professor emerita, reads an excerpt from a book by Father Pascal during the Open Mic event Friday night.

President Thomas F. Flynn welcomes AFCU delegates during the formal opening.

Miro Lowosz, multimedia specialist, demonstrates a virtual tour of the Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi for delegates.

“To Learn, To Love, To Serve.”
In 2008, Alvernia College stands on the threshold of university status. Alvernia’s fifty-year journey began with a bold vision of the Bernardine Franciscan Sisters…
Celebrating Fifty Years

The Alvernia story—chronicled by decade

The ’60s—Beginnings

With very little money but with enormous drive and spirit, Alvernia was founded as a four-year liberal arts college by the Bernardine Franciscan Sisters in 1958 to educate the younger members of the congregation who were aspiring teachers. The first building, Francis Hall, was originally an orphanage, later becoming a girl’s high school. By 1960 it was renovated to accommodate a chapel, library, dining hall, auditorium, a student lounge remodeled from an old furnace room, classrooms, small gym, science and education labs, administrative offices, a lecture hall, and a wing that served as a dormitory for women. Alvernia received its Charter from the State of Pennsylvania that same year, and in 1961, the first lay women were accepted as students. Sr. M. Zygmunta, the founding president of Alvernia, described her vision for the institution as “a college which is faithful to Catholic philosophy and Franciscan ideals, which aims to develop the intellectual, spiritual, moral, social and physical potential of students, to prepare them for their role in the Church, in the home, and in society.”
Many sisters did not hesitate to seek benefactors from among their family members and friends and to elicit donations from the various parishes and institutions where they were missioned.

From the very beginning, the Bernardine Franciscan congregation invested enormous personal and financial resources in the college enterprise. Many sisters did not hesitate to seek benefactors from among their family members and friends and to elicit donations from the various parishes and institutions where they were missioned. When a Bernardine Sister from the college faculty attended an educational conference and won a $1,000 piano, it was promptly donated to the music department. The college faculty of sisters were very devoted to scholarship, curriculum development, and the cultivation of a well-rounded student experience. In 1961, the Superintendent of Schools in Allentown selected Alvernia to serve as a teacher-training center for all beginning lay teachers contracted to work in the diocesan school system.

The dynamic growth in the first decade of Alvernia life is impressive. The first graduating class consisted of four Bernardine Franciscan sisters; by 1969, the class numbered 39, of which only nine were sisters. In the early '60s, Alvernia hosted visiting professors such as the Music Director from New York City University, and distinguished foreign lecturers from Brazil and West Germany. Alvernia's faculty became a leading force in teacher education and pioneered several remedial programs in math, reading, and language arts that formed the basis for innovative change in the school systems throughout eastern Pennsylvania.

Student life in the '60s seemed nostalgic and far-removed for the fast-paced, techno-savvy student of the '90s, but alums from the '60s glow with enthusiasm and appreciation when they revisit Alvernia's campus today. Dr. Marie Nowakowski, from the first graduating class in 1961, credits Alvernia with teaching her skills for organization, leadership, and independent thinking. She writes that Alvernia prepared her for her professional career "by nurturing a sense of creativity and spontaneity which guided her through grad school and a grueling psych internship." She

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remembers Alvernia’s faculty for their personal interest: “the librarian who knew my favorite author; the college president who allowed me to challenge her political convictions in a government class.” Mary Ann (Schaeffer) D’Alonzo, class of ’69, thanks Alvernia for the opportunity to form friendships which have spanned more than 35 years. She remembers a peaceful, beautiful campus “where we could think, learn, figure out who we were and where we were headed in life.” She has fond memories of beautiful traditions that nourished the imagination and spirit of the developing young adult, such as the regally formal President’s Dinner with the entire faculty and student body celebrating together the feast of Christmas. In the ’60s, Alvernia College was a small school with a big dream. It was founded by a group of women totally committed to excellence and quality in higher education and they held fast to that conviction in every adversity. In the ’70s, the dream would continue to unfold, in ways that the founding sisters could never have imagined.

In the ’70s, Alvernia College made an important transition from a women’s college emphasizing education and teacher preparation to a co-ed campus featuring career opportunities and programs to attract a diverse student population. It was an important but difficult change, and it required strong leadership and imagination. Alvernia was the youngest and smallest of four colleges in Berks County competing for students; it needed an innovative and creative curriculum to guarantee survival. In this decade, six major programs were added to the curriculum, and this quadrupled the enrollment to 860 students by 1980. An article that appeared in the Reading Eagle as early as September 1975 hinted at this growth, praising the college for its ability to turn around and come back stronger. “In a textbook example of educational Darwinism, the Bernardine Sisters have learned to be flexible. And this flexibility has converted 16-year old Alvernia from a Catholic women’s college threatened with sinking enrollment and budget deficits to a co-ed college where nuns teach the liberal arts to policemen.”

The key to a changing image at Alvernia was the innovative Institute for Law and Justice, a four-year baccalaureate program in criminal justice introduced in 1974. This creative venture set the standard of professionals teaching professionals, and launched additional professional programs at Alvernia, including nursing, business, addictions studies, and social work. Campus expansion also marked this decade with buildings being remodeled.
Members of the Class of 1983 pose on the steps of Bernardine Hall.

In 1990, construction on the Franco Library began, a structure best known for the large statue of St. Francis over the entrance, shown here being lowered into place. In 1990, construction on the Franco Library began, a structure best known for the large statue of St. Francis over the entrance, shown here being lowered into place.

As Alvernia continued to grow, it still managed to keep tuition low and affordable to those who valued the small and personal school.

The '80s—A Decade of Change

In 1983, Alvernia College celebrated its 25th Anniversary under the leadership of its third president, Sr. M. Dolorey, who continued to expand the physical plant, and built a competitive sports program which would evolve to Division III athletics. With additional new lay trustees on the board and a growing body of alumni, Alvernia began to forge partnerships within the community and to look beyond campus borders to influence a broader population.

In 1985, the college launched a Continuing Education Evening Division with flexible modular scheduling to accommodate the non-traditional student seeking a degree while working or raising a family. Two satellite campuses were opened, in Philadelphia and Pottsville, and research began toward establishing a master's program in education.

During this decade of change, Alvernia began to upgrade its technology, and by the end of the decade, computer science led the field of popular new majors. With desktop computers making in-house publishing a reality, several campus publications were launched, including the college newspaper, a literary and news magazine, the yearbook, and new marketing brochures. Most amazing, as Alvernia continued to grow, it still managed to keep tuition low and affordable to those who valued the small and personal school. At the end of the decade, Alvernia College was ranked 39th among 100 private schools in the nation listed in a survey of “Best College Buys” conducted by Money magazine, moving ahead of LaSalle University in Philadelphia, Scranton University, and King’s College in Wilkes-Barre. Truly, Alvernia College was an institution with a strong future, and its core values and Franciscan mission continued to drive the contemporary trends and changing scenes of college life. Offering 26 baccalaureate programs and three associate programs, Alvernia’s enrollment had climbed to 1,100 with a student-faculty ratio of 14:1 as it continued to stress the Catholic, Franciscan tradition of a core liberal arts education as the basis for a career, a profession, and for life.

The '90s—Building Traditions

In its fourth decade, Alvernia again experienced new leadership and more campus changes: new buildings, climbing enrollment, increased faculty and staff, and recognition for a commitment to values and service. Dr. Daniel L. DeLuca, the fourth and first lay President at Alvernia, made values an institutional priority by promoting a clear mission statement to affirm the Catholic, Franciscan identity of Alvernia, and articulating the theme of service with a singular mission motto: “To Learn, To Love, To Serve.” In recognition of these efforts, Alvernia was honored by the John Templeton Foundation in 1997 when selected for its Honor Roll of Character Building Colleges, citing Alvernia’s service requirement as an outstanding contribution to the community.

During this decade, Alvernia opened the Frank A. Franco Library and Learning Center, an impressive centrally located building that became the core of a campus learning environment encompassing 12 new townhouse residence halls serving a resident population of 250 students, a number which would grow to 1,300 by the end of the decade. During this period, the endowment reached $8 million, providing the ability to offer additional financial scholarships for merit and need.

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With the explosive growth of technology, Alvernia entered cyberspace with Internet access, e-mail, and a college Website. In 1997, the Board of Trustees appointed Dr. Laurence Mazzeno as the fifth President of Alvernia College, and he began several building projects which included a $5 million Student Center, a new college main entrance, additional parking lots, a new apartment-style residence hall, and the O’Pake Science Center extension to Bernardine Hall. In 1998, Alvernia was granted approval for three masters’ programs, all linked by a common focus of leadership and ethics in the public and private sectors. In addition to changes in traditional curriculum offerings, the faculty approved a Human Diversity Course policy, a Service Learning fourth credit option, and the development of a College Honors Program. The college also adopted a governance model with a provost and division structure which included faculty deans to oversee the academic growth at the college. At the end of the decade, Alvernia was poised for new challenges in the coming millennium.

