

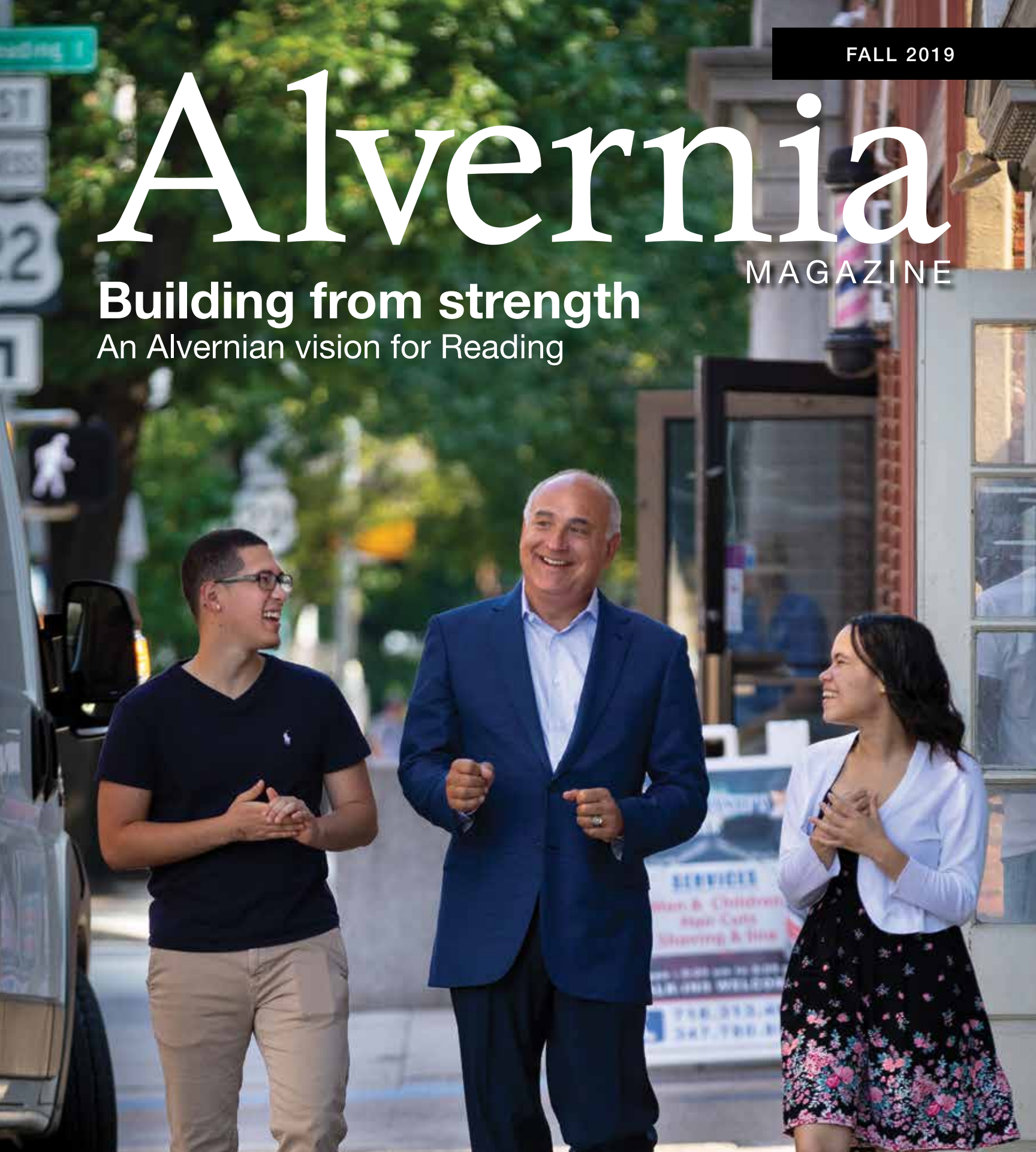
FALL 2019

# Alvernia

MAGAZINE

**Building from strength**

An Alvernian vision for Reading



SPECIAL ISSUE welcoming President John R. Loyack

# Alvernia

MAGAZINE

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THEO ANDERSON



# What is yours to do?

Welcome to new beginnings at Alvernia University. We kicked off a marvelous academic year in Franciscan style through a series of events all designed to reflect on, participate in and remind us of our primary focus—identity and mission.

During the final days of St. Francis of Assisi, his followers gathered around his death bed and asked Francis how they would continue his work when he was gone. Francis responded, “I have done what is mine to do, may Christ teach you what is yours.” We reflected on this pivotal question, “what is ours to do,” during our annual Mission Day: Franciscan Vocational Leadership, led by Dr. Julianne Wallace, our vice president for mission and ministry at Alvernia.

As she pointed out, being Franciscan encompasses four areas: narrative, in which we tell our stories; relational, in which we develop authentic connections with each other; solidarity, in which we create communities centered in dignity and respect; and prayer and contemplation, in which we renew ourselves to live out our Franciscan identity. What a perfect way to begin the year renewed, reflective and ready to recognize what is ours to do.

Welcoming hundreds of first-time students during move-in day and preparing them for their first Alvernia Day of Service was, in part, a way to help them identify what is theirs to do. As I spent the day engaging with new students, parents and families and helping their teenagers-turning-young-adults move into their new homes for the next four years, I couldn’t help feeling immense joy for them as they begin their transformational journey. More than 400 students comprise the Class of 2023, and another 60 transfer students have joined our family as well.

These are exciting times ahead for Alvernia and the communities we serve. Our new

strategic planning process is underway, and we are receiving great feedback and input from across constituencies—faculty, staff, administrators, trustees and community leaders.

Known as the Alvernia Advantage, the new strategic plan will provide a framework for the university’s distinctive vision and support for experiential transformation for the individual and community. Through our Franciscan identity, transformation and innovation, student experience, community engagement and stewardship, the Alvernia Advantage will position the university to expand its mission and service, transform lives and global communities, cultivate relationships in downtown Reading and beyond, and steward resources to ensure continuity for generations to come.

If you have not yet been contacted to share your feedback on the Alvernia Advantage, you will! We are reaching out to alumni, parents, the community and of course, students. There is no area that will be untapped in our quest to move Alvernia to the next level of excellence.

I began my first day on campus with a mission moment in which I shared two quotes—one from St. Francis and one from Abraham Lincoln. As we begin this new journey together, we will ensure that Alvernia is poised for a great future and capable of the impossible.

Cheers,

**John R. Loyack**  
President

FALL 2019

## PRESIDENT

**John R. Loyack**

## VICE PRESIDENT FOR GOVERNMENT RELATIONS & EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

**Deidra W. Hill, EdD**

## EDITOR

**Kristopher M. Nolt**

Director of Communications

## ART DIRECTOR

**Lynn N. Gano**

Director of Creative Services

## CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

**Richard Bader**

**Ernest Beck**

**Claire Curry**

**Deidra W. Hill**

**Ambre Juryea-Amole**

**Lini S. Kadaba**

**Kristopher M. Nolt**

**Susan Shelly**

## CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

**Theo Anderson**

**Susan Angstadt**

**Dan Z. Johnson**

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**ON THE COVER** President Loyack shares his vision for making Reading a college town with Reading Collegiate Scholars Program students.

President John R. Loyack rolls up his sleeves and pitches in helping first-year students during move-in day.



# Building from **Strength**



*John Loyack brings an innovative spirit, a unique skill set and a vision of Reading as a college town to his post as Alvernia's president.*



**By Richard Bader**

Left: President Loyack in downtown Reading. Above: President Loyack talks with students about his vision for downtown Reading at 5th and Penn Streets.

Of the various “Reading” things John Loyack has done since being chosen as Alvernia’s seventh president, two stand out. One was having lunch at Jimmy Kramer’s Peanut Bar, the iconic Reading restaurant that’s perhaps best known as the place where it’s OK to throw your peanut shells on the floor. The second was attending the Berks Jazz Fest, held this year in late March and April, which featured the Berks High School All-Star Jazz Band, the Navy Commodores, tributes to Miles Davis



Above: Loyack discusses downtown Reading vision with Reading Collegiate Scholars Tyler Moran (left) and Josualy Rivera (right). Right: Loyack shares a moment with Alvernia students Kayleen Torres (left) and Justin Gibbs (right).



and Aretha Franklin, a trio playing what they called “Sweet, Sexy Soul,” and dozens of other performances at venues throughout downtown. “How lovely it was,” Loyack said, “and how little people outside of the area seem to know of it.”

That lack of awareness of what’s going on in Reading is something that Loyack would like to change.

Alvernia’s new president has big ideas for both the university and its home city. Loyack comes to Alvernia from King’s College in Wilkes-Barre, where he was executive vice president of finance and the architect of a college turnaround that today gets described in biblical terms, with words like “redemption” and “resurrection.” A big part of that turnaround involved transforming abandoned downtown buildings into structures that would house the kinds of programs the college wanted to create. In the process, Wilkes-Barre became a college town. He’d like to see something similar happen in Reading.

“You bring the building back to life, repurpose it, and bring economic activity to it, expand the mission of the institution, and grow the city, all in one activity,” Loyack said, “I love activities that have that kind of multifaceted impact. They open up all kinds of doors.”

Unlike King’s College when Loyack arrived there in 2012, Alvernia’s vital signs are strong. Enrollment is at its highest level ever. The budget has been in the black for 15 consecutive years. But while the university may be in good

shape, the city of Reading could use a shot in the arm. According to the most recent census data, the median household income in the city is below \$30,000 a year. More than a third of residents live in poverty. In 2011, The New York Times said Reading was the poorest city in the U.S.

