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PROVIDENCE COLLEGE 2023
Providence College Magazine is published twice yearly by the Division of Marketing and Communications for alumni, parents, and friends of the college.

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Farewell Fennell
Alumni share their memories of life at Fennell Hall.

Calling Her Shots
Cayleigh Griffin ’14 used drive, confidence, and networking to become a professional sports broadcaster.

From Page to Screen
A book by Paul Tremblay ’93 becomes a major motion picture, Knock at the Cabin.
I READ WITH GREAT INTEREST THE ARTICLE by Brian Maher ‘68, “In Honor, about service and the Friars Club. I was a member of the Friars Club from 1959-1961. The club moderator was Father Herman Schneider, whom Schneider Arena was named after.

Brian brought back many memories of PC and beyond. A friend from the Boston area, Jim Carly ‘61, was the manager of the 1961 NIT Championship basketball team. I knew Father Walter Heath very well at PC. He grew up in the Union Square neighborhood of Somerville, Massachusetts. He graduated from Lehigh University, where he majored in metallurgy. He served in the Navy before becoming a Dominican. He taught some of my philosophy classes and was the moderator of the Greater Boston Club, in which I was active. When I attended reunions I always go to the Dominican Cemetery. Father Heath’s grave is one step at to say a prayer.

In 1962, I was married at St. Mary’s Church in Winchester, Massachusetts. I still call it “Winchester Cathedral.” For a few years after our marriage, my wife and I attended midnight Mass on Christmas Eve at St Mary’s. We were surprised to see that Father Heath was the celebrant. He was very congenial and glad to see us. He explained that his sister and her family lived in Winchester. We saw him at Christmas Eve for a few years until we moved west of Boston.

— Peter F. Wall ‘61

THANK YOU FOR A GREAT ARTICLE on Lt. Comdr. Joe Vaghi Jr. ‘42. Joe Vaghi was a teammate of my dad, David J. Tubridy ‘46, who also attended PC on a football scholarship. They were both linemen and good friends. Dad mentioned Joe’s name and his war exploits to us, his children (10!) over the years.

Years later, my sister, Pam Tubridy Baucom, worked as a producer for Ken Burns on his film “The War.” In that capacity, she asked Dad for an intro to Joe Vaghi and any other World War II contemporaries that he knew. Pam’s interview with Joe became the basis for his segment of “The War.” We believe that it was the film’s coverage of Joe’s pivotal role in the Normandy invasion that prompted the French government to honor him with the Legion of Honor award — 70 years later after the fact.

— Jim Tubridy ‘71


A photo credit on Page 36 in the Spring 2023 magazine incorrectly made photographer Kevin Reilly ‘80 a member of the Class of 1982.

All-American in 1970. He was also inducted into the Friars Hall of Fame a few years later. Just a thought! Keep up the nice work!

— Jack Kelly ‘70

I wanted to create something that honored that,” Dumas said. He says that the new team’s crest was designed by Anchor and shield. Amber and blue. Rhode Island’s new professional soccer team’s crest was designed by Myles Dumas ‘03, design director at NAIL, a Providence-based creative agency. Rhode Island FC, based in Pawtucket, will compete in the United Soccer League beginning in 2024. Above, Dumas models branded team apparel with his wife, Róisín McGettigan-Dumas ‘03, ‘07G, and their 2-year-old son, Ruari. The crest includes colors based on the Rhode Island flag and nods to Rhode Island’s maritime and athletic teams. “Pawtucket was a hotbed of American soccer a century ago. I wanted to create something that honored that,” Dumas said. He says that the new team and fan experience will “blow people away.” With art by Dumas, they’ll do so in style. 
Providence College will begin construction in the summer of 2023 on a new School of Nursing and Health Sciences on the site of Fennell Hall. The five-story, 125,000-square-foot building will be the largest on campus. It was designed by SLAM of Glastonbury, Connecticut, the architectural firm that designed the Science Complex addition and the Ruane Center for the Humanities. It is scheduled for completion in January 2025.

The building will include a 7,000-square-foot suite that simulates a hospital floor for acute-care patients. Under the supervision of instructors, students will learn how to use medical equipment, perform diagnostic tests, and update records on digitally controlled manikins — full-body patient simulators designed to mimic human anatomy and physiology. The Clinical Simulation Suite will make it possible for 50 percent of a nursing student’s required clinical experience to take place on campus.

The building also will feature a 100-seat auditorium-style classroom, student study and collaboration areas, maker space and research labs, a student advising and career center, faculty offices, an oratory chapel, a plaza and pavilion, and a dining facility. It will anchor the east part of campus along the Smith Center quad and is intended to be a collaborative academic center for the entire community.

College President Rev. Kenneth R. Sicard, O.P. ’78, ’82G announced his goal to offer programs in nursing and health sciences during his inaugural address in October 2021. The bachelor’s degree in nursing was approved by the state of Rhode Island in September 2022. The college will enroll its first 50 nursing majors and 50 health sciences majors this fall. New laboratories have been constructed in the Feinstein Academic Center to serve students until the new building is ready.

“This facility will set us apart among healthcare education programs,” said Father Sicard. “It will be a powerful draw for the excellent students who aspire to be the skilled, compassionate healers the Providence College nursing and health sciences programs will produce.”

“A bold new home for School of Nursing and Health Sciences

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— COLLEGE PRESIDENT REV. KENNETH R. SICARD, O.P. ’78, ’82G

A view of the new school looking west toward Susan Hall, shown at the left. At the far right is Koffler Hall, now a residence hall.
Demolition will begin on Fennell Hall to make way for the new School of Nursing and Heath Sciences. We asked alumni to share their memories of Fennell, a quirky, offbeat outpost on the edge of campus, home to thousands of students through half a century.