In the first year of his tenure, he launched three major initiatives: a comprehensive $27 million capital campaign, a new campus master plan, and a new long-range strategic plan that would position Alvernia as a regional leader in higher education. The college acquired the Upland Center for Graduate and Adult Education and partnered with the city of Reading for a long-term lease of Angelica Park. This allowed for an ambitious campus renovation that included upgrades to existing buildings, a revamped residential program with projections for added enrollment, a beautiful green Campus Commons in place of a congested center-campus parking lot, and an application to the state Department of Education for university status.

In mid-decade, Alvernia was invited to join a larger regional athletic conference, the Middle Atlantic Conference, and in June of 2008, sponsored its first national academic conference for the Association of Franciscan Colleges and Universities for 23 attending institutions. The Bernardine Franciscan Sisters’ new Conference Center adjacent to their renovated Motherhouse afforded the college a stunning space for public events and lectures organized by the Holleran Center for Community Engagement and the Center for Ethics and Leadership.

As Alvernia completes its first half-century of progress, the institution is poised to celebrate its 50th Anniversary with events and programs to highlight its growth and success in the past five decades, while pointing to a future promising more of the same.

Congratulations to all who share in this remarkable journey!
Tina Wise graduated in 2000 with a bachelor of social work degree. She has worked for the Berks County Office of Aging as a Care Manager for the guardianship program, for almost three years. She lives outside of Bernville with her husband and four-year-old daughter, Shelby.

On her most memorable teacher…
My most memorable teacher was Dr. Vigna. I think I had him for three different classes, all in one semester. We never quite knew what was going to come out of his mouth next. He would tell us stories about how he’d go home and sit on his stairs and meditate on his goldfish swimming in the fish tank.

On things she misses…
The thing I miss most about Alvernia is my friends. Being in the OT program, we had nearly all of the same classes together, and we became like family.

On how Alvernia changed her…
College changed me by making me more independent and helped to develop my leadership skills.

On hindsight…
When I was at Alvernia I wish I had taken more time for self-development. Now that I am older, I am taking classes in pottery and guitar. These are things I could have learned as part of my education at Alvernia.

On the community of Alvernia…
The thing that surprised me most about Alvernia was that the professors actually cared about me as a person. The first college I attended was a large state school and I was lucky if any of my professors knew my name, let alone my personal strengths and goals.

On great influences…
The one thing about Alvernia that I will never forget is the Mission de Amistad trip to the Dominican Republic. Aside from the influence of my parents, I don’t think there has ever been a greater influence that has molded me into the person I am today. Participating in that trip has helped to shape my career path, my relationships, and my values.

Dawn Martz-Porter was a member of the first graduating class from Alvernia’s occupational therapy program in 1998, and returned to Alvernia in 2003 to complete her MBA in 2003. She currently works as a Health Systems Specialist at the VA Medical Center in Coatesville, and lives in Honey Brook with husband, Tim, and one-year-old son, Evan.

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Alvernia’s final PAC season on the books is the ideal occasion to measure the accomplishments of the athletic program during the same time: 93 appearances in conference championships (culminating in 23 team titles), 18 different student-athletes honored as PAC Player of the Year in their respective sports (five of them earned the award twice), and 419 All-Conference awards collected by the Crusaders.

Alvernia’s success in the PAC is a testament to the talent that can be culled from Division III athletes when combined with stellar coaching and the leadership to elevate Alvernia’s athletic program to signature status.

As a bit of background, the PAC announced its formation in February of 1992 at a press conference hosted at Veterans Stadium. Alvernia was one of ten charter members. Though it was the school’s first NCAA conference membership, the Crusaders wasted no time making their mark, earning two conference championships that first year in golf and baseball.

Baseball’s early PAC success must be credited to long-time Coach Yogi Lutz, who brought a strong program into the PAC and led the Crusaders baseball team to dominance, adding seven more PAC Titles and having three players (Todd Meyer, Anthony Recker, and Zach Lutz, son of Coach Lutz) finish their collegiate careers as two-time PAC Players of the Year. Meyer, the Crusaders’ home run king, went on to play in the Montreal Expos minor league system. Recker and Lutz are both young stars in systems of the Oakland A’s and New York Mets, respectively.

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Vice President of Enrollment John R. McCloskey ’94, M’01, who served as Athletic Director from 2001 to 2007, cited Yogi Lutz as one of Alvernia’s standout coaches. Lutz finished his final PAC season with an overall record of 557-265-5 and was honored three times as PAC coach of the year. His reputation for winning and growing athletes has allowed the baseball program to flourish.

In 1989, Coach Kevin Calabria arrived on the Alvernia campus with an assignment to start Alvernia’s women’s basketball program from scratch. By 1994, Alvernia won its first PAC championship and another in 1998. Calabria, also one of Alvernia’s winningest coaches with an overall record of 355-169, produced four All-Americas, racked up six appearances in NCAA championship tournaments, and added three more PAC championship titles in 2002, 2004, and 2005. McCloskey called Calabria “a remarkable coach who mentors his athletes.”

Pioneering Coach Jack McCloskey led men’s basketball to two PAC titles and four NCAA appearances, including an NCAA at-large bid in 1997 through which they advanced to the Division III Final Four. Alvernia still remains the only PAC basketball team to reach the Final Four. The success of the men’s basketball program continued when Jack McCloskey’s long-time assistant Mike Miller took the reins in 2003, coaching the men’s team to two more PAC titles and two NCAA bids in less than five years.

By 2004, championship teams in Varsity sports other than baseball and basketball emerged. Men’s tennis won its first PAC title in 2004, and that fall, the field hockey program began a streak of four straight finals appearances and three consecutive NCAA invitations.

Alvernia field hockey won its first title in 2005 and became the first PAC team to advance to the second round of the NCAA Championship with a 2-1 win over Lynchburg College. Like women’s basketball, the field hockey program started with low numbers—nine players in Coach
Laura Gingrich's first season. Both men's tennis and field hockey added a second conference title in 2007, and between 2004 and 2007 both basketball programs and the baseball team managed to post back-to-back championships.

The Crusaders' success on the field has gone hand-in-hand with success in the classroom during their years in the PAC. Since 1995, when the PAC began recognizing athletes whose grade point average surpassed a 3.2 in their season of competition, 811 of Alvernia's student-athletes have earned the honor. In 2006 Alvernia field hockey player Carey Manzolillo, who was the Crusaders’ second of four straight PAC Field Hockey Players of the Year, earned one of the highest academic honors available when she was chosen as an Academic All-American by the College Sports Information Directors Association. In 2007-08, 90 student-athletes earned All-PAC Academic honors, including team highs in men's basketball, baseball, golf, and tennis.

“I always measured the success of our athletics program by more than wins and losses,” explained former director McCloskey. “Our retention rates and graduation rates, our students’ academic success, these things were of foremost importance to me.”

Besides growing hundreds of scholar-athletes, Alvernia also built some meaningful rivalries in the PAC in memorable matchups with fellow charter members Cabrini College and Gwynedd-Mercy College.

“We respected each other’s program even though there was no love lost in the rivalry,” said men’s basketball coach Mike Miller. “Playing Cabrini in the PAC was a great rivalry because the winner was usually the league champion. I would compare it to the Yankees vs. Red Sox rivalry because both teams would play their hardest.” Although the schools will be in different leagues this year, Alvernia plans to continue playing Cabrini to keep the rivalry going.

The Gwynedd-Mercy Griffins and the Crusaders also played meaningful games in nearly every postseason in women’s basketball. Ten PAC women’s basketball titles are shared between the two schools with Alvernia topping Gwynedd-Mercy in the final for four of its five titles. In PAC baseball history, Alvernia and Gwynedd-Mercy hold seven of the last eight titles with the two schools going toe-to-toe in six of those deciding games.

As with any change there will be a period of adjustments. Two other PAC foes (Eastern and Misericordia) will also experience the transition to the Freedom Conference this year. All three schools will be reunited with former PAC counterparts DeSales and Arcadia (members of the MAC’s Commonwealth Conference).

Alvernia’s PAC participation was an extraordinary run and has prepared the college well for the more competitive MAC, according to McCloskey. Under his aegis, the number of sports programs and roster size increased, and Alvernia teams became more competitive in preparation for such a move.

“I have confidence in our student athletes and our coaches,” McCloskey said. “We will be able to compete and represent Alvernia as a leader in this new conference, poised for even greater success.”

The first home games of the upcoming fall season, and a new chapter in Alvernia athletics, began August 30. Check out the athletics website (www.athletics.alvernia.edu) to follow your Crusaders on their new quest through the Freedom Conference.

Celebrating Fifty Years

Terrence Shawell takes a jumper against Gwynedd Mercy.

The Alvernia Crusader gets fans into the action at basketball games.
During the 2004 presidential election campaign in the United States, there was much discussion about how Catholics should vote and how presidential candidates and other office seekers matched up against Catholic teaching, values, principles, and ideals. My suggestion was then (and still is) to hold up candidates and their party platforms against the background of the Beatitudes, articulated by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, which reminds us that the core message of Christianity is summarized in the Beatitudes. It also encourages a second look at the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, a body of doctrine that relates to issues raised in the Beatitudes.