The university has already taken significant steps to increase its presence in Reading. The Reading Collegiate Scholars Program brings underrepresented graduates of local high schools to Alvernia and has expanded to include students from Reading Area Community College as well. Nearly 300 students have received support through the program. The O’Pake Institute for Ethics, Leadership and Public Service helps build community partnerships.

A college, Loyack believes, can catalyze urban revitalization in ways that other institutions can’t. “Why wouldn’t we have a school or college downtown?” he said. “It just creates opportunities. In a day where it’s such a competitive world in higher education, we need to innovate and continue to find ways to grow what’s special about Alvernia’s mission.”

“John has a great perception of what is already happening here,” said Glynis Fitzgerald, Alvernia’s new senior vice president and provost. “And he also has the vision to build on those key strengths in ways that transform the students who come here and the university as a whole.”

Loyack’s first official day as Alvernia’s president was July 1, but his appointment was announced in December, and he spent much of the winter and spring with one foot in King’s and the other in Alvernia, sometimes

“You bring the building back to life, repurpose it, and bring economic activity to it, expand the mission of the institution, and grow the city, all in one activity.”

— John Loyack



Above: Loyack chats with Alvernia's Bog Turtle Creek farm students (from left to right) Brianna Dreisbach, Destiny Roque and Noah Rizzo, at the Reading Downtown Market. Right: Loyack speaks with Aaron Gantz, executive director of Downtown Revitalization of the Greater Reading Chamber Alliance.

holding phone meetings on the drive back and forth between the two campuses. He invited Alvernia staff to come to Wilkes-Barre so he could show them what King's had accomplished there. All of this happened before Loyack was officially on the clock at Alvernia. "The time and energy he has put into his new role demonstrate what kind of leader he is," said Freddie Pettit, vice president of institutional advancement at King's, who has worked closely with Loyack for years.

Being a university president has a way of constricting one's spare time, but what free time he can carve out of his schedule Loyack would like to spend with his two daughters and son: Shawn, who is senior assistant director of admissions at King's College; Courtney, a recent graduate of Notre Dame Law

“The specialness of the university is the transformation of the student, and it's extraordinary.”

— John Loyack



School who's starting her legal career in Houston; and John Paul, who just graduated from Oklahoma State University and is beginning a career in finance. Loyack also plays golf, enjoys a glass of good wine, and has been known to partake in the occasional cigar.

One of the reasons Alvernia selected Loyack as president was that he brought substantial expertise not just in higher education but also in the world of business. Before taking the job at King's College in 2012, he was president and CEO of Optim Energy, a Texas-based power-plant operator. Before that, he held other leadership positions in the corporate sector.

At its core, he said, a college is a business, and it needs to do the kinds of things that keep any successful business healthy. It needs to generate revenue, grow, be responsive to its customer base, and offer what people want in the manner they want it. In both, there's a product. In business, it might be a car or a cellphone or, in the case of Optim Energy, light and heat for your house. At a university, the product is the student. And in at least this one fundamental way, higher education and the corporate world are very different. "The specialness of the university is the transformation of the student," Loyack said. "And it's extraordinary."

Loyack's leadership in the coming years will help determine the shape of that specialness and the nature of that transformation.

"Alvernia is really lucky to get John Loyack," said Freddie Pettit, his colleague at King's. "John is the kind of person you want on your team." [A](#)

“The time and energy he has put into his new role demonstrates what kind of leader he is.”

— Freddie Pettit

# Embracing the First 100 Days

By Claire Curry



*Fitzgerald shares a laugh with faculty members at the welcome reception for President John Loyack.*

During her first few weeks as Alvernia University's senior vice president and provost, Glynis Fitzgerald met with faculty and the library staff at its annual summer meeting, cheered alongside first-year students at a Lancaster Barnstormers game, mingled with Berks County business leaders at the Women2Women Lobsterfest and began each day with a peaceful moment in the campus chapel.

She made it a priority to get to know the university's faculty, trustees and students as she supports Alvernia's new president, John R. Loyack, and his team in shaping a vision for the future. As the chief academic officer, Fitzgerald oversees the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Professional Programs, School of Graduate and Adult Education, and other areas including the library, the Holleran Center, the Office of Institutional Research and many others.

"My first 100 days will involve a lot of listening to identify our strengths and examine what the needs are to support growth," she said. "Those conversations will

help determine what makes sense for Alvernia moving forward."

Fitzgerald, who succeeds Interim Provost Jerry Greiner, previously served as associate vice president of academic affairs and dean of the School of Graduate Studies at Central Connecticut State University. She is excited about the shift from a large public institution—Central Connecticut serves nearly 12,000 students—to the more intimate setting of a private university. She also values Alvernia's Franciscan heritage, strong commitment to community engagement and close-knit family vibe.

"There's a spirit you can feel here," she said. "The sense of support that everyone gives to one another and the wraparound care that you can provide for each student... that truly is 'knowledge joined with love.'"

The balance of a rich traditional on-campus undergraduate experience and strong graduate and adult learning programs drew Fitzgerald to Alvernia, and part of her plans as provost include exploring ways to enrich student success even further. She is particularly



*“There’s a spirit you can feel here. The sense of support that everyone gives to one another and the wraparound care that you can provide for each student... that truly is ‘knowledge joined with love.’”*

— Glynis Fitzgerald

Above: Fitzgerald is greeted by the Golden Wolves mascot. Right: Fitzgerald shares stories with students.



excited about the many possibilities that will emerge from President Loyack’s college town strategic initiative in Reading, an effort that will aim to forge partnerships and build programs in collaboration with the city and its business community.

“We speak the same language,” Fitzgerald said about President Loyack, who also joined Alvernia July 1. “I share his strong commitment to community engagement and thoughtful program expansion. We complement each other, and he’s put together a team that allows each of our strengths to thrive.”


During her 20 years at Central Connecticut State University, Fitzgerald rose from assistant professor of communication to professor and chair of the communication department before she was appointed associate vice president for Academic Affairs and dean of the School of Graduate Studies. Her accomplishments include building 16 new programs, including a doctorate in nurse anesthesia practice, a program the faculty expressed a need for in part due to accreditation changes in the field.

“We had a strong master’s in nurse anesthesia, but we needed to establish a doctorate,” Fitzgerald explained. State institutions are bound by specific requirements and agreements and, at that time, Central Connecticut State University was not cleared to offer professional doctoral programs. After petitioning the legislature, Fitzgerald successfully paved the way not only for the new doctorate in nurse anesthesia practice but also for other professional doctoral programs across the state system.

“I am proud because it fulfilled a need for the university and for the state,” she said, adding that the program’s first class graduated in May. “That was an important moment for me to be with the faculty and see that class graduate.”

Fitzgerald said that she and her son Conor have received a warm welcome not only from Alvernia but also from the greater Reading community they now call home. They are enjoying the outdoors, especially kayaking on Blue Marsh Lake. “It’s how I recharge,” Fitzgerald said of the time she spends on the water. A high school and college actress, she is looking forward to attending theater and musical performances on campus, as well as sporting events. She’s also an avid reader and hopes to start a faculty book club.

Originally from Grand Island, New York, near Niagara Falls, Fitzgerald earned her doctorate and master’s in organizational communication at the University of Buffalo and bachelor’s degree in communication from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. She didn’t always plan for a career in academia, but a respected mentor encouraged her to think outside the box.

“This professor took the time to encourage me and help me think differently about what my career could look like.” His support ultimately guided Fitzgerald to find her calling and taught her the difference she too can make in others’ lives as an educator. “If it weren’t for him, I wouldn’t be here today in a career that has rewarded me so greatly.” 



Loyack and Fitzgerald share a laugh during move-in day.





by Susan Shelley

While talking with five Alvernia graduates currently leading nonprofit organizations in Berks County, one notices the repeated use of certain words, phrases and ideas.

Words and phrases such as humility, passion, service work, mission, a calling, faith-based and blessing frequently arise in conversation.

The concepts of giving back, helping others and making a difference are recurring themes from these servant leaders, who work in various capacities to make the Greater Berks community a better place.

They shared their visions, challenges and inspirations, and spoke of the role Alvernia had in shaping their careers and their lives.

Stacy Grube, M '17, is the chief executive officer of Dayspring Homes, a faith-based organization that works with intellectually and developmentally disabled individuals. Serving others comes naturally to her.

"My entire life has been in service," she explained. "I knew when I was 14 that I was called into some sort of ministry to serve others."

Grube enrolled in Alvernia's Master of Business Administration program while working as vice president of



**Stacy Grube, M '17**  
Director of Dayspring Homes

*"There is great opportunity to give back to the university for what it has given me. Alvernia is a stronghold in the community for service, peace and justice."*

— Meggan Kerber, '96, M '01

administration at the Children's Home of Reading and said the degree helped her transition into the executive officer role at Dayspring Homes.

"It was a good way to advance my skills and Alvernia was an easy choice," Grube said. "It has a fantastic reputation and its values match up with my values."

Christine Folk, executive director of Mary's Shelter/ Mary's Home, has a long relationship with Alvernia, both as a student and a nonprofit leader.

After graduating from Alvernia's nursing program in 1986 and working as a labor and delivery nurse for several years, Folk found Mary's Shelter, an organization that provides housing and education services for pregnant women and mothers of newborns.

From the minute she arrived as a volunteer, she was hooked.

"I fell in love with the concept that it wasn't just a shelter but also an educational facility," she said.