As resident hall director at Fennell, Brother Francis Kevin O’Connell, O.P. made sure students followed the rules and visitors left on time. He also was director of financial aid. In 1993, when Brother Kevin moved to Joseph Hall, he acquired his dalmatian, Friar Boy V. Moderator of Friars Club, Brother Kevin died in 2008.

Matt Weber ’06, a four-year resident of Fennell and resident assistant, helped build the mini shrine to Mary at the hall’s entrance, adding the message, “Our Lady Queen of Fennell, Pray for Us.” Weber said it was intended to be an inspiration and blessing to Fennell residents coming and going, like the “Play Like a Champion” sign at Notre Dame. The statue was blessed by Rev. Kenneth R. Sicard, O.P. ’78, ’82G, then the director of residence life and now college president.

The network of tunnels that connected buildings on the hospital property began at Fennell, with entrance through the ground floor. For many years, “haunted passageways” tours were offered at Halloween from Fennell to Dore Hall. No actual ghost sightings were reported.

“‘So sad to say goodbye to an iconic PC building! I met my husband on the steps of Fennell in 1999 ... Years later he proposed to me on the same steps.’”

— DESIREE ADAMS APREKUMA ’03 (AND ABIYE APREKUMA ’00)

Fennell was named in honor of Rev. Charles Vincent Fennell, O.P. ’28, who died in 1974. Father Fennell was the college’s first director of residence and executive vice president and treasurer under four PC presidents. He held a master’s degree in journalism from Columbia University and was the Cowl’s moderator. Many of his nieces and nephews have attended PC. “He loved PC basketball, and he also had a weak heart,” said great-niece Mary K. Talbot ’85. “Toward the end of his life, his doctor advised him not to go to games or listen on the radio, so he would stay home and pray the rosary in his room in Harkins Hall while the team was at play.”

Fennell Hall was built in 1930 as the Barry Building, the residential quarters for nurses at Chapin Hospital, a city-owned hospital that treated patients with infectious diseases. In 1968, faced with a housing shortage, Providence College leased the building for $1 a year. Eight students from Rhode Island Junior College shared the space with 100 PC students. When the college purchased the 25-acre hospital property in 1974, the building, called Chapin, became an official residence hall. It was male-only until the fall of 2013.

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Vincent Zandri ’86, an award-winning author of suspense and thriller novels, in his Fennell room in 1984.
Introducing new basketball coaches Kim English and Erin Batth

THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE AND SPONTANEOUS CHANTS OF "LET'S GO, FRIARS!" ECHOED THROUGH MULLANEY GYM IN ALUMNI HALL ON MARCH 29, 2023, AT A RALLY INTRODUCING THE COLLEGE’S NEW MEN’S BASKETBALL COACH, KIM ENGLISH, AND THE NEW WOMEN’S COACH, ERIN BATT.

English, a native of Baltimore, was drafted by the Detroit Pistons in 2002 after a standout career at the University of Missouri and played in 47 games during the 2012-2013 season. Barth, a native of Marietta, Georgia, was the first player from Clemson University drafted into the WNBA, going to the Cleveland Rockers in 2001.

English and Barth also have extensive coaching experience. English was an assistant under former Friar head coach Rick Barnes at the University of Tennessee and also coached at the University of Tulsa and the University of Colorado Boulder.

Barth has 17 years of NCAA Division I experience, at North Carolina State, Liberty, Georgia State, Tennessee Tech, Towson, and Virginia Commonwealth. She also was director of operations at Virginia and executive assistant to the general manager of the Sacramento Kings.

Colleges have added a major in neuroscience, a burgeoning field of study and employment that considers the biological foundations of behavior. It is offered through the School of Arts and Sciences, with Victoria Temple, Ph.D., associate professor of psychology, as program director.

The college previously offered a neuroscience certificate, the equivalent of a minor, but it was limited to 12 students in each class year. The major allows the program to increase enrollment and expand its course offerings. The certificate program will no longer be offered once the final students graduate in 2027.

Cristo Rey scholarship

Through a new scholarship program, one senior from each Cristo Rey High School in the United States, chosen by the Office of Admission, will receive a $25,000 annual scholarship to PC for four years. In addition, the college will meet 100 percent of the demonstrated financial need of each recipient after federal loans are applied.

The Cristo Rey Network, founded in Chicago in 1993, has grown to 35 college preparatory high schools in low-income, urban areas in 24 states. Students earn their Cristo Rey tuition through work study with corporate partners. Eleven students from Cristo Rey schools now attend PC.

Record applicants to PC

The college received 12,460 applications from students wishing to join the Class of 2027, the highest number of applications in its history. The previous record of 11,470 was established four years ago by those applying to the Class of 2023.

More than 1,100 students applied to study nursing and health sciences, the new majors being offered through the School of Nursing and Health Sciences.

New major in neuroscience

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Visitors to Providence College’s campus can’t help but notice signs of development along Admiral Street — literal signs. The name “Strive,” simple white letters on a black background, adorns dozens of properties in the neighborhood and across the city.

The company’s founder and CEO is Joseph Colaluca ’09, ’15G, a marketing major with an MBA from PC. Colaluca was a senior when he purchased his first property at 441 Admiral Street, across from the fire station, for $141,476, using money saved while working for his family’s plumbing and heating supply business. He crossed the street between classes to work on renovations to the two-story, 3,200-square-foot building, returning to the classroom covered in paint and sawdust. The work took six months, and shortly after, Colaluca leased the three apartments to college students and young professionals. He still owns the property, now valued at an estimate of more than $380,000. The apartments rent for between $1,250 and $1,650 per month.

“My family was not in the real estate business and I really didn’t have much construction experience, but I knew I had the drive to get the job done with help from my father and grandfather,” Colaluca said.

In his senior year, for an internet marketing course with Cemal Ekin, Ph.D., professor emeritus of marketing, students were assigned to build a website for a local company. Colaluca chose his father’s business, Atlantic Plumbing and Heating in Coventry, and created a fully functional e-commerce site that took orders for parts and equipment from all over the country. Ekin became an advisor and mentor, helping Colaluca discern his career path.