In the fifth chapter of Matthew’s gospel, you will find this account of the teaching Jesus presenting a summary of what it means to be a Christian, even though at that point in history there were no Christians. Nor was there a Catholic Church. But the following set of ideas, intended to both describe and define Catholic Christians, was there for all within range of the voice of Christ to consider many centuries ago, the so-called “Beatitudes”—happiness qualities, blessings, although it takes faith to see the happiness there, to welcome them as blessings in your life. There are eight categories: (1) the poor in spirit, (2) those who mourn, (3) the meek, (4) those who hunger and thirst for justice, (5) the merciful, (6) the single-hearted, (7) the peacemakers, and (8) the persecuted.

Let me begin making this connection between the Beatitudes and the principles of Catholic social teaching, and then linking both to the 2008 election, by remarking that principles, once internalized, lead to something. They prompt activity, impel motion, direct choices. A principled person always has a place to stand, knows where he or she is coming from and likely to end up. Principles always lead the person who possesses them somewhere, for some purpose, to do something, or choose not to.

What are those Catholic social principles that are to be accepted as an essential part of the faith? I have culled ten from a 1998 statement of U.S. bishops. As we proceed through this list, listen for echoes of the Beatitudes in the Gospels and consider how these principles, internalized can lead to action:

1. The Principle of Human Dignity
   “Every human being is created in the image of God and redeemed by Jesus Christ, and therefore is invaluable and worthy of respect as a member of the human family.”

   This is the bedrock principle of Catholic social teaching. Every person—regardless of race, sex, age, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, employment or economic status, health, intelligence, achievement or any other differentiating characteristic—is worthy of respect. It is not what you do or what you have that gives you a claim on respect; it simply being human that establishes your dignity. Given that dignity, the human person is, in the Catholic view, never a means, always an end.

   Individuals have dignity; individualism, in the sense of rugged individualism, has no place in Catholic social thought. The principle of human dignity gives the human person a claim on membership in a community, the human family.

2. The Principle of Respect for Human Life
   “Every person, from the moment of conception to natural death, has inherent dignity and a right to life consistent with that dignity.”

   Human life at every stage of development and decline is precious and worthy of protection and respect. It is always wrong directly to attack innocent human life. Catholic tradition sees the sacredness of human life as part of any moral vision for a just and good society.

3. The Principle of Association
   “[O]ur tradition proclaims that the person is not only sacred but also social. How we organize our society—in economics and politics, in law and policy—directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community.”

   The centerpiece of society is the family; family stability must always be protected and never undermined. By association with others—in families and in other social institutions that foster growth, protect dignity and promote the common good—humans achieve their fulfillment.

4. The Principle of Participation
   “We believe people have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable.”

   Without participation, the benefits available to an individual through any social institution cannot be realized. The human person has a right not to be shut out from participating in those institutions necessary for human fulfillment.

This principle applies to conditions associated with work. “Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form...
of continuing participation in God’s creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected—the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to organize and join unions, to private property, and to economic initiative.”

5. The Principle of Preferential Protection for the Poor and Vulnerable

“In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, our tradition recalls the story of the last judgment (Mt. 25:31-46) and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.”

Why is this so? Because the common good—the good of society as a whole—requires it. The opposite of rich and powerful is poor and powerless. If the good of all, the common good, is to prevail, preferential protection must move toward those affected adversely by the absence of power and the presence of privation. Otherwise the balance needed to keep society in one piece will be broken to the detriment of the whole. Here, by the way, is how the Second Vatican Council described the common good. It is “the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily” (Pastoral Constitution on the Church and the Modern World).

6. The Principle of Solidarity

“Catholic social teaching proclaims that we are our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers, wherever they live. We are one human family.... ‘Loving our neighbor’ has global dimensions in an interdependent world.” The principle of solidarity functions as a moral category that leads to choices to promote and protect the common good.

7. The Principle of Stewardship

“The Catholic tradition insists that we show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation.”

The steward is a manager, not an owner. In an era of rising consciousness about our physical environment, our tradition is calling us to a sense of moral responsibility for the protection of the environment—croplands, grasslands, woodlands, air, water, minerals and other natural deposits. Stewardship responsibilities also look toward our use of our personal talents, our attention to personal health and our use of personal property.

8. The Principle of Subsidiarity

This principle deals chiefly with “the responsibilities and limits of government, and the essential roles of voluntary associations.”

No higher level of organization should perform any function that can be handled efficiently and effectively at a lower level of organization by human persons who, individually or in groups, are closer to the problems and closer to the ground. Oppressive governments are always in violation of the principle of subsidiarity; overactive governments frequently violate this principle.

All eight of these principles were culled from the “Reflections of the U.S. Catholic Bishops.” As I read a companion document, “Summary Report of the Task Force on Catholic Social Teaching and Catholic Education,” I found two additional principles, which follow.

9. The Principle of Human Equality

“Equality of all persons comes from their essential dignity.... While differences in talents are a part of God’s plan, social and cultural discrimination in fundamental rights... are not compatible with God’s design” (“Summary,” pp. 23-4).

Treating equals equally is one way of defining justice, also understood classically as rendering to each person his or her due. Underlying the notion of equality is the simple principle of fairness; one of the earliest ethical stirrings felt in the developing human person is a sense of what is “fair” and what is not.

10. The Principle of the Common Good

“The common good is understood as the social conditions that allow people to reach their full human potential and to realize their human dignity.”

The social conditions the bishops have in mind presuppose “respect for the person,” “the social well-being and development of the group,” and the maintenance by public authority of “peace and security.” The principle of the common good points to the “need for international structures that can promote the just development of the human family across regional and national lines.”

What constitutes the common good is always going to be a matter for debate.

The absence of any concern for or sensitivity to the common good is a sure sign of a society in need of help. As a sense of community is eroded, concern for the common good declines. A proper communitarian concern is the antidote to unbridled individualism, which, like unrestrained selfishness in personal relations, can destroy balance, harmony, and peace within and among groups, neighborhoods, regions and nations.

I am often asked what the difference is between a value and a principle. The terms are frequently used interchangeably. I like the “leads-to-something” implication of principle, while acknowledging that values, once internalized, will prompt people to act consistently with what they cherish and consider to be valuable—i.e., with what they judge to be worth their time, treasure and talent. Neither principles nor values lead anywhere if they remain abstract, embalmed in print, or are not internalized by human persons and carried in human hearts.
Hollerans give $3 million to establish Holleran Center for Community Engagement

The Hollerans, a Reading couple with a passion for community service and a personal record of meaningful community engagement, have donated $3 million, the largest single gift in Alvernia’s 50-year history.

Jerry and Carolyn Holleran are supporting the Center for Community Engagement, which has been renamed the Holleran Center for Community Engagement at Alvernia. Their gift includes working capital to enhance the work of the Center in the Reading community as well as provisions to permanently endow it.

The Hollerans have a long-standing relationship with Alvernia, having devoted 16 years of service between them to the College Board of Trustees. Mrs. Holleran is a trustee emerita, having served from 1992-2000, with two terms each as Vice Chair and then Chair. Jerry Holleran completed a term on the Board of Trustees this year. They endowed a student scholarship and have made leadership gifts to numerous capital projects over the last 18 years, including the campaign to build the student center, among others.

“When we make gifts,” Mr. Holleran said at the announcement, “we like to make gifts that have an impact.” They chose to give to Alvernia because they believe, “It’s the kind of school that can make a difference.”

“This magnificent gift will shape Alvernia’s future and help us realize our ambitious vision of becoming a distinctive Franciscan university,” President Thomas F. Flynn said. “The Hollerans are making possible a significant expansion of community-based learning projects involving a range of faculty and students. They are helping us realize our goal to make our community an integral part of our curriculum and, in doing so, to contribute to the revitalization of Greater Reading.

Flynn established the Center for Community Engagement in 2006 with a vision for Alvernia’s future and how the students’ coursework and co-curriculum should embrace and reflect the College’s mission and values.

In less than two years, the Center has enabled the community to become an essential learning laboratory for Alvernia students and faculty, especially through the South Reading Youth Initiative, serving young teens by introducing them to workshops at the GoggleWorks and the Institute of the Arts, day camps, and other initiatives pursued with help and guidance from Alvernia students and Center personnel.

“ dorminal gifts, we like to make gifts that have an impact. It’s the kind of school that can make a difference.” Jerry Holleran

The Center has served as a prominent “front door” for the College’s many community-based projects, including hosting a new Non-Profit Roundtable with the Chamber of Commerce, a community resource for executives of local non-profits. It has also cosponsored a free lecture series on topical issues related to ethics, service, and community.

Ginny Hand, director of the Center for Community Engagement said, “This wonderful gift will allow us to share with our students and the entire Alvernia community the values of civic mindedness and service that the Hollerans exemplify.”