Her involvement with the organization increased, and she took the reins in 1997 with a goal of helping clients further advance their education.

"We have a requirement that all moms need to complete high school or get a GED," she said. "But I wanted to see more of them continue their educations."

At the time, Mary's Shelter was located near Alvernia's campus. Folk recognized an opportunity and sought a relationship with the school.

"And, that's when Alvernia adopted us," she said.

The university and Mary's Shelter, which has expanded

*"It's hard work, but really, it's my calling."*

— Mary Kay Bernosky, MBA '03

**Christine Folk, '86**

Executive Director of Mary's Shelter/Mary's Home



tremendously and moved to a new location in 2018, continue to partner to educate clients. Alvernia students intern and complete volunteer hours at the shelter, and the university provides scholarships and welcomes its residents on campus.

"The relationship has been such a blessing," Folk said. "We always talk about the miracles that happen here, and Alvernia has been a part of those miracles."

**Meggan Kerber, '96, M '01**

Executive Director of Berks Arts Council



Meggan Kerber credits Alvernia with instilling in her the value of service when she was an undergraduate there.

Kerber, who graduated from Alvernia in 1996 and earned a master's degree there in 2001, took over in August 2018 as executive director of Berks Arts Council. She previously served as director of development for Bethany Children's Home, Inc.

"Alvernia is where I learned the rewards of service, and I've been serving ever since," she said. "I've been in nonprofits pretty much my whole career."

Kerber's strong history of service includes giving back to her alma mater by serving on several committees and councils. She is a mentor for a Reading Collegiate Scholar and has been nominated to serve on the university's board of trustees, beginning with the 2020-2021 school year.

"There is great opportunity to give back to the

*"At the end of the day, it's all about wanting a sense of place for their children to be safe and to be part of a community. That's what we're able to do for our clients, and that's a blessing."*

— Tim Daley, '78

university for what it has given me," she said. "Alvernia is a stronghold in the community for service, peace and justice."

Tim Daley '78 insists that he enrolled at Alvernia to play basketball, with education only a secondary consideration.

What he acquired as a student was completely unexpected.

"What Alvernia did is infuse me with an absolute thirst for learning," said Daley, executive director of Habitat for Humanity of Berks County. "And for that, I am forever grateful."

A criminal justice major who spent 17 years on the Reading police force and also worked as a teacher and safety management consultant, Daley learned about serving others at an early age from his mother, a nurse.

**Tim Daley, '78**

Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of Berks County



"People would come knocking at our door in the middle of the night and my mother would go to help," he said. "I guess doing work that has some sort of societal influence is just in my DNA."

Daley, 65, who grew up in a row home in Reading, said Habitat clients want the same things as anyone else.

"At the end of the day, it's all about wanting a sense of place for their children to be safe and to be part of a community," he said. "That's what we're able to do for our clients, and that's a blessing."

Mary Kay Bernosky, MBA '03, chief executive officer of Safe Berks, was a seventh grader when she read "To Kill a Mockingbird" and decided to pursue a career in law.

After getting a law degree from the College of William & Mary, Bernosky earned an MBA with a concentration in nonprofit leadership from Alvernia University in 2003

*"The relationship has been such a blessing. We always talk about the miracles that happen here, and Alvernia has been a part of those miracles."*

—Christine Folk, '86

*"It was a good way to advance my skills, and Alvernia was an easy choice. It has a fantastic reputation and its values match up with my values."*

— Stacy Grube, M '17


while working full time as Schuylkill County solicitor.

She accepted the position of executive director of Berks Women in Crisis in 2005. The organization in 2016 changed its name to Safe Berks.

Bernosky worked closely with Alvernia President Emeritus Thomas F. Flynn over the years and is grateful for the support the university has given Safe Berks.

"Tom Flynn gave us the Pro Urbe Award (presented to an organization that contributes significant community service), and that raised our profile and paved the way for our capital campaign," Bernosky said. "That was a great gift to us."

Bernosky believes her work has made a difference not only to the women served by Safe Berks but also to their families and the greater community.

"It's hard work, but really, it's my calling," she said. 

**Mary Kay Bernosky, MBA '03**

Executive Officer of Safe Berks





# Icing the Pipeline

By Kristopher Nolt

## Women's hockey opens Alvernia to new domestic and international markets

Of the 24 NCAA Division III athletic programs Alvernia University will field in 2019-20, only one will play on ice.

Initially announced in March 2018, the Golden Wolves Women's Ice Hockey Program enters its first year of competition following an 18-month process of identifying practice and game facilities, hiring a coaching staff and, most importantly, recruiting the inaugural crop of student-athletes.

The last part of that process, recruiting, brought about a welcome opportunity for the university that no other current sport could offer, a chance to expand Alvernia's reach far beyond Pennsylvania, New Jersey and the commonly referenced DMV (Washington, D.C., Maryland and Virginia) markets.

"Women's ice hockey allows Alvernia to attract student-athletes from outside our typical recruiting markets, including internationally," said Alvernia University

*Alvernia women's hockey team starting from the bottom first row left to right: Alex Robertson, Isabelle Hovel, Kayla Ackerman, Julia Beaven. Second row left to right: Abby Reisinger, Abby Zenone, Joely Griffith, Lauren Czymek. Third row left to right: Abby Radcliffe, Mackenzie Jackson, Logan Arand, Olivia Gilida. Top row left to right: Amber Steinhilpert, Fiona Stewart, Morgan Moore, Cassidy Heidkamp.*

Athletic Director Bill Stiles. “The prospect for talented young women to continue their ice hockey and academic careers beyond high school and clubs is limited, and we are delighted to provide that opportunity.”

“The addition of women’s ice hockey as Alvernia’s 27th sport is a continuation of consistent and strategic growth to provide additional opportunities to talented student-athletes in our region and beyond,” said Stiles.

To build a program from scratch required hiring a leader with intimate knowledge of the process. Alvernia

Alaska, with Michigan, Massachusetts and Minnesota in between.”

Brandwene and recently named Assistant Coach Ashley Ryan recognized the No. 1 goal was ensuring student-athletes were a good fit for the institution.

“The core values of Alvernia are crystal clear, and I knew from the first time I stepped on campus that this institution was going to attract the type of student-athletes like I like to coach,” said Brandwene.

Abigail Radcliffe, a forward from Waxhaw, North

**“The core values of Alvernia are crystal clear, and I knew from the first time I stepped on campus that this institution was going to attract the type of student athletes I like to coach.”**

— Josh Brandwene

found that in July 2018 in the form of Head Coach Josh Brandwene, who previously constructed the first NCAA Division I women’s ice hockey program at Penn State University.

“Josh had success building an NCAA program from the ground up. The conversations we had with Penn State administrators and student-athletes who played for Josh underscore his commitment to development on and off the ice,” said Stiles.

Brandwene’s first step following his hiring was to return to his old recruiting grounds in the hockey-heavy states of Michigan, Massachusetts, Minnesota and Alaska and even across the northern border into Ontario, Canada. All represent places previously unreachable in Alvernia’s enrollment efforts.

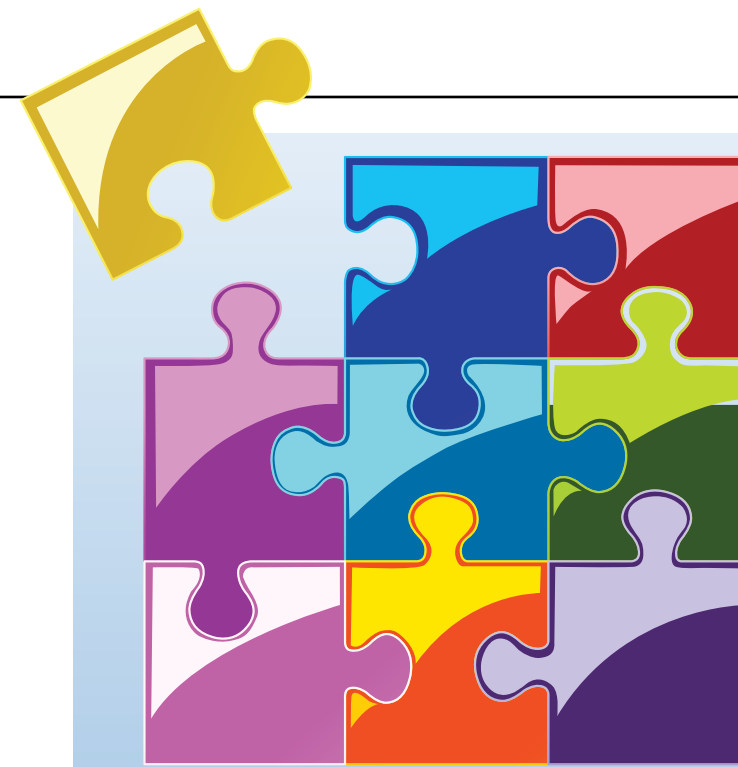
“I think the addition of women’s ice hockey was the perfect fit for this institution and the strategic goals,” said Brandwene. “With the girls hockey footprint being spread so far and wide throughout North America there was going to be a natural growth geographically, and you are seeing that in our recruiting class that stretches as far southeast as North Carolina and as far northwest as

Carolina, wasn’t discouraged by the eight-hour trek from home because Alvernia was her perfect fit.

“I get to meet new people and make new friends from all over the country and play with some amazingly talented players,” said Radcliffe. “Alvernia has a gorgeous campus with such nice and caring people who helped make it feel like home the first time I stepped on campus. Coming from a small Catholic high school, I wanted that same environment in a university.”