“I first knew Joe as a student in my Marketing on the Internet class, where he was always eager to learn more and always had a smile on his face,” Ekin said. “When he started his real estate company, he wanted to discuss various ideas, company names, and strategic moves. I built his original website, took many photographs for different purposes, but most significantly, designed his first logo with a steep hill to symbolize what drives him even today. Always strive to be better. And he still strives for improvement.”

After graduation, Colaluca earned a real estate license and worked for Coldwell Banker while developing a small portfolio. He worked for two other firms before founding Strive, a full-service real estate brokerage, in 2013. He added Strive Construction in 2015, the year he earned an MBA from PC.

Colaluca has roots in the neighborhood. His great-great-grandfather ran a bottling company where the Walgreens now stands at Admiral Street and Douglas Avenue. He grew up attending Friars games with his grandfather, Frank DePetrillo ’59, a season ticket holder. After graduating from La Salle Academy, he enrolled at the University of Virginia as a soccer team walk-on. When Rhode Island tugged at his heart, he transferred to PC as a sophomore.

“As a student and young entrepreneur, Joe exhibited tremendous work ethic and ambition,” said Mark DeFanti, Ph.D., associate professor of marketing, who still advises him. “In my Principles of Marketing class, Joe finished among the top 20 students nationwide in Chevrolet’s Super Bowl ad competition. Since then he has worked tirelessly at building Strive into the formidable real estate company it is today.”
This past semester, Colaluca served as the business school’s real estate industry expert for PCBiz Basics, a six-week workshop series that introduces students to careers in real estate, investment and wealth management, and sports management.

Among Strive’s 19 employees are Kenneth McCarthy ’23, a marketing major from Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, who has worked with Colaluca in a variety of roles since September 2020 and now is brand director. Emma Mitchell ’23, a marketing major from Great Barrington, Massachusetts, works in leasing. Jolade Oshinkanlu ’25, a psychology major from Providence, is an office assistant. Caroline Franks ’22, a management major from Pelham, New York, was a Strive intern before joining the commercial real estate firm CBRE.

Colaluca describes himself as a hands-on manager. He awakens most days at 4:30 a.m. to set up job sites. By 6:30 a.m., contractors are calling him as they start their days. His workdays don’t end until 9 p.m.

Strive boasts a portfolio of more than 300 units, most in multifamily homes, and rents to “a healthy mix” of undergraduates, graduate students, and young professionals. The company’s real estate offices are located in Strive Lofts, a converted mill with 56 rental units at 553 Atwells Avenue. But the primary area of focus is the neighborhood north of Admiral Street, where Strive owns 60 properties in about a one-mile radius.

At 383 Admiral Street, once the home of Club Eagles and Clubbies, Strive Kitchen + Bar offers three floors of dining, including a basement speakeasy. A vacant laundromat at 361 Admiral was converted to a first-floor coffee shop, Admiral Coffee Company, with one-bedroom and studio apartments upstairs. Strive also plans a new five-story apartment building at 663 Admiral, near River Avenue, with 48 one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments. Other properties throughout the neighborhood and the city are identifiable by the simple Strive sign.

To critics who say that redevelopment brings gentrification, displacing low-income residents, Colaluca said, “There is a need for the housing that we provide, too. My connection to this neighborhood runs deep — it’s where my family settled after emigrating from Italy. I’ll always work to improve the area I love.”
$1M Wirtz gift supports field hockey program

W. ROCKWELL ‘ROCKY’ WIRTZ is best known as the owner of the Chicago Blackhawks hockey team and co-owner of the United Center in Chicago, where the Friars played Kansas in the Sweet Sixteen of the NCAA tournament in 2022. But at PC, Wirtz is making a lasting impact on field hockey. His $1 million gift to the program is the largest gift to women’s athletics in college history. His daughter, Hillary Wirtz ’01, played field hockey for the Friars while studying elementary and special education.

“I have such proud memories of watching Hillary and the team excel on and off the field,” Wirtz said. “The Wirtz family is pleased to be able to give back, to support the field hockey program, to provide other student-athletes with the opportunity to fulfill their dreams.”

The Wirtz Family Fund for PC Field Hockey will support scholarship allotment for the field hockey program in compliance with NCAA regulations. It isn’t the first time Wirtz has supported PC athletics. In 2017, he made what was then the largest gift in history to field hockey, designated for player development.

After teaching for 10 years, Hillary Wirtz now is director of diversity and inclusion for her family’s company, Breakthru Beverage Group, based in Cicero, Illinois. She is charged with building a culture of inclusion and belonging where every employee can bring “their full, authentic selves to work.”

“It is in this spirit that I hope the donated funds can provide an opportunity for talented student-athletes to attend PC, compete at the highest level, and receive a quality education,” she said.

Hillary was a starting forward as a sophomore and played defense her final two years. She attributes her commitment to community service, hard work, perseverance, and teamwork to all that she learned as a student-athlete. She remembers traveling to Northwestern University to play on the field at Northwestern, where I grew up playing in field hockey clinics, games, and tournaments, always dreaming of one day playing at the collegiate level. To have my immediate and extended family all come to watch and support us was a dream come true. It’s a memory I will forever cherish.”

Dean of students and vice president of student affairs, Steve Sears, Ed.D. leads with enthusiasm, passion, and love — characteristics that help provide the energy he needs for a 24/7 calling that he says is far more rewarding than challenging.

“This isn’t a job, it’s a remarkable life,” he says.

Sears’ wide-ranging management portfolio comprises 135 staff members across 12 departments including residence life, public safety, community standards, personal counseling, student health, career education, student activities, and more.

“I am so grateful for our team,” he says. “As a group, we are passionate, focused, and committed to doing all we can to educate, guide, and support our Friars in their determination of a meaningful life.”