The Hollerans have supported not only Alvernia but also their alma maters: Connecticut College and Carnegie Mellon, where Jerry Holleran was a scholarship recipient because a mentor paved the way for him to attend to study engineering. The mentor asked only that Mr. Holleran make his own contribution to education someday, which fueled a lifetime of support for private higher education.
Senior Scholar: Holly Mount

The Senior Scholar Award is a $10,000 scholarship toward Alvernia senior year tuition presented to one student. The recipient must maintain a 3.7 GPA, submit a letter describing his or her goals, a resume, a reference letter from a faculty number, and a reference letter from a peer. Finalists are interviewed by the faculty Honors and Awards Committee and the Academic Standards Committee to determine the final recipient.

Graduate & Continuing Studies
Academic Awards

SPRING COMMENCEMENT

Main Campus

Founding Dean’s Award Graduate Anna Marie Mattern
Director’s Award Debra A. Allen
Outstanding Academic Achievement Sharon Evans Faust, John H. Lash
Outstanding Master in Education Kara Lynn Hopkins
Educational Leadership Award Paul Eugene Gladfelter
Outstanding Master in Business Administration Jacob William Mattern
Outstanding Master of Arts in Community Counseling Jessica L. Hinkel-Leibig
Academic Achievement Award in Nursing Diane M. Luchetta
Excellence in Clinical Nursing Practice Cynthia Marie Kaszmetskie
Nursing Research Award Brenda L. Williams, Sharon Marie Hedderick Gambler
Spirit of St. Francis Nursing Award Joan D. Zupicick
Behavioral Health Studies Crusader Award Idella Lee Hopkins, Robin Michelle Leon
Betty Ford Center Academic Award Sandra Van Sickle
MCC Professional Counseling Development Award Prunella Mary Davidson
MSOT Award of Excellence Stephanie Marie Long

Philadelphia Campus

Director’s Award Vincent Michael Gaudini, Jr.
Outstanding Master of Arts in Liberal Studies Robert Patrick Hosephros
Father Martin Ashley’s Academic Award Cynthia T. Ryan
Father Martin Ashley’s Humanitarian Award Mary Sommerer
Caron Award of Excellence Michele S. Burwell
Betty Ford Center Award David Mark Patterson
Behavioral Health Studies Crusader Award Vallery Christene Johnson
Criminal Justice Academic Excellence Award Pamela Nicole Pendleton
MCC Academic Excellence Award Christine Renee Liebers
MCC Commitment to Clinical Growth Award Herbert Alexander Grant

Schuylkill Campus

Director’s Award Corrine D. Gates

Philadelphia campus graduates receiving awards included Christine Liebers and Herbert Grant (top), Cynthia Ryan and Mary Sommerer (middle), Robert Hosephros, and Vince Gaudini Jr. (bottom).
A Moment with

Carrie Fitzpatrick

Scholar, teacher, and pioneering professor Carrie Fitzpatrick, Ph.D., is the winner of this year’s 2007 Christian R. and Mary F. Lindback Foundation Award and Honorarium for Teaching Excellence at Alvernia. Currently an assistant professor of English and Communication, her versatility as an academic transcends the title. Ask anyone on campus who defines the digitally savvy 21st-century professor, and Carrie Fitzpatrick’s name tops everyone’s list. In fact she’s been tapped to direct Alvernia’s first Office of Distance Education for Online Learning and Study Abroad program. Recently she stepped up to direct the redevelopment of the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies (MALS) for Community Leadership program, newly refashioned to address sustainability efforts within our communities and worldwide. In addition, she is certified in new media and is also a certified grant writer.

Her range of expertise shared since coming to Alvernia in 1995 has gone beyond the classroom. She was the first coordinator of Schuylkill Center programs and Director of Instructional Standards for the Graduate and Continuing Studies division. She assumes numerous faculty governance responsibilities, representing Alvernia College around the world with professional papers and presentations related to sustainability, media and technology, and literacy. In addition, she serves as a faculty advisor of the English/Communications honor society (Sigma Tau Delta) and has advised the Alvernian student newspaper staff.

You’ve been commended by the Alvernia community for excellence in teaching. What are some of the things that the selection committee recognized in giving you this honor? I’ve been involved in a great deal of curricular development and student research projects over the years. I developed special topics courses such as American Folklore & Culture and Irish-American Literature. I take students on field trips, incorporate community-based research into undergraduates’ coursework, and have assisted students in presenting at national conferences. I’m chairing the Sigma Tau Delta International Convention in St. Louis, Missouri, in 2010.

As the Director of the Office of Distance Education, how will Alvernia seize this unique opportunity to redefine distance education for Online Learning and Study Abroad? Alvernia will offer niche programs other providers can’t and don’t provide. The programs will be designed to incorporate a level of quality in Alvernia’s online learning that distinguishes them from other providers, through well-trained faculty certified to teach in cyber environments, the most advantageous combinations of blended instruction, and consistent course content and assessment.

What is the connection between study abroad and distance learning? Study abroad is the time-honored, textbook example of distance learning. The intent is to provide more study abroad opportunities with the establishment of this office.

You seem to be uniquely qualified to integrate these two kinds of learning. I have traveled extensively to present research, face-to-face or virtually, at professional conferences in India, Malaysia, Turkey, Vietnam, and will be presenting at an international conference in Mauritius in 2009 on sustainability. I’ve been enriched by my conferences in India, Malaysia, Turkey, Vietnam, and will be presenting at an international conference in Mauritius in 2009 on sustainability. I’ve been enriched by my conferences. I’ve been involved in a great deal of curricular development and student research projects over the years. I developed special topics courses such as American Folklore & Culture and Irish-American Literature. I take students on field trips, incorporate community-based research into undergraduates’ coursework, and have assisted students in presenting at national conferences. I’m chairing the Sigma Tau Delta International Convention in St. Louis, Missouri, in 2010.

Do you have any professional aspirations beyond the emergence of an academic career that’s been an amalgam of your talents and interests? I would like to be a Fulbright Scholar after the successful launch and shepherding of Alvernia’s distance education programs.

Polly Mathys, CIS, received the Sister Mary Donatilla Faculty Award for exceptional service to the College at the 2008 Honors Convocation.

Jodi Radosh, communication, was the emcee for the Cystic Fibrosis Valentine’s Gala on February 9. In her fourth year as MC, the gala raised $60,000 for the Foundation. Radosh got involved after being approached by a student.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Peggy C. Bowen
Peggy C. Bowen presented “Native Americans as Criminal Justice Professionals,” at the 45th Annual Meeting of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, Cincinnati in March, and presented “Criminal Justice Research and the IRB,” at the annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Association of Criminal Justice Educators (PACJE), Altoona, in April. Dr. Bowen was also chair of a panel and was elected second Vice President for this organization.

EDUCATION

Dale E. Smith co-authored Mental Retardation: Focus on Down Syndrome with Dolores Bertoti, AT/OT/SW.

HUMANITIES


Donna Yarri, theology, and Spencer Stober, biology, had their essay, “God, Science, and Designer Genes: An Interdisciplinary Pedagogy,” published in a co-edited volume entitled The Human Genome Project in College Curriculum: Ethical Issues and Practical Strategies. The pair presented a talk in April for the “Theology on Tap” program co-sponsored jointly by Lancaster Theological Seminary and St. James Episcopal Seminary. They spoke on the subject of “God, Science, and Designer Genes.” Yarri has accepted an invitation to serve on the Steering Committee of the Ethics Section of the American Academy of Religion. In addition, she recently attended the annual Association of Practical and Professional Ethics meeting in San Antonio, Texas, where she participated as a judge in the National Ethics Bowl Competition for students, and moderated a session on Ethics and Animals.

Scotland. He gave a series of four lectures on Indira Gandhi at the Highlands at Wyomissing through April, and presented “Commonalities Among the Eight Leading Presidents: A Tentative Theory of Process and Founding” at the Massachusetts School of Law at Andover in April. The presentation was taped by C-SPAN.

Mike DeSantis received the Saint Bernardine Faculty Award for excellence in part-time teaching during the Alvernia College Honors Convocation, May 2008.

NURSING

Theresa M. Adams and Deborah A. Greenawald co-authored “School Nurse Book Club: An Innovative Strategy for Lifelong Learning,” in the Journal of School Nursing, in April 2008. The pair also co-presented, “Open your Eyes and Minds: Read about Diversity, History, and Image” for the National Association of School Nurses in June 2007. In addition, Adams was highlighted in the newly released Berks Women in History, Volume II. The book is a historical collection of women in Berks County, past and present. Former Alvernia nursing department head, Courtney Stevens, and Sr. Pacelli, communication, were highlighted in the first volume.


OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY


PSYCHOLOGY & COUNSELING


SCIENCE


Spencer S. Stober, biology, wrote and presented “Academic Service Abroad: Confronting Our Limitations,” The International Journal on Environmental, Cultural, Economic and Social Sustainability, presented at the Fourth International Conference on Environmental, Cultural,
Economic, and Social Sustainability, Terengganu, Malaysia, January 2008. He also presented “Mother Nature and Her Discontents: Gaia as a Metaphor for Environmental Sustainability,” for the Association for Practical and Professional Ethics, 17th Annual Meeting and Convention, San Antonio, Texas in February. Also, an article by Stober on the physician MBA service trip to Santo Domingo was published in the International Journal of Environmental, Cultural, Economic, & Social Sustainability, 2008.

SOCIAL WORK

Phyllis Hay


Janice Fetrow-Stewart presented “Social Work Internship Mentoring: Students Mentoring Students in Ethical Field Practice,” at the Southwestern Social Science Association Conference, Las Vegas, March 2007. Fetrow-Stewart is also the founder of Berks Social Workers and hosted the organization’s second BCTV program of, “What Social Workers Can Do for You” this spring. Guests included Alvernia social work Senior, Natalie Carrier, and Alvernia Social Work adjuncts, Mary Rita Weller and Gene Walters. In addition, the Berks County Commissioners have appointed Fetrow-Stewart to the Board of the Berks County Office of Aging.

ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

Sr. Ann Marie Coll, OSF and Sr. Philip Ann Yurkonis, OSF were honored this spring for ten years of service to the College.

Jen Gittings-Dalton, career services, was a featured poet at the PAL Center for the Arts Poetry Workshop, on May 6.

Gale Martin, marketing and communications, received two honorable mentions in the 2008 CNW/FFWA national writing contest—in Non-Fiction/Previously Published for her humorous essay, “Oh, for that familiar sound of summer,” published last year in The Christian Science Monitor and in the Fiction/Novel Chapter category for the seventh chapter of The Shaker Proposal called “Dr. McDreamy.” The Shaker Proposal was named one of six finalists in the Strongest Start II Writing Competition sponsored by the NBW Online Writers’ Workshop.

Alvernia men’s basketball coach, Mike Miller, was honored by the Berks County chapter of the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame in April. Miller recorded a record of 145-31 as head Varsity coach at Reading High from 1988-94, after seven years coaching Junior Varsity. After Reading, Miller spent 10 years coaching with Jack McCloskey before taking over as head coach in 2004. He has a 79-32 record, including back-to-back 23-5 seasons and PAC titles in 2006 and 2007.

Sharon Neal, library, attended the 16th Annual Innovative (online library system) Users’ Group Conference in Washington, D.C., in April.

Jennifer Richter, marketing and communications, graduated from the Leadership Berks Core Program on June 12, 2008. Richter did her fieldwork with the Reading Berks Habitat for Humanity, and will spend the next year working with the Greater Reading Young Professionals. She will also serve on the Leadership Berks Marketing Committee.

Karen Thacker, Dean of Professional Programs, was the author of “Nurses’ Advocacy Behaviors in End-of-Life Nursing Care.” Nursing Ethics, March 2008, and co-presented “Attitudes to Evidenced-Based Practice: A Study to Examine RN Perceptions Related to Nursing Research,” at the 15th National Evidenced-Based Practice Conference, University of Iowa, April 2008.

Gerald Vigna, Director of the Center for Ethics and Leadership, has a new blog. Visit it at: http://www.alvernia.edu/ethics/blog/.
Terrence Shawell (left) was featured in a Reading Eagle article on Feb. 16: "Shawell, Alvernia get it done." Although he was only one point away from 1,000 career points after scoring 32 in conference action against Eastern, Shawell heeded Coach Mike Miller’s words to “kill the clock” instead of dunking in the final minutes of the 76-66 victory. The win clinched a first-round bye and the promise of a PAC semifinal game at home. Shawell did reach the 1,000 point career plateau in just two seasons at Alvernia, and was recognized by the Eagle, and the Pottstown Mercury for receiving PAC Player of the Year (the Pennsylvania Athletic Conference’s highest honor).

"Alvernia raising awareness of green razing" was the title of a Reading Eagle article on January 24. Mike Laws, facilities, was pictured and quoted on the Student Center renovation. The $1.7 million project involves recycling almost all of the old building material. Dave Reppert, facilities, said, “We’re trying to do the same work we normally do, just better.”

The Sports Capital reported that Jill Rosolie transferred to Alvernia after talking to Coach Kevin Calabria during a summer league program. About coming to Alvernia, Rosolie said, “The academics programs were strong and the basketball program has a winning tradition, which was a huge advantage.” Rosolie plans to teach and coach basketball after college.

An Alvernia 101 Session on January 25 was featured in the Boyertown Area Times. About 25 students attended the session with their families, and listened to presentations conducted by Jeff Dittman and Dwayne Walker (both of admissions). Photos of the event accompanied the article.

The Reading Eagle reported that women’s basketball coach, Kevin Calabria, reached several milestones in one week (in February), with his 350th career win and his 200th PAC victory. Calabria is the only women’s basketball coach in Alvernia’s 19 season history.

On February 14, New Jersey Sports quoted a high school senior-athlete as saying, “I fell in love with the atmosphere [at Alvernia], and I love the coach there (Coach Kevin Calabria).”

In a March 2 Reading Eagle article about emergency notification systems at area colleges, Alvernia was recognized as having a 71% participation rate. One reason Alvernia’s rate is high might be that freshmen were given the opportunity to sign up during orientation this year. In addition, parents are able to receivenotifications from the college.

Alvernia Seniors College 10th Birthday Party

You’re Invited!

Thursday, October 2, 2008
5:00 - 7:00 P.M.
Bernardine Franciscan Conference Center

Join Us! Join Us! Join Us!

Call 610.796.5005
R.S.V.P. by Friday, September 19, 2008
President Thomas F. Flynn was featured in television, radio, and print media after his meeting with Pope Benedict XVI. According to WFMZ Channel 16 News, the Pope was interrupted by applause when he talked about the importance of Catholic education remaining to serve poor and inner cities, with which Flynn agreed, saying that the idea follows the mission of Alvernia College.

The Reading Eagle reported, “about 200 Berks Countians gathered at Alvernia in early March to discuss pressing topics, such as access to health care, at a forum sponsored by the United Way of Berks County.” The group hoped to spark change through knowledge.

Kenji Kitagawa’s stirring presentation at the Bernardine Franciscan Conference Center was featured on the front page of the Reading Eagle on March 6, and was featured on WFMZ’s Channel 69 News. The presentation was part of an ongoing awareness project at the Center, which exhibited posters depicting the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings of 1945, and brought attention to the current nuclear arms race.

In a March 10 Eastern Pennsylvania Business Journal article, Scott Ballantine, business, discussed how stimulus packages for local businesses could help the economy.

Alvernia adjunct professor of criminal justice, Barry Harvey, discussed organized retail theft in a Reading Eagle article on March 10. According to the article, Harvey investigated numerous theft rings as a Pennsylvania State Trooper, and was assigned to an organized theft task force during much of his 32-year career.

A February 28 Reading Eagle article entitled, “Adding up the real cost of college” discussed the difference between “sticker price” and “actual cost.” President Flynn and Gale Martin, marketing and communications, were quoted in the article. According to the article, Alvernia’s “actual cost” was significantly lower than the cost of local competitors and Ivy League schools. In fact, Alvernia’s price was less than half the cost of comparable private schools in the state.

Gerry Vigna, theology, center for ethics and leadership, was interviewed for a Reading Eagle article on March 16 called, “Where is the Line?” The article talked about Berks County Commissioner Christian Leinbach, and his recent comments about the separation between church and state.

A lengthy Citizen-Standard article on March 19 entitled, “Alvernia offers college choice close to home” started off by saying, “For more than 10 years, Alvernia College has been recognized as the college of choice for continuing education students.” Schuykill Center staff members Mary Sacavage, Christian Daniels, and Ed Murray were pictured.

The Boyertown Area Times published a photo (April 17) of new Alvernia soccer coach, Bill Bonewitz, along with three Boyertown High School recruits (sporting Alvernia shirts) who will be joining the Alvernia team next year. The photo was taken in the Alvernia Physical Education Center.

A photo of Alvernia College senior, and softball Co-Captain Shannon Higgins took up three-quarters of the Ambler Gazette’s sports page on March 12, and the Springfield Sun’s sports page on March 13. Higgins is a four-year starter and three-time Captain, and served as President of Alvernia’s NCAA Student Athletic Advisory Committee for 2007-08.

Shannon Higgins
An April 17 *Reading Eagle* article broke down what area colleges have done in the year since the Virginia Tech tragedy. Alvernia’s list was impressive: “Ran two tests of an emergency-alert system that sends warnings to phones and e-mail addresses; participated in a bomb drill with Reading police, the city bomb squad, and fire and ambulance crews; and provided additional training to campus public safety officers.”