Another North Carolina resident, Abigail Reisinger, is looking for the opportunity to serve as an ambassador for women’s hockey and Alvernia in the Reading area and her hometown.

“I am going to work my hardest to make Alvernia women’s ice hockey a topic discussed not only in the city of Reading or the state of Pennsylvania but down in the growing hockey community of the Carolinas,” said Reisinger. “I have already spoken to coach Brandwene about the possibility of traveling down to Charlotte, North Carolina, in hopes of doing camps for young girls to not only spread Alvernia’s footprint but to grow women’s hockey in the south. I found my way to Alvernia from



## Finding the Right Fit

The holistic approach is working for Alvernia’s student-athletes. Just look at the numbers:

- In 2017-18, the average student-athlete GPA was 3.21, and 15 sports had a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- Over a six-year period, student-athletes had a 9% higher graduation rate over non-student-athletes.
- In 2017-18, the retention rate for student-athletes was 82.2% versus 70% for non-student athletes.

In efforts to continue recruiting higher-performing students, 22 Division III athletic programs and three club programs will compete as Golden Wolves during the 2019-20 season. With the average number of sports sponsored by Division III institutions sitting at 19, Alvernia’s commitment to athletics is apparent, adding five new sports, including football, equestrian, wrestling, men’s volleyball and women’s ice hockey in the last two years alone.

“The growth of Alvernia’s athletic programs is a strategic and prudent process that is put into place to enhance the experience for all Alvernia students,” said Stiles. “All our programs, including our new programs, add spirit, community and togetherness to this university and offers many opportunities to engage students and alumni alike.”

NCAA Division III athletics is about recruiting student-athletes searching for a holistic approach to their education. Very rarely will a DIII athlete report they are playing sports to “play in the big leagues” or “compete in the Olympics,” but that doesn’t mean competition at the Division III level is any less than its counterparts at Division I or II.


“There is a stigma that NCAA Division III programs are not competitive,” said Alvernia University Athletic Director Bill Stiles. “That couldn’t be farther from the truth. In addition to being extremely dedicated and serious about their sport, our student-athletes seek a holistic education that includes time for participating in other leadership and service opportunities on campus, acquiring work-study positions and internships, and using the extra time away from their sport to focus on their studies.”

way down there, and I want other girls to know they have options too.”

Julia Beaven, the team’s first international student-athlete and early example of a global enrollment trend, hails from Seaforth, Ontario, Canada.

“When I had my Connection Day, people were shocked that there was someone from Canada. I think that shows that a small university in Reading, Pennsylvania, is growing its footprint when now you have people coming from Canada and all over the United States.”

Brandwene sees the women’s ice hockey program as one of the first steps in forming a global footprint for Alvernia.

“When you recruit the right student-athletes into these roles, they have a tremendous opportunity to be ambassadors not only on campus but off campus because of the amount of travel and visibility,” said Brandwene. “I’m excited that the institution will reap those benefits of establishing our program and, in a few years, use our student-athletes to establish a global alumni network.” 

# A Timeline of THE FLYNN PLEX

Students, faculty, staff, donors, Bernardine sisters, trustees and community leaders gathered at the newly opened Tom and Helen Flynn Recreation, Wellness & Health Sciences Complex (PLEX) for a blessing and dedication ceremony in September. The program capped a three-year journey of careful planning, stewardship and construction that officially established Alvernia's East Campus. The timeline below captures the process from the demolition and groundbreaking to the topping off ceremony and official opening.



Buildings are razed for construction



Structure beams go up



Groundbreaking ceremony



Topping off ceremony



Walls go up



Installation of equipment begins



Floors laid



Alvernia President John R. Loyack presides over the blessing and dedication ceremony and is pictured with Sister Marilisa da Silva, Helen Flynn and President Emeritus Thomas F. Flynn.

2017

2018

2019

Dec.

May

June

July

Aug.

Sept.

Oct.

Nov.

Jan.

Mar.

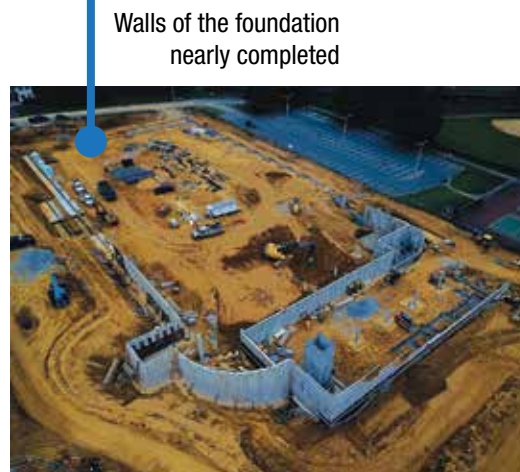
Apr.

May

Sept.



Groundbreaking ceremony



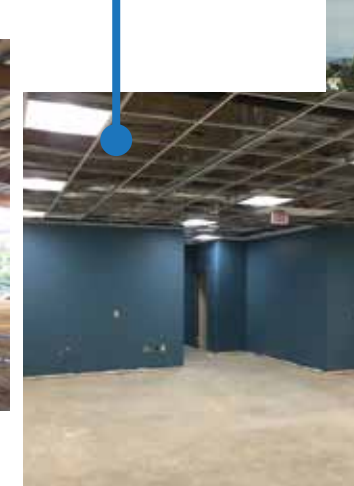
Walls of the foundation nearly completed



Roof nearly completed



Roof completed and floor work begins



Walls painted and ceiling placed



Near completion

# Placing Her Stamp



By Claire Curry

In her early career as an elementary school teacher, Joanne Haag '69 used her stamp-collecting hobby as a tool to teach her students in Washington, D.C., about crucial moments in history. At the time, she didn't know that her interest in stamps would also set the stage for significant milestones in her own personal history.

Stamp collecting not only evolved into a successful side business for Haag and her husband Walter but also led to a serendipitous meeting and job offer that redirected the course of her career from education to the corporate business world.

"I thought I was going to be a teacher," said Haag, president of H.P. Thompson UTEC, an engineering firm based in Milford, Ohio. "When my husband was transferred to Cincinnati, I inquired about teaching positions there, but I was too high up on the pay scale, coming from the East Coast." Potential employers could hire new college graduates for less.

Left with no job prospects and time on her hands in an unfamiliar city, Haag took a friend's suggestion and attended a luncheon held by a local stamp group, hoping to meet other collectors and dealers. One of the men she met co-owned an engineering firm. "He asked what I would do while I'm in Cincinnati, and I said I didn't know," Haag recalls. "He gave me his business card and asked me to come in for an interview for a job opening at his firm." To her surprise, she got the job, so she set out to learn everything she could about engineering.

H.P. Thompson UTEC represents manufacturers of industrial equipment and works with such clients as Procter & Gamble and major universities to

power massive industrial plants and manage waste and water filtration.

"I did it on sheer guts and faith," Haag said. "I worked my way up, and after five years, I owned stock in the company. I was motivated and I loved what they did. I loved the client base and, 40 years later, it's history. It's been a real adventure!"

*Alvernia is the stepping stone for whatever you choose to become in life. It teaches the values that help your character develop and that help you grow as a person. Those values carried me through making many business decisions over the years.*

— Joanne Haag '69

Since her business partner died 22 years ago, Haag has run the operation singlehandedly and with the knowledge and expertise of a seasoned veteran. But in the early years, working in a male-dominated field alongside degree-holding engineers when she held a degree in education presented some challenges and required that Haag prove herself through hard work and determination.

Today, as she celebrates her 50th anniversary as an Alvernia alumna, she credits the university for giving her the knowledge and foundations that have guided her career. "I've taken a very different life path," she said. "No matter what your degree might be in and what you've prepared for, Alvernia is the stepping stone for whatever you choose to become in

life. It teaches the values that help your character development and that help you grow as a person. Those values carried me through making many business decisions over the years."

Parallel to her career with the engineering firm, Haag and her husband of 48 years have built a

thriving business in stamp collecting and dealing and attend more than 20 shows each year as national accredited dealers. They have spent much of their free time over the years traveling with their son, Steven.

"A trip around the world with my husband and son was tops," said the Pennsylvania native. Steven, now 34, lives in London and co-owns a boutique hotel in Scotland on the island of Islay, famous for its Scotch whiskey, scenery and seafood. The family enjoys get-togethers a few times each year there. Haag said her other favorite destinations are Bangkok for its unique culture, shrines and floating market, and New Zealand for its beautiful scenery.

"When my son turned 10, we went on one major trip every year, to places like China, Hawaii, Switzerland

and the Caribbean," Haag said. "Your education is one part of who you become, but traveling is a different kind of education, learning about different cultures and how to interact with different people."

Haag said she had a crash course just after college when her husband took an assignment with the World Health Organization in Switzerland. "We lived there for two years and it was an incredibly life-altering experience. We traveled everywhere, all over Europe and to Greece. It broadened who we were as people and shaped our future."

Haag said she is especially proud of her son's achievements. Steven attended Emory University, where he earned two bachelor's and a master's degree. Later, he received a master's with honors at St. Andrews University in Scotland and then pursued a law degree in London. All of his studies were on full academic scholarships. Following his parents' footsteps, Steven has continued traveling the world and, to date, has visited more than 50 countries.

Even though five decades have passed since she was a student at Alvernia, Haag has fond memories of the lifelong friendships she made, and she remains in touch with several friends, including her college roommate, Mary Kay Murphy '69, and best friend Nancy Nicklas '69.