An Air Force veteran and father of three (including a current PC student), Sears holds a doctorate in education from NOVA Southeastern University and an MBA from Salve Regina University. He came to PC in 1998 as associate director for housing and discipline, hired by College President Rev. Kenneth R. Sicard, O.P. ’78, ’82G, who was then director of residence life.

“It is one of the greatest gifts God has provided me,” Sears says. Sears conceptualizes his team’s responsibilities to students on a timeline that begins with orientation and continues through graduation.

“We work to create experiences for growth, development, and dialogue, all in the search for truth,” he says. “If we are successful, students will flourish as self-aware, contemplative leaders prepared to pursue their path in life.”

“Dean Sears,” as students know him, is ever-present in the day-to-day life of the community, giving those students a window into his personality and his approach to life. They know he is likely to answer “solid” when asked how he is doing. They know he will finish near the top of the Friar 5K during Homecoming every fall. And they know he embraces opportunities to witness his faith, notably in the inspiring email messages he sends them.

“I strive for our Friars to see all that is good,” he says. “Bringing out the good in people and sharing happiness is important to me. It is about working together to create a foundation based on shared values and relationships that will last a lifetime.”

Sears was named associate vice president and dean of students in 2010. One of the first things Father Sicard did when becoming president in 2020 was name Sears a vice president and add him to the President’s Cabinet, the college’s senior team.

“The opportunity to be a voice for our students as we work to determine the direction and trajectory of the college is one of the greatest gifts God has provided me,” Sears says.

BY JOE CARR ’83 PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN JAMES MUIR
The first story I heard about St. Dominic tells of him remaining awake all night, speaking with the keeper of the inn he was visiting while traveling through Spain. Upon conversing with the man, St. Dominic learned that the innkeeper had stopped practicing the faith. By the end of that night, the innkeeper was convinced of the truth of the Gospel and had resolved to return to it. When I imagine how this night must have unfolded, I cannot help but wonder what St. Dominic’s disposition toward this man must have been. I imagine him engaging the innkeeper with profound patience, kindness, understanding, and charity. I envision the two men sharing a pitcher of beer on the first floor of the inn, discussing questions that everyone asks, at one time or another: Who am I? What was I made for? What is happiness, and how do I attain it? I imagine, with the sun rising over the horizon, St. Dominic embracing the innkeeper with brotherly love, as the innkeeper cries with the particular joy that comes when one encounters true charity.

The mental image I have of this encounter is the result of a personal experience not unlike the innkeeper’s. Before I arrived at Providence College, I was a staunch agnostic, firmly resistant to the Catholic faith. During my first theology class, a class I only enrolled in because it would eventually be required, I found myself asking question upon question. Knowing that the Dominican friars would be good resources for the answers, I began to meet with them regularly to have conversations about the faith. Their answers were always delivered with patience and kindness and demonstrated a respect for me and the questions I was asking. Their dispositions reopened my mind, softened my heart, inspired me to pursue theology, and prepared me to receive the gift of faith that God had been trying to give to me all along.

Like the innkeeper and many of my friends at PC, I was given the greatest gift I could receive because of the determination of St. Dominic: the gift of the truth communicated in love. It is the truth that shapes the minds and hearts of the students at Providence, an institution which exists only because St. Dominic committed himself to helping others know the deep, pervasive, and transformative joy that comes from rejoicing in the truth. I am deeply grateful to the friars I have come to know, who never once failed to guide me with the same patience, charity, and humility with which St. Dominic presumably treated the innkeeper. In a time when, for many, the truth has become seemingly slippery and elusive, reduced to relativized conclusions drawn from personal experiences, it is essential that PC continues to commit itself to sharing the truth with its students. The temptation to falter is strong, and the cultural resistance to the truth of the dignity of human life, and to the providence of God, is powerful. But imagine what good we stand to preserve if veritas continues to be our motto, not only in name, but in action: that particular joy of the innkeeper that so many students have the opportunity to experience, and the promise of an everlasting happiness that surpasses anything we can imagine.

Liz Duffy ’23, from East Greenwich, Rhode Island, majored in theology and humanities. She received a Father Philip A. Smith Fellowship for Service and Study Abroad to spend the summer of 2022 in Geneva with Dominicans for Justice and Peace, a delegation to the United Nations Human Rights Council. She is the daughter of Robert Duffy ’82 and Sharon Stetkiewicz Duffy ’82, and the sister of Meaghan Duffy Orrall ’11 and John Duffy ’20.

“BUT IMAGINE WHAT GOOD WE STAND TO PRESERVE IF VERITAS CONTINUES TO BE OUR MOTTO…”
Margaret Watkins, Ph.D. named dean of Arts and Sciences

MARGARET WATKINS, PH.D.,
dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Seattle Pacific University, a private Christian liberal arts university, will be the new dean of the School of Arts and Sciences at Providence College beginning July 1, 2023. Watkins will replace Sheila Adamus-Liotta, Ph.D., the school’s first dean, who served from 2009 until leaving in 2022 to become provost of Saint Anselm College in Manchester, New Hampshire. Joan Branham, Ph.D., associate dean and a professor of art and art history, was interim dean after Adamus-Liotta’s departure.

Watkins, who holds a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Notre Dame and an undergraduate degree from the College of William and Mary, specializes in early modern ethics and aesthetics and is an expert on the 18th century Scottish philosopher David Hume. Her work includes studies of philosophy and literature, race and gender in early modern thought, and efforts to increase inclusivity and diversity in philosophical teaching-learning and scholarship.

“I am inspired by Providence’s vision of a transformative and liberating Dominican education, rooted in the ideal of veritas, as well as the commitment to care for community and diversity that was so evident in all of my interactions during the interview process,” Watkins said. “I am very much looking forward to joining the Friar community.”

Prior to Seattle Pacific, Watkins served as a professor, honors program director, interim dean, and from 2019-2021, dean of the School of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences at Saint Vincent College, a Benedictine institution in Latrobe, Pennsylvania. She has been at Seattle Pacific since 2021.