An April 26 article in the *Reading Eagle* highlighted a leadership and ethics conference at Alvernia. About 100 Berks students attended the event, and listened to West Point candidates talk about ethics and character. According to the article, “Berks teachers who accompanied their students spoke highly of the conference, which was held for the fifth straight year.” Articles also appeared in several Berks weekly newspapers, including the *Westside Weekly, Kutztown Patriot, Boyertown Area Times,* and *Southern Berks News.*

The *Hazelton Standard Speaker* printed an article, “While mothers, kids gather to learn English” on April 27. The title referred to English as a Second Language learning in Schuylkill County. Alvernia College students often work with non-native speakers to learn the language at the Alvernia Schuylkill Center.

Senior baseball catcher, *Dale Curry,* was the subject of a feature article, “Curry a good catch for Crusaders,” in the *Reading Eagle* (May 1). Curry has been excellent behind the plate for Alvernia with both the bat and the glove. A full photo was captioned, “Alvernia’s Dale Curry: batting .427 with eight homers and 56 RBIs.”

*Bonnie Sue Pilat* and her daughter *Kyrie* were featured in a *Reading Eagle* article on graduation day. Both graduated with honors from Alvernia on May 17, 2008. Bonnie Sue Pilat also received a social work award for Outstanding Field Placement during the honors convocation on Friday.

The *Reading Eagle* featured Senator Robert P. Casey’s commencement speech to Alvernia graduates on May 18. Lists of graduates were printed in at least twenty different newspapers in four different states. Alvernia College was also recognized by the *Philadelphia Inquirer* for having Senator Casey speak at commencement.

The May 1 edition of the *AD Times* featured Alvernia College on three different pages, including a photo of *President Flynn* on the cover. One half-page article entitled, “Alvernia College panel focuses on candidates and their faith” featured a photo of President Flynn addressing an Alvernia faculty panel, consisting of *Gerry Vigna,* theology, *Debbie Greenwald,* nursing, *Elizabeth Matteo,* psychology, and *Spence Stober,* biology. A second, three-quarter page unrelated article called, “Alvernia chaplain elected Superior General of Apostles of Jesus,” was about *Father Kamanzi’s* life, and rise to the African ministry institute to which he was called in February.

PAC Softball Rookie of the Year, *Rhiannon Sorrentino,* has been making a name for herself in the *Morning Call* and *Whitehall-Coplay Press,* with columns and photos in both papers. She led the team with a .475 batting average and with 13 doubles and 7 triples.

*Tim Blessing,* history, has been a regular contributor to the *WFMZ Channel 69 News* in recent months, as talk about elections and candidates takes front stage in the news. Interviews with Blessing have aired January 4, April 21, 22, 24, May 7, and May 9. After the Iowa primary, *WEEU* broadcast an hour-long discussion by Blessing on the Mike Faust “Feedback” Show, and the *Philadelphia Inquirer* quoted him in a political article on April 14.

Alvernia College Career Services Coordinator, *Jennifer Giddings-Dalton,* was quoted in several *Reading Eagle* articles on March 31, related to career outlooks for graduating college students. She emphasized how important networking can be. Almost 50 employers attended a job fair March 18 at Alvernia. Alvernia students were also quoted in the articles, such as psychology major *Mike Taylor,* who said with the experience and contacts he gained through internships, he’s confident and happy with how his job search is going so far.
As athletic teams make the long-anticipated jump from PAC to MAC this fall, seasoned Crusaders Athletic Director, John R. McCloskey, is making his transition from athletics to enrollment permanent, too. Double alumnus, John McCloskey began his career at Alvernia in 1994, and became Director of Athletics in 2001. In that role, he assembled an impressive team of coaches and staff for Alvernia’s 15-team Division III athletics program, and has been a leader in both conference and national NCAA activities. As a result, Alvernia athletes have been champions on the field, as well as the classroom (even graduating at higher rates than the overall student body).

McCloskey has also been instrumental in the growth of recreational opportunities for the entire campus. Intramurals and wellness programs have grown dramatically over his term as director. The program’s high quality and integrity, along with McCloskey’s personal credibility, were key factors in Alvernia’s acceptance into the Freedom Conference of the Middle Atlantic Conference (MAC).

But for the past two years, McCloskey has taken on the dual responsibilities of Head Athletics/Recreation Administrator and Chief Enrollment Officer, and saw his duties expand further in 2007 as the new Associate Vice President of Enrollment Management.

“Improvements in undergraduate admission and financial aid practices have been dramatic,” remarked President Thomas F. Flynn. “The involvement of faculty and staff in recruitment efforts and the effective partnership between our enrollment and marketing teams are but two examples. In response to the strategic plan, ambitious goals have been set to improve the size, quality, and diversity of the undergraduate student profile well as institutional performance on the key quality measures of freshman retention and graduation rates.”

As Alvernia transitions into the Freedom Conference of the MAC, Laura Gingrich (Associate Director of Athletics and the Senior Woman Administrator) has been appointed Interim Athletic Director. Gingrich’s experience, and the contributions of other key staff have made for a smooth transition.

In order to give full attention to her new post, Gingrich announced her resignation as Field Hockey Head Coach this summer. Former assistant, Nichole Rhoads, takes the helm as Head Coach this semester.

Although she will miss working with the team, Gingrich will surely be found cheering on the girls, from that familiar sideline on game day. “I wish the girls all the best, and have no doubt that this program and the team will continue to perform at a high level,” said Gingrich. And the parting message to her team? “Be sure to let the MAC know who we are, by making a good go at the MAC Championship!”

### Department Awards:
- Outstanding Senior Athletes
  - Dale Curry (baseball)
  - Tom Novak (lacrosse)
  - Amy Sikorski (volleyball)

### Strength and Conditioning Crusader Awards
- Colleen Foley (soccer)
- Rachel Koerner (basketball)
- Terrence Shawell (basketball)
- Rob Guth (softball)

### Sportsmanship Awards
- Corey Berghardt (baseball)
- Bridget Burger (cross country)

### Team Awards:
- Men’s Cross Country
  - MVP – junior, Richard Kessler

- Women’s Cross Country
  - MVP – sophomore, Bridget Burger

- Field Hockey (16-6, 10-0 PAC)
  - Offensive MVP – sophomore, Janelle Lynch
  - Defensive MVP – senior, Amber Landis

- Men’s Soccer (5-12-3, 3-3-2 PAC)
  - Chris Schlager Award – junior, Richard Kessler

- Women’s Soccer (6-9-3, 3-6-1 PAC)
  - Offensive MVP – senior, Brandi Light
  - MVP – freshman, Felicia Sippel

- Volleyball (10-14, 6-5 PAC)
  - Coach’s Award – junior, Lauren Crimi
  - MVP – senior, Amy Sikorski

- Women’s Tennis (6-8, 4-6 PAC)
  - Coach’s Award – junior, Breana Martzall

- Men’s Basketball (16-11, 13-3 PAC)
  - MVP – junior, Terrence Shawell
  - Coach’s Award – junior, Tyrone Bradley

- Women’s Basketball (14-13, 12-4 PAC)
  - Samuel J. Calabria Coach’s Award – senior, Jill Rosolie
  - Joseph M. Calabria MVP – freshman, Kelli McIntyre

### Cheerleading
- Coach’s Award – seniors Alina Dominguez, Laura Ritter

### Ice Hockey (20-4, 10-1 MDCHA)
- Offensive MVP – senior, Anthony Froio
  - MVP – freshman, Eric Ryan

### Baseball (31-11, 15-3)
- MVP – senior, Dale Curry

### Golf
- MVP – junior, Derek Stewart

### Men’s Lacrosse (1-14, 1-6 PAC)
- MVP (Offense) – senior, Tom Novak
  - MVP (Defense) – senior, Josh Pokrywa

### Women’s Lacrosse (2-13, 2-8 PAC)
- MVP (offense) – senior, McKenna Shafer
  - MVP (defense) – senior, Katie O’Brien

### Softball (31-11, 16-4 PAC)
- MVP – senior, Jackie Rhoads

### Men’s Tennis (6-8, 4-3 PAC)
- MVP – sophomore, Zach Lockwood

### Sports Award Honors
2007-2008
1970s

James C. Bell ’77 passed away May 13, 2008 in the Reading Hospital. He was the husband of Rhonda (Harbster) Diamond.

Michael J. Gombar ’78 is the new Chief Berks County Detective. Michael is a Reading native and has nearly three decades of experience as a police officer, most in the narcotics area.

1980s

Deborah Kay Green Weatherlow ’85 passed away on April 26, 2008, in Tucson, Arizona. She was 56.

George Rice, Jr. ’85 is the Executive Director of the Association of Public-Safety Communication Officials-International (APCO), the world’s oldest and largest non-profit professional organization dedicated to the enhancement of public safety communications.

Natalie Fisher ’87 is currently employed as a seventh-grade math teacher at Conrad Weiser Middle School.

Jean (Unger) Hornberger ’89 became the District Assistant Business Manager of the Ephrata Area School District in April 2008.