"That's the thing that had the most impact for me, the friendships and relationships you develop there," she said. "We were a small class, so we participated in everything together. No one was just a number; we each had an identity. For us, that family atmosphere shaped who we became." ☒

# Advancing Opportunities

By Lini S. Kadaba

When Sister Digna Chuwa, C.P.S., M.Ed.'03 was studying multicultural education and administration at Alvernia University, she never anticipated how crucial those skills would prove in helping the girls of Kahama in her native Tanzania.

In this small gold mining town in the country's northwest, girls seldom receive education beyond the primary grades. "School is for boys," Sister Digna, 56, a Missionary Sister of the Precious Blood, said of local attitudes. "Girls are supposed to be at home to prepare themselves for marriage to any husband."

Those as young as 14 are forced to marry and are viewed as a source of much-needed income through dowry paid in cows, Sister Digna explained. In Tanzania, which has one of the highest adolescent pregnancy rates in the world, girls pregnant out of wedlock are expelled from school and ostracized by the community. At the same time, the country is striving to change that outcome by making girls' education a priority.

So in 2003, fresh off her master's degree, Sister Digna was asked by the local bishop to explore the development of a diocesan boarding school. By 2005, Queen of Family Girls' Secondary School opened in Kahama with 70 students—the first girls-only school in the district.

For 12 years, Sister Digna served as headmistress. Of nearly 1,000 graduates, none have gotten pregnant and all have matriculated, many becoming teachers and a few doctors and engineers, she said with pride.

"My most fine thing," Sister Digna said, is that "the parents have come

“Sister Digna is a perfect living example of that mission. She’s doing a lot of hard work, sacrificing herself so others blossom and flourish.”

— Elena Lawrick

Sister Digna sits and chats with her mentor, Dr. Elena Lawrick.



to see girls can do this too." In 2017, she returned to Alvernia to pursue a doctorate in educational leadership.

Of course, establishing the school was no easy mission. Sister Digna had to persuade the community's men—including the bishop—that young girls already promised in marriage should instead get educated.

"The culture is where women do not talk in public where men are," she said. "Women, they are supposed to listen. Here you have a woman sitting at the head of the table, giving orders to men. Most men say, 'Are you for real?'"

Sister Digna's reply? "Yeah, I am."

Dressed in a white habit with a white veil, a cross around her neck, this petite woman has conducted herself as an "ethical leader with moral courage," said Elena Lawrick, director of Alvernia's Office for Multilingual Student Success and Sister Digna's mentor.

"These are words that relate to

Alvernia's mission and education," Lawrick said. "Sister Digna is a perfect living example of that mission. She's doing a lot of hard work, sacrificing herself so others blossom and flourish."

Sister Digna held workshops to win over the mothers, convincing them that their daughters would benefit from education, and most importantly, not get pregnant.

"That was the first mission," she said, "to get it into their being, You are not meant to get married at the age of 14, 15. We are going to study to the end, and we're going to prove to the world they are wrong about us."


That message starts with the school's name: "She is the queen in the family," Sister Digna said, just as the Virgin Mary is the "Queen of the Holy Family."

Growing up in the foothills of Mount Kilimanjaro—an area where education is valued—there was

no doubt that this daughter of a teacher father would attend school and college. After joining religious life, Sister Digna came to the United States to work at Dayspring Homes, a Reading nonprofit for special needs children, and earned a scholarship to pursue her master's at Alvernia.

Now the doctoral student is researching female leadership in educational contexts in Tanzania and exploring disparities between boys' and girls' test scores in STEM subjects.

"She is connecting various pieces of data that no one has connected before," Lawrick said. "It will help narrow that gender gap."

For Sister Digna, it is the next step to better the lives of girls and women. "They also play a vital role in the leadership of the country," she said. "Somebody has to say to them, You are able to do this. You can play an active role here." 

# Ethics training enhances medical internship



Above: Welteroth works in the Trauma Surgery department at Reading Hospital.

As Alvernia University pre-medical student Collin Welteroth unpacks and organizes clothing, he chats with the newest resident at a facility for people who use wheelchairs. The resident tells Welteroth he has had a great life and would rather be himself than trade places with a person who doesn't use a wheelchair. Welteroth steps back to reevaluate his worldview.

"His words really hit me. It was incredible just to hear

*"The more I'm there, the more I realize how useful it will be to be able to look at each patient from an ethical standpoint and seeing the moral side of everything."*

— Collin Welteroth

department at Reading Hospital, he applies ethics to his patient interactions. "The more time I spend at my internship, the more I realize how useful it will be to look at each patient from an ethical standpoint."

Welteroth noted he enrolled in more theology classes early in his academic career than required for his degree. In fact, he only needed two more to obtain a minor in theology, so he enrolled in medical moral theology and theology of addictions. "The more I'm there, the more I realize how useful it will be to be able to look at each patient from an ethical standpoint and to see the moral side of everything."

Welteroth feared he would not be able to form relationships with his patients in the trauma department but quickly learned that this was not the case. He found through small acts of kindness he was able to create bonds with patients suffering through the most intense periods of their lives.


He recalled the moment he first interacted with a patient who was in a horrific car accident and had been in a coma for 10 days. "He was sitting up in a chair. He would ask me for help changing the channel on the TV or putting music on, and he was just the nicest guy. That was really awesome – getting to interact with him after he woke up, especially after seeing him come in the way he did."

With a newfound understanding of addictions through his theology coursework, Welteroth applies his training when working with patients. "I'm learning that people make choices for reasons I can't explain, and obviously, they aren't my choices to make for them."

how selfless he was about his condition. It blew my mind."

The conversation happened during an Alternative Breaks service trip, a program through Alvernia's Office of Mission and Ministry where students engage in service activities during holiday breaks from school. Welteroth credits a combination of experiential learning and theology coursework for teaching him to approach his work in the medical field from an ethical perspective.

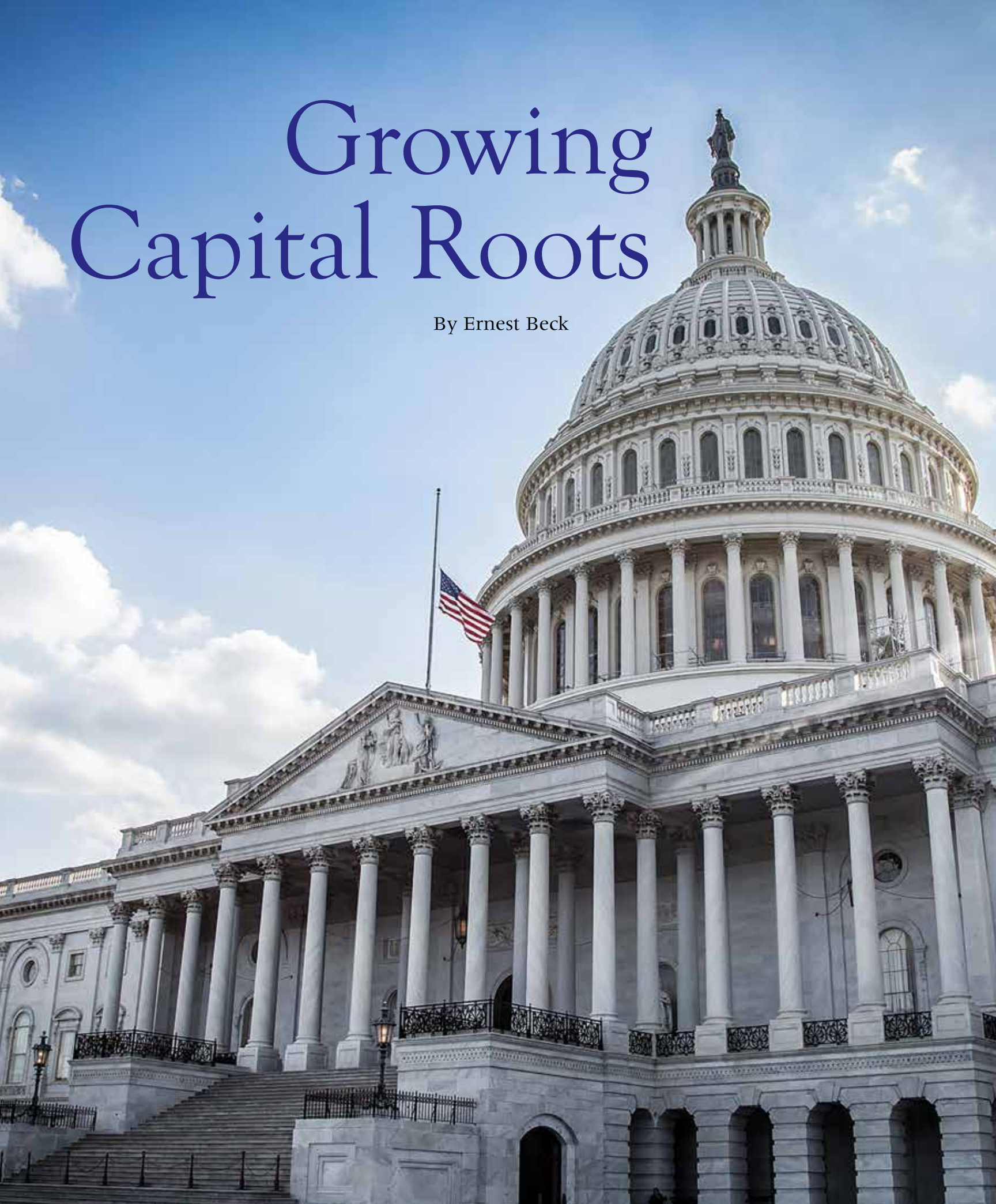
Now working as an intern in the trauma surgery

Welteroth's ethics training is preparing him to be a successful physician with the ability to see each patient objectively. Then, he can make the best decisions to provide quality care. "There's never any typical patient who comes in, and every case is always different, so you have to meet people at their level and understand and accept them for who they are. So even though it was by chance that I minored in theology, I now realize that I'm really going to use it in my career." 