Nursing chair appointed

Nancy L. Meedzan, DNP will chair the new Department of Nursing and will be a member of the college faculty beginning July 1, 2023. She has been dean of the Cummings School of Nursing and Health Sciences at Endicott College in Beverly, Massachusetts, since January 2019. “I am honored and excited to be leading the new nursing program at Providence College and joining the Friar community,” Meedzan said. “Rhode Island has a very special place in my heart, it is my home state, and I couldn’t imagine a better way of returning home.”

After graduating from Boston College in 1987 with a bachelor’s degree in nursing, Meedzan began a nearly 20-year career as a registered nurse in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. She has a master’s degree in nursing from Salem State University and a doctor of nursing practice degree from Regis College. Her academic career began in 2004 at Endicott.

Professional Studies changes name

The School of Professional Studies has a new name — the School of Education and Social Work. The change, approved by the Faculty Senate in February 2023, reflects the move of the health policy and management major, formerly part of the School of Professional Studies, to the new School of Nursing and Health Sciences. The departments of elementary/special education, secondary education, and social work, as well as graduate programs remain in the School of Education and Social Work under Dean Yune Kim Tran, Ph.D.

New directors for Honors Program

The new director of the Honors Program beginning July 1, 2023, will be Rev. Gabriel Pivarnik, O.P., associate professor of theology, assisted by Michael Mathes, Ph.D., assistant professor of economics. The roles were previously held by Steven Lynch, Ph.D., professor of English, and Suzanne J. Fournier, Ph.D. ’73, associate professor of English. II
ON A RAINY TUESDAY IN
November, Kerry Weber ’04 and four colleagues from America magazine stood in a room on the ground floor of Casa Santa Marta, the pope’s residence in the Vatican. They were quietly conversing when Weber tapped her colleague on the arm to indicate, “He’s here.”

Without announcement or fanfare, Pope Francis entered, pushing a wheeled walker, with a seat and a basket underneath that held a cane with a crucifix wrapped at the top. Introductions were made, and the in-person interview with the pope began.

“Before Francis entered, I was very nervous,” Weber said. “Once he was in the room, I didn’t feel the nerves anymore. He put everyone at ease. At that point, I could focus on the job I came to do.”

The assignment: to discuss with Pope Francis some of the major questions facing the Catholic Church, the United States, and humanity. Joining Weber, an executive editor at America, were her coworkers: Rev. Matt Malone, S.J., outgoing editor-in-chief; Rev. Sam Sawyer, S.J., incoming editor-in-chief; Gerard O’Connell, Vatican correspondent; and Gloria Purvis, podcast host.

America, a monthly publication of America Media, is a forum for discussion of religion, society, politics, and culture from a Catholic perspective. Continuously published since 1909, it is one of the oldest periodicals in the United States. Weber has worked for America since 2009, after graduating from Columbia University with a master’s degree in journalism. After 12 years living in New York and New Jersey, she now works remotely from her home office in East Longmeadow, Massachusetts, with occasional trips to America’s office in midtown Manhattan.

Weber majored in English at PC and was a student in the Honors Program. She followed in the footsteps of her mother, Peggy Martin Weber ’76 (her father, John, went to Marquette), and her siblings followed her — Matt Weber ’06 is chief creative officer and senior adviser to the president at the University of Virginia, and Elizabeth Weber ’10 lives in western Massachusetts with her husband (and former Civ classmate), Jeremiah Begley ’10, and their four children.
He was there as Pope — somebody being interviewed — but also a pastor...

Conference of Catholic Bishops as “very trustworthy” on matters of faith and morals. And she asked about the church’s pastoral response to women who are pained because they are excluded from being ordained as Catholic priests.

In response to how the bishops conference can regain the trust of American Catholics, Pope Francis said, “Jesus created bishops. Jesus did not create bishops’ conferences... The grace of Jesus Christ is in the relationship between the bishop and his people,” not the conference and the public.

It was a very quotable answer,” Weber said. “And while it wasn’t necessarily surprising, it was a good reminder that the conference is made up of individual bishops, and it’s the individual bishop’s relationship to the people he serves that matters most.”

Weber also asked, “What would you say to a woman who is already serving in the life of the church, but who still feels called to be a priest?”

Francis responded, “It is a theological problem,” and gave a theological answer. He described two principles — the Petrine, proceeding from the apostle Peter, and the Marian, proceeding from Mary, the mother of Jesus — calling the Petrine principle that of ministry, and the Marian the principle “where the church sees a mirror of herself because she is a woman and a spouse.” While the Marian principle is “more important,” the pope said, “we have not developed a theology of women that reflects this.”

Francis said that objection to the church’s teaching may be because “we have too often failed in our catechesis when explaining these things.” He affirmed the exclusively male priesthood, saying of women priests, “the Petrine principle has no place for that... That a woman does not enter into the ministry is not a deprivation.”

Weber said she had hoped that Francis would focus less on describing the specific teaching and more on the person affected by it.

“I think he clearly explained teaching on the matter, but I wish he had addressed the pastoral dimension,” she said. “We need to talk about the pain that many feel in response to church teaching.”

Weber and her associates felt a palpable sense of authentic presence from the pope. While questions and answers were being translated, she had the opportunity to quietly observe him.

“He acted like he had nowhere else to be, even though he absolutely did. He chose to spend this time with us. And as he conversed with us, he continued choosing. There was no sense of rush or hurry from Pope Francis. He was there as pope — somebody being interviewed — but also a pastor,” she said.

“We went into the interview thinking we’ll have an hour, but he gave us almost two. We were conscious of that fact that he could be whisked away at any moment, so we tried to get as many different questions in as possible.”