1990s

Mario S. Ninfo ’90 graduated from John Marshall Law School in 1993 and founded the Law Offices of Ninfo & Associates, P.C. in suburban Atlanta, Georgia, now known as Ninfo & Perkins-Brown, P.A. with main offices located in Covington, Georgia. Mario also serves as a Public Defender for the City of Jackson, Georgia.

John Noll ’90 is a member of the IV Team at the Reading Hospital & Medical Center and serves as a Skills Lab Preceptor for the School of Nursing at TRHMC’s School of Health Sciences.

Janelle Pierce-Messick ’91 completed a master’s degree in Pastoral Studies from Loyola University, New Orleans.

Paula Kerschner ’92 is engaged to marry Cliff Kline.

Michael Kutz ’92 has joined Century 21 as a sales associate, after receiving his real estate license in December. He has 13 years of experience in the mortgage industry and sales.

Entech Engineering recently opened a new office in Lititz with Alvernia grad Scott Carl, Sr. ’93 as principal and project manager at the new location.

Brian Conner ’93 received his real estate license in December, and has joined Caldwell Banker Landis HomeSale Services, Spring Township.

Leif Ericksen ’93 is the Director of Food & Beverage at ARAMARK Educational Service, LLC at The Desmond Tutu Center.

Alicia (Petruska) Wike ’94 was married on October 19, 1996 to Timothy Wike. They reside in Lebanon and have two children, Blaine (9), and Sidney (7). Alicia recently accepted the position of Supervisor of the Cardiac Cath Lab at the Good Samaritan Health System in Lebanon. She has been at GSH for 17 years, and her nursing career consists of working in Med/Surg, Emergency Care, and the Cardiac Cath Lab.

Rachel Maher ’94 was featured on the front cover of Delaware Today magazine as one of the top dentists recommended by peers. Rachel was one of only seven dentists profiled, and the only one pictured on the cover. After attending the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine, Rachel completed a residency in Delaware, and took special training in Cincinnati. She then split time between a practice in Pennsylvania and a pediatric externship at the Children’s Hospital in Philadelphia. She now works as a pediatric dentist in Delaware, treating children as young as two-years-old.

Jan Leister ’94 is employed by Premier Immediate Medical Care as Director of Nursing.

The Lancaster Sunday News reported (March 30) that Warwick Police Chief Rich Garipoli ’95, was working to put on a three-day public safety summit. Garipoli is a 32-year veteran of law enforcement, and has been Warwick Chief since 2001.

Jacquelyn Stahl ‘95 is engaged to marry Martin Weaver in September 2008. She is currently employed by Rehab Care.

Kimberly Dunning ‘97 married James Witt III on November 28, 2007, in Kissimmee, Fla. The couple resides in Hackettstown, N.J. Kimberly is employed as an accounting operations manager with Affinity Federal Credit Union.

Jennifer (Holzapfel) Filipe ‘97 is expecting identical twin girls (Erica Danielle and Emma Marie) by May 2008. These will be her first children. Jennifer is a Supervisory Officer for Customs and Border Protection in Newark Airport, N.J. and has been with CBP over 10 years.

Mary Ann Heydinger ‘97 is currently a substitute teacher with the Daniel Boone School District. She also tutors students at her home. Mary Ann is an avid reader.

Julia (Schultz) Dickinson ‘98 and her husband Matt welcomed Hannah Frances Dickinson into the world on February 11, 2008. Hannah weighed 9 pounds 1 ounce and was 21 inches.

Kirstie Taylor ‘98 has announced her engagement to marry Jason Anderson. Kirstie is employed by St. Joseph Medical Center.

Heidi (Brenneman) Edwards ‘99 has been named the new Training and Development Director of Human Resources at Central Pennsylvania College.

Kelly (Welchoff) Smola ‘99 and her husband John welcomed Darian Charles Smola into the world on March 28, 2008. He was 7lbs. 9 oz and 20.5 inches.

Stephanie (Wojszwillo) Kunkel ‘99 has been named Head Coach of the women’s volleyball team at Alvernia College, where she was a three-year starter for the Crusaders. For the last seven years, Stephanie coached at Fleetwood School District.

Martha (Richitis) Yanalitis ‘99 died February 18, 2008. After earning her BA in accounting and business from Alvernia, Martha went on to earn a master’s degree from Southern California University. She was the Owner/Operator of her own custom design and dressmaking business, as well as an accountant for her husband’s electrical contracting business. Martha was very active in her community of Palo Alto, Schuylkill County.

2000s

Karen L. (Smith) DeLong ‘00 is currently a Certified Registered Nurse Practitioner (CRNP) at Respiratory Specialists in Wyomissing.

Julia & Hannah Dickinson

See the Possibilities…

Give the Gift of Possibilities.

All gifts to the Franciscan Fund make an immediate impact, and bring more possibilities to our students. If you’d like to make a gift, please call (610) 790-1901.
Roger M. Ulrich ’00 was awarded a master of divinity degree on May 17, 2008, from Lancaster Theological Seminary.

Jim and Jessica (Keffer) Bemis ’00

and big brother Michael are proud to announce the birth of Matthew, born January 31, 2008, at 8:14 a.m., weighing 9 pounds 9 ounces, and measuring 20.25 inches long.

Mary K. Curry ’01 of Sinking Spring, died April 28, 2008, in the Reading Hospital.

Brian Keeney ’01 is a Senior Financial Auditor for Sovereign Bank in Wyomissing, Pa. He is currently in the process of attaining his Certified Internal Auditor (CIA) designation.

Judy (Schwenk) Johnson ’01 has been employed with the Lipkin, Marshall, Bohorad, and Thornburg P.C. general practice law firm in Schuylkill County since 1994. Among other duties, Judy handles payroll taxes, estate planning, business and individual income taxes, pension and profit sharing. She also serves as a paralegal for the firm.

Kathleen (Szumilo) Felker ’01 was named Executive Director at the American Red Cross of the Susquehanna Valley, Lancaster. In her new position, Felker will oversee operations and service delivery in Lancaster, Dauphin, Perry, Mifflin, Juniata, and Cumberland counties. She will manage 38 full-time and 12 part-time employees.

Melanie-Ann (Bottner) Glassey ’01 married Scott Glassey on March 22, 2008. She received her second master’s degree (Art Therapy) in May, and passed the exam and credentials to become a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). Melanie works with elementary and middle school children in the Lebanon Schools and also works part-time in Private Group Practice with adopted children and their families.

Jessica Ann Westley ’02 is engaged to Shane Kohl.

Jennie Criswell ’02 is currently employed as a Special Agent with the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General.

Kezia Basta ’02 married classmate Mika Santo on June 9, 2008. Kezia is a Rehabilitation director with Select Medical Rehab. Her husband is a Sales Representative for Woodgrain Distribution.

Deputy First Class Robert M. Kovacs ’02 was given the Exceptional Duty Award by the Hartford County Sheriff’s Office (Maryland) for his role in stopping a store robbery in progress and apprehending the suspect a short time later.

Michele Kissinger ’02 gave birth to a son on April 1, 2008. Ty weighed 8 lbs., and was 20 inches long.

Robert “Bobby” Willis ’03 is an Accounting Adjunct at Reading Area Community College.

Ryan Schiavo ’03 won two Emmy awards as an Associate Producer with ESPN. He received the first Emmy, for best daily studio show (Sports Center) in 2004, and received the second Emmy in 2006 for best weekly studio show (NFL Countdown). He was featured in the Boyertown Area Times for his accomplishments.
Agency on Aging, where he also did a practicum for the psychology department as an undergraduate.

Kelly McBride '03 successfully completed her Comprehensive Exams and is a doctoral candidate in education at Immaculata University. She anticipates completion of her dissertation in the spring of 2009.

Brianne Moyer '03 received her master’s degree in education at St. Joseph’s University, Philadelphia.

On January 20, 2007, Tiffany (Spotts) Micale '03 and husband Brad welcomed daughter Aurora Josephine at 6 lb 5 oz and 19 1/2 inches long.

Janel Pfeifer '04 is engaged to Daniel Vecsi.

Two time Alvernia alumnus, Keith Sadler '04 M’06, retired from the Philadelphia police force (where he was in charge of more than 700 detectives) to take a high profile position as the new City Police Chief of Lancaster. According to Lancaster Online, Sadler is also the city’s first black police Chief. Sadler has bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Alvernia, and is currently part of the Doctoral program at the College. He also serves as an adjunct professor for criminal justice and multicultural issues in law enforcement. The Lancaster New Era reported that Lancaster Mayor Rich Gray was “particularly impressed by Sadler’s educational background.”

Timothy Behney '04 is employed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Transportation as a Roadway Programs Specialist in Harrisburg.

Kari (Schneider) Plasha '04 was featured in the Salisbury Press (October 2007) as being the Owner and Director of the newly formed “Apple of my Eye Tutoring” service. After teaching in the Reading School District for eight years, Plasha decided to take on in-home schooling, with a staff of 17 tutors.