# Growing Capital Roots

By Ernest Beck



As director of operations for House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Emily Berret '11 is in the thick of politics and the daily swirl of activity in Washington, D.C. "I always knew I wanted to come to D.C.," Berret, who graduated from Alvernia in 2011 with a double major in political science and history, recalled. She is in her second job in Washington, having transitioned from an internship at the White House to the Speaker's office in 2013.

U.S. Forest Service, said his internships at the center were all-important, acting as a bridge to life in D.C. "I learned how the system works and how to navigate it," he said. DiProffio came to the capital after graduating in 2014 with a double major in history and political science. His first job, interning for former U.S. Rep. Candice Miller of Michigan, provided insight into drafting legislation and constituent work before he moved on to the Forest Service. "Without

**"Without my internship at the center, I don't think I would have had the jobs and the success I have had."**

— Nick DiProffio '14

Like many Alvernia students, Berret received an introduction to government work and life in D.C. through the Washington Center, the largest and most established student internship program in the nation's capital. Founded in 1975, the center has helped more than 60,000 young people gain real-world experience in the capital, whether they pursue careers in government or other fields. Over the past five years, 50 Alvernia students have attended programs at the center, including full semester and summer programs as well as those linked to specific events such as political conventions and the inauguration.

"We've had a long relationship with the Washington Center," said David Myers, former director of Alvernia's O'Pake Institute for Ethics, Leadership and Public Service. "Of all our off-campus programs, this is the most popular," he added, noting that it attracts a wide range of students from different academic interests.

For the 29-year-old Berret, an internship at the center was an opportunity to experience life in Washington and, equally important, to understand "why I wanted to come here," she said. While Berret had worked on political campaigns in Pennsylvania, she wasn't sure if politics was the right career path. Her program at the Washington Center involved a full-time internship and classes two nights a week, along with speaker programs.

Nick DiProffio, 27, an environmental policy analyst at the

my internship at the center," he said, "I don't think I would have had the jobs and the success I have had."

Kyle Covington, a 2015 Alvernia graduate with a dual major in business administration and accounting, interned at the Washington Center to learn more about doing business with the government. Although he didn't stay in D.C., his time there was invaluable and led to closer ties with Alvernia alumni. "We all have a common, fundamental connection," said Covington, a 24-year-old commercial bank manager with Wells Fargo in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania.

Perhaps that is a reflection of the type of Alvernia student who is attracted to programs offered by the center. "We always look for students who are willing to take a risk to do something different," Myers explained. For many students, the idea of going to D.C. might at first be daunting, he added, "but many come back saying the experience changed their perspective." They get to know politicians and policymakers, and see how government functions while living with other students in an apartment in an exciting city. Many also return with internship and job offers.

It's also about savoring the sheer thrill of being in Washington, D.C. "It was just enthralling to stand in the Capitol building for the first time," DiProffio said. "Like playing shortstop at Yankee Stadium." **A**

**ALVERNIA RANKS AMONG TOP 100 BEST REGIONAL UNIVERSITIES**

Alvernia University is ranked in the top 100 colleges and universities in the country. According to U.S. News & World Report, the university is among the 2020 Best Regional Universities in the North. Of the more than 1,500 colleges and universities in the northeast region, U.S. News only ranks 170, and Alvernia is at 94 in the top tier, moving up several positions over last year.

Alvernia's movement up the ranks over last year can be attributed to successful outcomes in three areas—faculty resources, average first-year retention rates and predicted and actual graduation rates. Rankings are based on data from fall 2018 enrollment figures as well as an average across the last three to four years. Since being ranked by US News & World Report during the past nine years, Alvernia has moved into the top tier and now to among the top 100.

**PERFORMING ARTS SERIES SHOWCASES BERKS ARTISTS**

The 2019-20 Performing Arts Series features recognized professional artists with ties to the city of Reading and Greater Berks County.

"Alvernia has a longstanding commitment in providing a dynamic environment for students and community members to experience arts and cultural events," said Alvernia Artist in Residence and Managing Director of the Performing Arts Series Jessica Warchal-King. "We are excited for the opportunity to celebrate and showcase our local artists with this season's events."

This season features the Wheatland Chorale, JCWK Dance Lab and Jill Haley. The Performing Arts Series continues its partnership with the Berks Jazz Fest in presenting Germaine Ingram and The Red Rose Collective.

All performances will be held in Francis Hall Theatre.

**Alvernia welcomes President Loyack**

Following a career of advancing leadership in private industry and higher education, John R. Loyack commenced his tenure as the seventh president of Alvernia University Monday, July 1, 2019.

His presidency began with a meeting of the newly aligned senior leadership team in Francis Hall. He then descended the stairs into the atrium where the Alvernia community welcomed him with a reception.

Loyack conversed with nearly 100 faculty, staff and students during a holiday week and even had a few moments to pose for pictures with the Golden Wolves mascot before engaging in the longstanding Alvernia tradition of delivering a special mission moment.

He also invited the community to follow him on his newly minted Twitter account @AlverniaPres.

Loyack helped usher in the new year during welcome-back week at several university-wide events.

At Mission Day, he joined the rest of the faculty and staff to reflect on the university's mission and collectively develop answers to the vital Franciscan question, "What is ours to do."

At the Opening Forum, Loyack ad-



President Loyack greets first-year students and their parents on move-in day in August.

ressed questions from the faculty and staff about the university's new direction.

On move-in day, Loyack, along with students, faculty and staff, welcomed new students and families to campus and offered a circle of support during the Opening Convocation ceremony.

"You'll find our community is a welcoming one, a caring one, one that will be with your sons and daughters every step of the way," said President Loyack.

After families made their way home, Loyack welcomed students with a barbecue on the quad, and they celebrated Mass of the Holy Spirit on the first day of classes.



President Loyack chats with faculty and staff at a reception for him.

**Students open new year with service**

Despite steady rain that persisted throughout the day, more than 500 new and returning Alvernia students, faculty, staff and peer mentors strengthened relationships with the local community by conducting a series of daylong service projects at nearly every school in the Reading School District.

"We are a community," said President Loyack. "We do service as a community, and we welcome new people as a community. This is what moral leadership is all about."

As many as 40 students assigned to 21 school locations served the school district in multiple ways, including helping teachers prepare classrooms for the upcoming year; gardening, weeding and mulching outside areas; cleaning up sidewalks and walkways; and painting murals and decorating walls.



Students dig and plant flowers and shrubbery outside of Reading High School.



Students paint the walls at Glenside Elementary School.

"Basically you are helping out your little brother and sister, and this day is for them," said first-year student Philip Glockner.

This marks the 11th year that Alvernia students participated in the Orientation Day of Service. The day followed move-in day when students unpacked their belongings in their new residence halls, posed for a class picture on the steps outside Francis Hall and attended the opening convocation ceremony.

The day is one of four days of service throughout the year when the university connects with the community on multiple service projects. The other three days are Feast of St. Francis, Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Earth Day.

**FLYNN EARNS EMERITUS STATUS**

The Alvernia University board of trustees granted emeritus status for former president Thomas F. Flynn following 14 years of transformational leadership. This is the first time in the university's history that an individual in the role of president has received such a distinction.

"Tom's vision and leadership converted this local commuter college to a thriving regional university with deep ties to the community," said Alvernia University board of trustees chairman and CEO of Fromm Electric Supply, Michael Fromm. "On behalf of the entire board, it gives us great pleasure to grant Tom the status of president emeritus, as he is the most transformational leader in the university's history."

Flynn ended his tenure as Alvernia's president June 30, after serving since July 2005.

**WOMEN'S COUNCIL RECOGNIZES MARSDALE**

For her distinguished career and service as a role model for women, recently retired Greater Reading Chamber Alliance Senior Vice President Karen Marsdale received the Alvernia University Women's Council's Bernardine Legacy Award.

"I am very humbled by this prestigious award," said Marsdale. "There are so many women more worthy than I who have truly paved the way for women in this community, but this award means a great deal to me. The legacy of the Bernadine Franciscan Sisters is a remarkable story that truly exemplifies God's love for others; we must never forget that we too have that obligation."

The Alvernia University Women's Council fosters the personal and professional development of Alvernia women at all life stages, strengthens their connection to the university and each other and educates and inspires them to pursue and grow in leadership roles both in their chosen profession and the greater community.

**STUDENTS INTERN WITH READING NONPROFITS**

Seven Alvernia students expanded their career skill sets last summer by completing paid internship experiences with local nonprofits as part of the Office of Career Development's newly established Greater Reading Nonprofit Internship Program.

"This program is the perfect marriage of Alvernia's commitment to the Greater Reading community and to offering life-changing experiential learning experiences to our students," said John R. Loyack.

Each intern received a stipend of \$1,250 for their work. A \$5,000 grant from Wells Fargo and additional financial backing from the Holleran Center for Community and Global Engagement's Office of Career Development funded the experiences.

Students gained experience in various fields of study with BCTV, Berks Agricultural Resource Network, Berks County Bar Association, Habitat for Humanity and the YMCA.