Weber works closely at America with Pope Francis’ conferences in the Society of Jesus — the Jesuits. Dominican friars are recognizable by their white habits; Jesuits wear the same standard Roman collar as diocesan priests or dress similarly to their lay colleagues. Both are known for their scholarship and teaching. Before she worked with the Jesuits, Weber studied with the Dominicans, at PC, and at Blackfriars, Oxford, during her junior year abroad.

“I always appreciated the friars’ ability to preach. Their homilies were well crafted and thoughtful. They spoke to my experience as a student, but not in a way that felt like they were trying to be ‘cool,’ Weber said.

She admires the way that both Dominicans and Jesuits authentically live their charisms, or particular missions; while distinct, they are more alike than different, she believes.

“Both charisms require real faith, real freedom,” Weber said.

Among the mottos of the Jesuits is “Find God in all things” — a fitting description of America magazine’s scope of content and editorial approach.

“There are very few limits to what we can publish because everything can be viewed through the lens of faith,” Weber said. “Bishops’ conferences, Netflix series, public policy; ministry to people in need, Vatican goings-on — we cover it all. It’s a magazine that exists at the intersection of the church and the world, where the Jesuits have always been.”

At America’s offices in New York City, in a large 11th-floor suite overlooking Sixth Avenue and proximate to Rockefeller Center, clergy and lay staff alike go by their first names. Far from reflecting a lack of respect, Weber says this practice is born of mutual respect.

“We’re real partners here. There isn’t a sense of hierarchy, of Jesuits over lay staff. We work as colleagues, as friends, and as brothers and sisters in Christ,” Weber said.
One of Weber’s closest associates and mentors at America is editor-at-large Rev. James Martin, S.J., a New York Times best-selling author and consultant to the Vatican’s Secretariat for Communications, who officiated at her wedding in 2015. Father Martin is known in the church and in the media for his ministry to the LGBTQ community, which he has described as a process of “building a bridge,” drawing both praise and ministry to the LGBTQ community, which he has described as a process of “building a bridge,” drawing both praise and criticism from voices in the church. He spoke at Providence College as part of its centennial celebration in 2016.

Weber’s role at America has evolved since she was first hired as an assistant editor, a job that included reviewing, editing, and writing features for print and web and co-managing social media. She wrote about everyone from Flannery O’Connor (one of her favorite authors) to comedian Tracy Morgan and everything from Catholic education to the Winter Olympics.

In October 2013, Weber was awarded an Egan Journalism Fellowship from Catholic Relief Services to travel to Rwanda. She spent a week with three other fellows examining the reconciliation process in the two decades since the 1994 genocide.

“It was hard to hear the survivors’ stories, but as hard as it was to hear, they actually lived it,” Weber said. “I knew that in way or another since I was 16,” she said.

Though Weber briefly worked as a staff reporter for the Greenwich Post in Connecticut, “I kept being drawn back to stories about faith. Not as many journalists seek to tell these stories,” she said. By the time she joined America, “Catholic journalism was a choice — a vocation.”

Weber’s work in the Catholic press has been influenced by her studies at PC. She is grateful for how her years there shaped her, and now laughs at the memory that she almost didn’t apply to her mother’s alma mater because she was eager to forge her own path.

“You can imagine my frustration when I visited campus and had to admit that I really did like it,” she said. When Weber moved into the fourth floor of McVinney Hall in 2001, among her worries was the Development of Western Civilization Program and its academic demands. Today, she cites the classes as one of her most formative intellectual experiences.

“Weber’s journalistic assignments are the realization of a lifelong aspiration to write. Her mother was a longtime writer for Communications, who officiated at the wedding of Kerry Weber ’04 and Cara Lynch in 2015. Weber’s work in the Catholic press has been influenced by her studies at PC. She is grateful for how her years there shaped her, and now laughs at the memory that she almost didn’t apply to her mother’s alma mater because she was eager to forge her own path.

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“In 2014, Mercy in the City. How to Feed the Hungry, Give Drink in the Thirsty, Visit the Imprisoned, Keep Your Day Job, was published by Loyola Press. It narrated her personal effort, over the course of one Lenten season, to practice the seven corporal works of mercy derived from Jesus’s teaching in the Gospel of Matthew.

“Pope Francis sees his role as pope as a pastor first, and so much of that comes from his Jesuit formation. He very much lives out the Jesuit motto of men and women for others,” Weber said.

“Pope Francis is very open, and he’s not afraid. He’s willing to dwell in the messiness of the world. It’s a very Jesuit approach. There’s no point when life is not going to be messy, which is why faith, mercy, and pastoral care are so vital,” Weber said.

At the Vatican, Weber felt her own story come full circle. In the Vatican Museums, she stood in front of Raphael’s fresco “The School of Athens,” a work she vividly remembered learning about in Civ.

“I saw it on a slide then,” Weber said. “But seeing it in Rome on my way to interview the pope, I could see how all my experiences were connected. And I felt so much gratitude for how they led me to where I was, not just into the home of Pope Francis, but into a deeper relationship with God.”
DEAR FUTURE FRiARS IS an initiative of Phillips Memorial Library to capture oral and video histories from the Providence College community, beginning with the stories of Black alumni.

PC Archives and Special Collections received a $2,500 grant from the Office of Institutional Diversity to launch the project in the Fall 2022 semester. Nahyr Morales Lugo ’24, a political science major and sociology minor from Lawrence, Massachusetts, was hired as an undergraduate research assistant to conduct the interviews.

The project is part of a broader goal to capture stories from alumni, faculty, staff, and students, said Michelle Chiles, head of archives and special collections. When Chiles joined the library staff in late 2019, she hoped to begin an oral history project using the name Dear Future Friars to mark the 50th anniversary of women as undergraduates in 1971.

The pandemic made that impossible, but the idea of collecting oral histories was renewed in early 2022, when Joe Small ’74 came to campus to accept PC’s Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Vision Award. Small, who became an actor, voiceover artist, and producer following a career in software publishing, proposed an oral history project with Black alumni. He was inspired by the memory of his classmate, friend, and campus leader Doug Sullivan ’74, who died in 2016.