Kristen Harper '04 is engaged to marry Justin Allegra '05 in June of 2009. Both grads are currently special education teachers.

Ryan Martin '05 received her MS in Higher Education Counseling and Student Affairs from West Chester University of Pennsylvania in December 2007. She is currently employed with Delaware County Community College as a Career, Personal, and Academic Counselor.

Monika Klein '05 is employed by The Sherwin-Williams Company and is in its Management Training Program.

Becky Shearer '05 is engaged to marry Patrick Dalton.

Travis Berger '05 is engaged to marry Lindsay Trottier '07.

Danielle Johnson '05 married Casey Long on July 28, 2007, on the beach in Ocean City, Md. Danielle works for Coordinated Health, Inc., and is the lead trainer for Palisades High School.

Lauren (DeWoody) Kresinski '05 and her husband Kevin '05 welcomed a son Ethan Luke on Jan. 2, 2008. He was 8lbs. 4oz. and 21inches long.

David Dvorshak '05 died on February 20, 2008, at the age of 41. David received his bachelor of science in business management in 2005, and was pursuing a master’s degree at the time of his death.

Anthony Recker '05, of the Midland Rockhound’s AA baseball team was elected to the 2008 Texas League All-Star Game in June. This is Recker’s third straight All-Star Game, having appeared in games for the Kane County Cougars (A team) in 2006, and then again in 2007 when he moved up to the Stockton Ports (A-Advanced team).

Christian Kraft '06 is currently on a long-term trip hoping to circle the globe over the course of 10-12 months. He is keeping a website of his adventures www.followingthedream.com.

Keith Rose '06 is a shift sergeant for G4S Wackenhut working out of Souderton, Pa.

Marisa Figliola '06 started a new position in October as a Worker’s Compensation Paralegal after completing school while working for the Superior Courthouse. She bought a condo and is preparing for the LSAT this summer.


Dustin Schondelmaier '06 married Katie Sturdevant. He is currently employed by Covco, Inc., Sanatoga.

Robert E. L. King ’07 was married to Jessica Frymoyer on September 15, 2007, at the Garden of Five Senses, Central Park, Lancaster Pa.

Linda Ferraro ’07 passed away February 12, 2008. Linda was 22 years-old, and she graduated from Alvernia College with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Elementary Education, Special Education & Early Childhood Education. She is survived by parents: Sam and Anna Ferraro (Anna works in Facilities at Alvernia), and sisters: Josephine, Lilly and Samantha.

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Mention archives to the average person and words like venerable, significant, priceless, and perhaps even stuffy come to mind. Mention archives to Alvernia College’s archivist Dr. Eugene Mitchell, and you’ll hear words like challenging, interesting, and fun. He likes cataloguing archival documents, artifacts, and memorabilia and speaks with unabashed enthusiasm over opportunities to have these things viewed and appreciated.

“While it is important to preserve our records and our artifacts,” Mitchell said, “they are only of value if they can be used in the present to understand who we have been and how our past has led us to where we are today.”

“We are becoming aware of our history in a special way and realizing the importance of preserving it.”

Dr. Gene Mitchell
Associate Provost for Information Services and Technology

Mitchell’s own past with Alvernia includes his original appointment to Director of Library Services in 1992. After President Laurence Mazzeno’s arrival, his responsibilities grew increasingly in the areas of technology as Dean of Library and Information Services and then later as Associate Provost for Information Services and Technology.

Two years ago, President Thomas F. Flynn asked Mitchell what he would be interested in doing next, upon easing out of a full-time Cabinet-level post. With an eye toward an upcoming 50th anniversary celebration, Mitchell replied, “Set up the college archives. It will be easier to set up an archives after 50 years than 100!”

Since his official appointment to the post of College Archivist in 2006, he has built on a small collection started by his predecessor as Library Director, Sr. Carlanita.

Besides old photographs, all of which Mitchell supplied for use in this issue of Alvernia Magazine and other anniversary publications, the archival collection now includes minutes of the meetings of the Board of Trustees, dissertations, tape recordings, yearbooks, literary magazines, faculty handbooks, and even some student life artifacts such as freshman beanies, student blazers, class rings, and pins.

What constitutes an archival record? “It is important to acknowledge,” Mitchell explained, “that not all records are collected in the archives. Purchase requisitions, for example, and other items of short term interest or value aren’t archived. The key is that the archives hold records of enduring value, not just any old stuff.”

So now that the responsibility of preserving Alvernia College for posterity rests entirely with him, how has he fared under the burden of such a charge?

“I love the archivist’s work!” Mitchell said. “In many ways it is a branch of the field of information organization and access that I have trained and worked in my entire career.”

He was thrilled to come across the following items:

- Pictures of Maria Hall, once used to support the music program, originally an infirmary for the Bernardine Sisters, and believed to be the first residence hall for male students;
- Reel-to-reel tape recordings of student Christmas concerts and faculty recitals;
- A baccalaureate thesis written by Sr. Zygmunta while she was an undergraduate at Villanova in 1929; and
- The “college shovel” used for groundbreakings of every major construction project since Bernardine Hall.

Alvernia’s 50th anniversary has created a special interest and need for archival records. He has enjoyed working with the alumni seeking to present the College’s heritage in a variety of interesting and fun ways as a co-chair of the Heritage Subcommittee of the 50th Anniversary.

“We are becoming aware of our history in a special way and realizing the importance of preserving it,” Mitchell said. “As I often say to people, we may only have 50 years of history but we do have 50 years of history.”

In Mitchell’s estimation, those 50 years have been nothing short of amazing in terms of Alvernia’s growth and self understanding, “especially in relationship to the 100-plus year presence of the Bernardine Sisters,” he said, adding, “We need to preserve their preciousness.”
Calendar of Events

October
1  Feast of St. Francis
2  Seniors College Birthday Bash
6  Annual Crusaders Golf Tournament
7  Blessing of the Animals
8–31 Greater Reading Literary Festival at Alvernia
14, 15 Jodi Radosh and Victoria Williams Lecture
16  Interfaith Peace Breakfast
17–19 Homecoming & Family Weekend
18  Undergraduate Open House
21  Richard Russo, Literary Festival
23  Marc DiPaolo, Literary Festival
30  Sr. M. Pacelli, Literary Festival

November
6  Novemberfest Alumni Social
6–8  Alvernia Fall Play
13–15  Alvernia Fall Play

December
2  Grad and CE Open House, all locations
   Student-Teacher Tea, Schuylkill Center
   Executive Conversation Series, Health Care CEO’s
8–10  Student Art Show
14  Winter Commencement

Bernardine Hall elevator, 1976
Fifty Years of Service

With the explosive growth of technology, Alvernia entered cyberspace with internet access, e-mail, and a college website.

In 1997, the Board of Trustees appointed Dr. Laurence Mazzeno as the fifth president of Alvernia College, and he began several building projects which included a $5 million Student Center, a new college main entrance, additional parking lots, a new apartment-style residence hall, and the O’Pake Science Center extension to Bernardine Hall. In 1998, Alvernia was granted approval for three masters’ programs, all linked by a common focus of leadership and ethics in the public and private sectors. In addition to changes in traditional curriculum offerings, the faculty approved a Human Diversity Course policy, a Service Learning fourth credit option, and the development of a College Honors Program. The college also adopted a governance model with a provost and division structure which included faculty deans to oversee the academic growth at the college. At the end of the decade, Alvernia was poised for new challenges in the coming millennium.

The ‘00s—
A Franciscan University

The year 2000 marked a dramatic growth in enrollment with the addition of master’s degree programs. Alvernia’s success in delivering graduate education spurred the development of a new Ph.D in Leadership, the only such program in the region. Alvernia’s internal and external growth attracted the interest of another impressive presidential candidate, Dr. Thomas F. Flynn, who became the sixth president of Alvernia in 2005. In the first year of his tenure, he launched three major initiatives: a comprehensive $27 million capital campaign, a new campus master plan, and a new long-range strategic plan that would position Alvernia as a regional leader in higher education.

The college acquired the Upland Center for Graduate and Adult Education and partnered with the city of Reading for a long-term lease of Angelica Park. This allowed for an ambitious campus renovation that included upgrades to existing buildings, a revamped residential program with projections for added enrollment, a beautiful green Campus Commons in place of a congested center-campus parking lot, and an application to the state Department of Education for university status.

In mid-decade, Alvernia was invited to join a larger regional athletic conference, the Middle Atlantic Conference, and in June of 2008, sponsored its first national academic conference for the Association of Franciscan Colleges and Universities for 23 attending institutions. The Bernardine Franciscan Sisters’ new Conference Center adjacent to their renovated Motherhouse, afforded the college a stunning space for public events and lectures organized by the Holleran Center for Community Engagement and the Center for Ethics and Leadership.

As Alvernia completes its first half-century of progress, the institution is poised to celebrate its 50th Anniversary with events and programs to highlight its growth and success in the past five decades, while pointing to a future promising more of the same.

Congratulations to all who share in this remarkable journey!