**NURSING FACULTY STAYS ON CUTTING-EDGE**

For her commitment to enhancing the learning environment, Assistant Professor of Nursing Cynthia Rothenberger, DNP, RN, ACNS, BC, was one of 35 nursing faculty selected for an American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) bootcamp to equip nursing educators with cutting-edge digital learning strategies.

"Use of digital technology is an increasing area of focus in health care, and I'll share what I have learned with colleagues at Alvernia, which will support us in providing cutting-edge, evidence-based education to our students," said Rothenberger.

The 2019 Digital Innovation Bootcamp: From Content to Action, which drew a pool of more than 130 candidates nationwide, showcases sessions on preparing digital content, developing iOS mobile apps and multitouch books, and creating an engaging learning environment.

**Alvernia aligns senior leadership team**

In preparation for the development of a new strategic direction for Alvernia University, four senior leadership team members have moved into enhanced roles and a new person joins the team.

"People are what make strategy come to life," said president John R. Loyack. "As we move forward together in developing the future direction of Alvernia, this valuable opportunity positions us for the successful rollout and implementation of our strategic direction for the university."

John McCloskey, previously serving as vice president for enrollment management, has been named senior vice president and chief of staff. In his new role, McCloskey will serve as a strategic partner with university leadership, faculty and staff as well as a senior adviser to the president.

Julianne Wallace, previously serving as assistant to the president for mission and director of campus ministry, has been promoted to vice president for mission and ministry, serving as the chief mission officer for the university. Wallace will lead the mission component of Alvernia's strategic planning process to

ensure that strategy aligns with mission.

Rudy Ruth, director of the O'Pake Institute for Ethics, Leadership and Public Service, now serves as part of the senior leadership team and reports directly to the president. The O'Pake Institute will be the vehicle to expand Alvernia beyond the 18th Ward toward a college town model in downtown Reading.

Deidra Hill, previously serving as vice president for marketing and external relations, has been named vice president for government relations and external affairs. In the new role, Hill will focus on increasing engagement with government officials and securing resources to support expansion and growth in Reading and throughout the region.

Mary-Alice Ozechoski was named the new vice president for enrollment management on Sept. 11 after serving as vice president for enrollment management and student affairs at Cedar Crest College since 2013.

"Mary-Alice has an impressive record of leading successful enrollment management programs as well as strategies designed to support student development and retention," said Loyack.



*Clockwise: John McCloskey, senior vice president and chief of staff; Julianne Wallace, vice president for mission and ministry; Deidra Hill, vice president for government relations and external affairs; Mary-Alice Ozechoski, vice president for enrollment management; Rudy Ruth, director of the O'Pake Institute for Ethics, Leadership and Public Service*



**Rosemarie Chinni, PhD**  
Professor of Chemistry and Forensic Science

Chinni will present at the Eastern Analytical Symposium (EAS) in the Technical Session called "Applications of Lasers in Analytical Chemistry" in November 2019. The title of her talk is "Laser-Induced Breakdown Spectroscopy (LIBS) for Forensic Applications of Paint Analysis and Gunshot Residue (GSR)."



**Neil Penny, EdD, MS, OTR/L**  
Associate Professor of Occupational Therapy

Penny's manuscript titled "An Investigation of the Moral Distress Experienced by Occupational Therapy Practitioners" was accepted for publication in the Annals of International Occupational Therapy. The piece was also written by co-authors and Alvernia Occupational Therapy graduates Taylor Benjamin '16, Chelsea Gonsalves '16, Amber Gordon '16, Erin Kinsley '16 and Samantha Markel '16.



**Dolores Bertoti, PT, MS, DPT**  
Professor of Physical Therapy, Biology and Healthcare Science

**Thomas Porrazzo, LAT, ATC, PhD**  
Associate Professor of Athletic Training

Bertoti and Porrazzo presented their research "Assessing Students' Application of Core Values to Ethical Dilemmas and Issues of Social Injustice" at the Clute Institute's 2019 International Education Conference in Dublin, Ireland, in June.



**Donna Yarri, PhD**  
Associate Professor of Theology

Yarri presented research on "Ethical Concerns in Cloning Animals" at the National Association for Practical and Professional Ethics Conference on Feb. 28, 2019. She also published a book review essay titled "Navigation Liberation Theologies," in Religious Studies Review and was a co-author on a piece with Alvernia Professor of Biology Spencer Stober titled, "To Intervene or Not to Intervene: The Issue of the Liminal Feral Cat," in the Open Journal of Philosophy.



**Ana Ruiz, PhD**  
Professor of Psychology

Ruiz and Alvernia professor of Psychology Di You published "Ethics Education in Franciscan Undergraduate Psychology Programs" in the Journal of Academic Ethics.



**Elizabeth Matteo, PhD**  
Associate Professor of Psychology

**Di You, PhD**  
Professor of Psychology

Matteo and You wrote a paper that was accepted for an upcoming special issue in the Journal of Character Education on Virtuous Leadership. The title of the paper is "Designing Undergraduate Internships to Foster Ethical Leadership."



**Spencer Stober, PhD**  
Professor of Biology

During summer 2019, Stober traveled to China with Alvernia Professor of Psychology Di You and a group of seven Alvernia students to serve as a trip chaperone and as a visiting scholar to present his research "Leadership: A Global Perspective" at the University of North Minzu. He also traveled to Grand Manan, New Brunswick, with students and to lecture at the Castalia Marsh Retreat, five acres of forested land on Grand Manan Island that is designed to host workshops or facilitate gatherings focused on personal, spiritual and environmental health.



**Mary Ann Durant, DNP, MSN, RN, MEd**  
Assistant Professor of Nursing

Durant presented her research "Irish Travellers: Exploration of the Social Determinants of Health Related to Cultural Barriers and Health Inequities" and "The Enhancement of Non-Nursing Students' Perceived Self-Efficacy and Cultural Competence through Use of Innovative Transcultural Activities" at the Transcultural Nursing Society's 44th Annual Conference. She also participated in a Cultural Immersion Experience in Dingle, Ireland, with occupational therapy and nursing students and faculty during the 2019 spring break.



**John Gieringer, MA**  
Assistant Professor of Mathematics and Physics

Gieringer was a co-author on the book "First Semester Calculus for Students of Mathematics and Related Disciplines" that covers all the information found in a typical first-semester college calculus course.

# Alumni Class Notes

## Attention Alumni:

- **Married?**
- **New job?**
- **Addition to the family?**

Share your news! Contact us at [alumni.alvernia.edu](http://alumni.alvernia.edu)

### 1960s

**Mary Ann C. (Schaefer) D'Alonzo '69, Bernadette S. Fennimore '69, Karen (Stephan) Goodhart '69, Carol E. (Kidder) Killian '69, Barb Kunder '69, Mary C. Murphy '69** and **Sister Shaun Kathleen Wilson '69** participated in festivities at this year's Baccalaureate and Commencement ceremonies. The class is celebrating its 50th reunion.

**Mary C. Murphy '69** was profiled in the Faces of Faith, a special section of the *Reading Eagle*.

### 1970s

**Dominic M. Murgido '79** was featured in the *Reading Eagle* about SudSSpirit, a bereavement support group to help those who have experienced the Sudden Death of a Spouse (SUDS) or significant other, and are Survivors in Participation to Inform, Renew, Improve and Triumph (Spirit).

### 1980s

**Kevin Georgetti '85** has been named chief compliance officer for First United Bank. He will oversee the BSA/AML and compliance departments as well as the development and implementation of the regulatory compliance risk management framework for the bank.



**Mary Dishong-VanEtten '88** was named vice president and corporate security officer for Tompkins Financial Corporation. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in criminal justice administration.

### 1990s

**Kristin Eck '98** joined the Alvernia family as the executive assistant to the vice president for institutional advancement.

### 2000s

**Kevin P. DeAcosta '00**, president and CEO of the Highlands at Wyomissing, was featured in the *Reading Eagle's* Business Weekly Profile 2019. The Highlands is in the process of constructing a state-of-the-art memory support neighborhood facility, with an anticipated opening in 2020.

**Rosemary Lamestra '01** was named to the committee on Professional Ethics of the Pennsylvania Institute of Certified Public Accountants (PICPA) for a three-year term. Lamestra is a certified public accountant and certified fraud examiner and is employed as the manager of RLB Certified Public Accountants in Allentown.

**James J. Stritch '02** was named corporate physical security manager at BB&T Bank and is responsible for managing physical security operations at 1,900+ locations in 15 states.

**Stefanie K. Schwalm '03** started a new position at West Chester University as associate provost for accreditation and assessment.



**Heather Baum '04/'09** has been elected to serve on Alvernia's Alumni Council.

**Carleen Mulholland '05** has been elected as Chair of Alvernia's Alumni Council.

**Kirsten P. Goeb '07** became engaged to Brian Picillo.

**Alice Einolf '07** will assume the post of principal for Berks Catholic High School. Einolf has more than 30 years of experience in Catholic education, serving most recently as Berks Catholic assistant principal.



**Christopher Winters '08** has been elected to serve on Alvernia's Alumni Council and has also been appointed CEO of Olivet Boys and Girls Club.



**Yola P. Lindo '09** was appointed director of nursing for the Phoebe Berks Health Care Center in Wernersville. She is responsible for managing and organizing the clinical operation of the nursing department and ensuring the department's compliance with policies and regulatory requirements.

**Kristen D. Rutledge '09** married Rafal Krol.

### 2010s

**Eli Benner '16 & Olivia Madara M '19** are engaged to be married.



**Rene Berkhammer '10** was featured in the Berks County Community Foundation's May newsletter. Berkhammer is a secondary life skills teacher at John Paul II Center, where she teaches students to be successful and independent after graduation.