“To explain the project and find participants, Chiles set up an information table at the Alumni of Color panel at Homecoming in October. More than a dozen people signed up to participate.

Chiles and Morales Lugo developed questions to ask the alumni. The interviews began in November via Zoom and, when possible, in person in the library’s John E. Fogarty Reading Room. Technical support was provided by Megan Lessard, the library’s media support and outreach coordinator, who edited the interviews on iMovie and added them to the Archives Digital Collection for viewing by the public.

Morales Lugo, who was born in Ecuador, is amazed at how often experiences of Black alumni mirror those of students of color today.

“I love to be a part of capturing these stories where people share the raw experiences they have had,” she said. “It’s important not just for future students, but for current and past students as well. This has been an amazing experience for me.”

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Read about four of the oral history participants on the following pages.
Thomas S. Walters Jr. ’74

- Played basketball at St. Anthony’s High School in Washington, D.C., under coach John Thompson ’64
- Social work major who loved ethics
- Guard on Friars 1973 Final Four team under coach Dave Gavitt ’89Hon.
- Worked for the Rhode Island Department of Corrections for 37 years as a correctional officer steward at the Adult Correctional Institutions, Cranston
- Wife Cathie (Cabral) Walters ’06SCE; six children, including Kilah Walters-Clinton ’01, ’04G; six grandchildren

“Don’t worry about the books, the As and the Bs and the Cs. Learn this guy’s name, learn how he is. Let him know how you are. That’s the education. Because when you get out of here, that’s where you have to live, in the real world. That’s the education that Providence College affords us.”

Jennifer Maultsby ’89

- Majored in finance
- Helped reestablish Board of Multicultural Student Affairs, became its president
- As litigation manager of toxic torts and environmental matters for Aetna Casualty and Surety, traveled country working with EPA to represent companies in environmental litigation
- Opened former Charli’s Cupcake Factory, West Haven, Connecticut
- Daughter Charli Calhoun ’25 (pictured above) majors in English
“AT THE END OF THE DAY AT PROVIDENCE COLLEGE, I’M GOING TO THE THIRD FLOOR OF FENNELL HALL, AND NOBODY LOOKS LIKE ME, AND NOBODY COMES FROM MY EXISTENCE IN NORFOLK, VIRGINIA, AND THAT WAS HARD.”

Brenda Chapman McGill, Ph.D. ’75

→ One of nine Black women in PC’s first coeducational class
→ Majored in psychology (because there was no education major)
→ Member of first cheerleading squad
→ Married Patrick Joseph McGill ’72; two children, three grandchildren
→ Director of TRIO student support services, advising and counseling, and later director of disability services, Community College of Rhode Island, retired in 2019
→ In 2016, fulfilled a lifelong goal and earned a Ph.D. in behavioral science from URI

“WHAT I REALLY GREW IN WAS HOW TO ADDRESS MY OWN FEELINGS, MY OWN ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE, AND, IN THE END, TO LIVE A LIFE OF FORGIVENESS — THE PHRASE, ‘THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO.’”

Mallory Davis ’81

→ Majored in general social studies; helped pioneer courses in computer science
→ Worked for WDOM (first voice of Lady Friars), basketball team walk-on
→ Helped found Times² Academy, STEM charter school in Providence
→ Retired after 39 years as a software engineer with the Department of Defense at the Naval Undersea Warfare Center, Newport
→ Pastor of Pleasant Street Baptist Church, Westerly
→ Married Eva Weston Irby-Davis ’75; six children, five grandchildren
If you want to be successful in professional sports, you need drive, confidence, and a relentless work ethic. This isn’t just true of athletes. It’s also reflected in pros on the sidelines, like Cayleigh Griffin ’14, whose dedication has propelled her ascendant career in broadcasting through seven NBA seasons.

Griffin is the pre- and post-game host for the Cleveland Cavaliers and a feature reporter with Bally Sports Ohio, the television flagship of the NBA team. Her previous roles with the BIG EAST Conference, San Antonio Spurs, and Houston Rockets, along with the Houston Astros in Major League Baseball, have contributed to her respected status in a competitive field.

“Cayleigh is a rising star in the sports media landscape,” said NBA analyst Doris Burke ’87, ’92G, ’05Hon. “Her commitment to the work and her unflinching spirit in the face of a highly competitive industry has and will continue to serve her well. Cayleigh has an innate ability to connect with the athletes and teams she covers. I can’t wait to watch her ongoing journey unfold.”

Griffin reached out to Burke for advice while still a PC student and now considers the veteran sportscaster a confidant.

“She helped set me up for success to ultimately break into the NBA,” said Griffin.

Griffin’s dream of becoming a broadcaster began when she was 17, playing basketball at Trinity Catholic High School in Stamford, Connecticut. She was recruited by Division II colleges, but as much as she loved the game, wanted a different experience in college. She had visited PC often to play in tournaments and loved the campus, where her mother, Dorothy Tolan Griffin ’83, played basketball for the Friars.

Griffin is proof that you don’t need to study sports communication to become a successful broadcaster. She majored in humanities at PC, which gave her the freedom to choose courses that would fall under a traditional communication major, especially English classes, and minored in film. She spent a semester of her junior year abroad in Sydney, Australia, taking communication courses and holding a full-time internship. She also gained experience through PCTV, serving on the Intramural Athletics Board, and working for recreation sports.

One of her favorite memories as a student — basketball star Bryce Cotton ’14 holding a sign reading “2014 BIG EAST Tournament Champions”— is still the screensaver on her cell phone.

As a novice broadcaster, Griffin learned that saying “yes” when an opportunity arose was just as important as polishing on-air delivery. She understood the value of soaking up as much experience as possible, whether securing internships as a student with NBC and FOX Sports or spending her weekends on Long Island calling high school basketball and volleyball games.