**Justine Bauer '10** was promoted to manager at Herbein & Company's Reading Office. Her responsibilities include all the aspects of audit procedures and financial statements.

**Kate Ecke '11** has been elected as vice chair of Alvernia's Alumni Council.

**Abigail Eby '12/DNP '19** has been elected to serve on Alvernia's Alumni Council.

**Danielle M. Motze '13** was featured in an article published in the *Reading Eagle* about safe bicycling and educating cyclists' right of way.

**Engel A. 'Chip' Tagland '13** was named Nurse of the Year at Deborah Hospital, where he works in the medical ICU unit. He also serves as a charge nurse.



**Joan Kern PhD '15** represented Alvernia University at the induction ceremonies for the new president at Cedar Crest College, Elizabeth Meade. The ceremonies took place on April 26, 2019. Joan received her PhD in educational leadership.

**Taylor Newswanger '15** has been elected as Secretary of Alvernia's Alumni Council and also gave birth to healthy baby girl, Quinn Taylor, on June 26, 2019.



**Troy Price '15** has accepted a position of superintendent for Juniata County School District. The PhD graduate began his position on July 1, 2019.



**Dr. Jared T. Reinert '15** graduated from the Massachusetts College of Health Sciences School of Optometry, in Worcester, Massachusetts, with a doctorate in optometry.



**Tiffany Yoch '15** has been elected to serve on Alvernia's Alumni Council.

**Jamie V. Cappiello '16** is pursuing her masters at Temple University. She graduated in 2016 with a degree in behavioral health.

**Summer G. Liberto '16** gave birth to a healthy baby boy, Michael Scott Montgomery III, on June 26, 2019.



# Alumni Class Notes

**Devon A. Reeves '16 and Aaron Yuos '16** were married on July 12, 2019.



**Zachary Zechman '16** was sworn in as a police officer in West Norriton, Pennsylvania. Zechman earned his degree in criminal justice in 2016 and is a 2017 graduate of the Reading Police Academy.

**Dr. Paige Brookins '16** was named assistant dean of the College of Business at Kutztown University.

**Michael Durofchalk '17** earned his master's degree in healthcare administration from the University of Pittsburgh.



**Anna Marie Duna M'18** married Andrew Slick on June 1, 2019.



**Nathan D. Keller '18** moved to Iowa to work for Senator Kamala Harris as her field organizer.

**Brad Sloan '18** has been elected to serve on Alvernia's Alumni Council.



*Class of 1983. Do you recognize anyone?*

## In Memoriam

*In memory of our deceased alumni who are gone but not forgotten.*

### 1980s

**Darryl G. Grumling '89**

### 1990s

**Jennifer A. (Lakey) Grube '93**

### 2000s

**Paula M. Christensen '03**

**Alan Musket '00/M '03**

**Richard M. Riddick '04**

**Anna F. Swiezak '07**

### 2010s

**Aidra R. Orlando '14**

# Alumni NEWS

## A Message from the Alvernia Alumni Council Chair

AS GOLDEN WOLVES, LET'S START A TRADITION

Greetings from the Alvernia Alumni Council.

We want to extend our sincere thanks to Meggan Kerber, '96, M'01 for her leadership the past two years. Through her hard work, the Alumni Council has built upon the foundation established by her predecessors. Our alumni are more engaged in the university by being a core group of volunteers and advocates. Through our council committees, we are developing and enhancing ways in which our 14,000 alumni can share their expertise, experiences and time with our current and prospective students.

During our most recent May Commencement, I had the pleasure of welcoming more than 400 students to the Alumni family. At that time, I challenged our most recent graduates to do three things for our alma mater. Today I am challenging you to do the same.

**Number one, stay connected.** Come back to campus! Reach out to your classmates and attend an upcoming alumni event. If you're not close to campus, don't forget we have regional events in many different locations where our alumni live and work. Be sure to visit our Alvernia 360Alumni website to find classmates, register for events, find and post job offerings and much more!

**Number two, be an advocate.** Spread the growth of ethical leaders with moral courage. Encourage high school students and

continuing education seekers to explore Alvernia for undergraduate, graduate and doctoral degrees.

**And finally, support Alvernia.** When you're asked to give to the Alvernia Fund, remember the generosity of alumni and donors who supported Alvernia while you were a student. Perhaps you have a memory of a favorite professor, residence hall activity or sporting event. By supporting and giving back to Alvernia, you are giving a current student the opportunity to make those memories, develop those friendships and impact their lives.

One more challenge, start a tradition. When you come back to campus, take a picture of yourself with your friends and family. Repeat the tradition each time and post to social media! Use the Alvernia University Alumni Facebook page and build a time lapse of memories!

The Alumni Association is here to help all of us stay connected with each other and with the university. We are open to ideas, suggestions and ways to improve our role. Please do not hesitate to reach out to any of our Alumni Council members or the Alumni Office at 610-796-8212 or alumni@alvernia.edu. We are here to represent you!

Sincerely,

Carleen M. Mulholland M '05

## Ellen Frei Gruber Award Nominations Open

Service, humility, peacemaking, contemplation and collegiality are the core values of Alvernia University and the heart of an Ellen Frei Gruber recipient. Know someone who exhibits these values in their daily lives? Perhaps even you? If so, please let the Office of Alumni and Parent Engagement know, as nominations are now being accepted for the **2020 Ellen Frei Gruber Award**. The nomination should include the name of the nominee, address, phone/email and a description of why the individual should be considered for this award. Nominations can be sent via email to Julianne Nolan, director of alumni and parent engagement, at [julianne.nolan@alvernia.edu](mailto:julianne.nolan@alvernia.edu). **Deadline is December 31, 2019.**

## Alvernia Seeks Distinguished Alumni Candidates

Alvernia's foundation is strong because of the achievement of its alumni. Help recognize those individuals who have gained distinction through success in their professions, service to the

university and contributions to their communities. Know someone who has made significant contributions to society and whose accomplishments, affiliations and careers have honored the legacy of excellence at Alvernia? If so, please consider submitting a nomination for the **2020 Distinguished Alumni Award**. The nomination should include the name of the nominee, address, phone/email and a description why this individual should be considered for this award. Nominations can be sent via email to Julianne Nolan, director of alumni and parent engagement, at [julianne.nolan@alvernia.edu](mailto:julianne.nolan@alvernia.edu). **Deadline is December 31, 2019.**

## Pack Perks

For Alvernia alumni, staying connected to the university brings with it a lot of wonderful "Pack Perks."

Alvernia has a host of free services for alumni. Use of the Fitness Center, the state-of-the-art fitness facility located in Campus Commons is free for all alumni (just visit Public Safety in the Student Center to obtain a parking pass and photo ID before your first visit).

In addition, alumni are able to use the resources of Franco Library, including access to print periodicals and the ability to check out books.

The career advice doesn't stop upon graduation. The Office of Career Development is open to help all alumni in job and career changes and help update resumes and cover letters.

Also, don't miss out on great Alvernia events like the Lecture or Cultural Series, athletic tailgates and networking events that are offered for free or at a low cost with discounts available.

Alumni are also afforded 10% discounts at the Alvernia Bookstore and tuition discounts to pursue a second undergraduate degree or a graduate, certificate or second graduate degree.

Alumni can always stay connected by reading the Alvernia Magazine that is produced twice a year, follow the Office of Alumni and

Parent Engagement on social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram) as well as sharing their life updates (engagements, marriages, birthday, jobs, etc.) for class notes by emailing [alumni@alvernia.edu](mailto:alumni@alvernia.edu) or calling 610-796-8212.

For any dedicated alumni, wonderful volunteer opportunities are available as part of the Alumni Council, the advisory governing body of Alvernia University Alumni Association. The Council serves as a representative voice for the alumni body and supports the university's mission and core values by cultivating a mutually beneficial relationship between Alvernia and alumni communities. Opportunities are also available to volunteer on a committee.

Information on all opportunities are available at [Alvernia.360Alumni.com](http://Alvernia.360Alumni.com) or by contacting Julianne Nolan at [julianne.nolan@alvernia.edu](mailto:julianne.nolan@alvernia.edu) or 610-796-8212.



Fans celebrate at Homecoming Weekend 2018.



Students serve community on MLK Day of Service 2019.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER	<b>10</b>	President's Dinner
	<b>11</b>	Hall of Fame Dinner
	<b>11/12/13</b>	Homecoming and Family Weekend
	<b>18</b>	Alvernia Night on the Spirit of Philadelphia
NOVEMBER	<b>2</b>	Bus Trip to NYC – 911 Museum/Your Day in NYC
	<b>5</b>	Maroon & Gold Night
	<b>9</b>	Alumni Council Meeting
	<b>12/13</b>	Mock Interview Mania
	<b>14</b>	Criminal Justice Dinner
	<b>20</b>	First Year Seminar Lecture – “The Road to Character”
JANUARY	<b>20</b>	MLK Day of Service
FEBRUARY	<b>22</b>	Alumni Council Meeting

For a complete schedule of fall and winter events, please visit [Alvernia.360alumni.com](http://Alvernia.360alumni.com), follow the Office of Alumni and Parent Engagement at [Facebook.com/AlverniaAlumni](https://Facebook.com/AlverniaAlumni) (alumni) or [Facebook.com/Alvernia-ParentsAssociation](https://Facebook.com/Alvernia-ParentsAssociation) (parents/alumni parents) and visit [Alvernia.edu/Alumni](http://Alvernia.edu/Alumni).

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