“I wanted to put myself in a position to be a qualified candidate when I graduated from PC,” said Griffin.
Griffin joined the BIG EAST as a digital assistant/on-air correspondent in October 2014, only months after graduation. Her role coincided with the conference’s launch of a digital network. Such uncharted territory was perfect for Griffin—the chance to edit and shoot with the promise of more opportunities to come.

Griffin’s time with the BIG EAST Digital Network coincided with that of John Fanta, now a college sports play-by-play broadcaster at FOX Sports. Fanta parlayed his time with the conference into becoming a respected commentator, host, and reporter across multiple media platforms and outlets. He saw Griffin’s potential and believed it was only a matter of time before she struck it big.

“Cayleigh ushered in a new wave of BIG EAST basketball coverage and is the original correspondent in this great conference,” Fanta said. “Her passion and drive really inspired me. Beyond the tremendous work Cayleigh has done in the field, she’s an even better human being. When I think of Friartown, I think of people who are passionate and care for one another. Cayleigh Griffin embodies the spirit of Providence College. It’s a pleasure to call her a colleague and friend, and I still believe she’s only getting started. We will be watching her on our TVs for a long time because she’s that good, does her homework, and genuinely cares about her work and the people around her,” Fanta said.

After two years with the BIG EAST, and with guidance from Burke, Griffin joined the San Antonio Spurs as a team/digital reporter. Then, right before the 2018 NBA Draft, the Spurs informed Griffin that her position had been eliminated.

“That was an eye-opening experience on how quickly things can change,” said Griffin, who moved back to Stamford to consider her next opportunity.

By the start of the 2018-2019 season, Griffin was back with an NBA franchise, this time in Cleveland as a host/digital reporter at FOX Sports Ohio. Her varied experiences in broadcasting enabled her to fulfill a variety of roles, from live in-game segments to contributing to pre- and postgame shows. After one season with the Cavaliers, Griffin packed her bags—this time by her own choosing—and headed to Houston to work for AT&T SportsNet.

Griffin served as sideline reporter and pre- and post-game host for the Houston Rockets for three seasons. She traveled with the team for the first season, worked remotely in the Houston studios during the NBA bubble and COVID-19 season, and returned to travel for the third season. She also worked as a pre- and post-game host and fill-in field reporter for the Houston Astros during their championship season.

“Those three years were so instrumental to my growth in the industry, covering two professional sports teams in two professional sports leagues. I was privileged to cover some of the greatest athletes in their respective crafts,” Griffin said. Griffin chose to return to Cleveland in October 2022 to be the pre- and post-game host for the Cavaliers. She pursued the full-time hosting gig to round out her experience—an approach she’d recommend to any aspiring broadcaster.

“Versatility in the industry is so important, and I didn’t want to be viewed as only a sideline reporter. I encourage those looking to break in to expand their horizons and not limit themselves to just one role,” Griffin said.

The opportunity in Cleveland has opened other doors as well. She works as a host with Tipico Sportsbook and as an analyst calling games in college basketball and in the NBA’s developmental G-League.

As for what’s next, Griffin is hoping for a playoff run by the Cavaliers and is excited about new opportunities, while also planning her wedding in August 2023. Griffin is now able to share words of wisdom with aspiring broadcasters.

“Nothing is too big. If you put in the work, they’ll find you. Build genuine relationships. And when you’re having a tough day, be sure to reflect on how far you’ve come. It’s something I have to remind myself,” she said.

Brendan McGair ’03 is a freelance writer from Cranston, Rhode Island.
I often wondered what brought us together that day:
Was it fate or the daily prayers of Father Herman Schneider, O.P. and his undying wish to have a hockey team at Providence College?

It was early September 1951. My father had a roofing and sheet metal business on Smith Hill. He did all of Bishop Russell McVinney’s diocesan roofing and sheet metal projects. My father and I were sent to a job at the House of the Good Shepherd in Providence, a school for wayward girls that was run by nuns. We worked on what is now PC’s Dominic House.

When we finished the work at hand, one of the nuns asked, “Would it be possible to repaint the cross at the top of the building?”

My father assured the nuns it would be no problem. “I’ll get my son to do it.”

That cross was more than 30 feet up. My dad hooked me up with a safety belt, a rope, and a can of gold paint, and up I went. As I painted, I would look down at all the nuns praying for my safety. When I finished and returned to the veranda the nuns came over to thank me, but one nun in particular asked my name and whether I was still in school.

I told her that I had just graduated from La Salle Academy and was going to wait a year to enroll in the University of Rhode Island.

“No nonsense. You should go to PC,” she said, pointing to the school, which was in view from where we stood.

I tried every excuse to get out of going.

“I’ll be waiting for Father Fennell’s call, so don’t disappoint me,” she said.

So, off I went.

I walked into Harkins Hall and was awestruck by its grand appearance. Father Fennell met me and asked if I had taken an entrance exam. I told him that I did at URI. He asked me if I wouldn’t mind taking another quick set. No, I said, but is that going to delay my start?

“No, I’ll work that out,” he said. I filled out some papers and took the exam. He reviewed it, smiled, and said, “Let’s go get you some books.”

During that process he told me that I was going to take business administration management, taught by professor Gus Coté. My first class was the following morning. My head was spinning. I couldn’t believe what was happening and so fast.

The next morning I was able to find the business administration building and attended my first class with Mr. Coté, who was a big sports fan. My next class was French with George Reilly (I believe a relative of David Reilly ’55, my former hockey teammate at La Salle).

I had trouble locating the classroom. That’s when I frantically walked into a class that I thought was Reilly’s French class. Instead, it was a German language class. As I was asking other students if I was in the right place, I got a tap on my shoulder, and there stood Father Schneider, the teacher.

I told him I was looking for Reilly’s French class. Kidding, he asked, “Why not take both?”

“What’s your name?” he asked.

“Ray Farrell,” I said.

“Where did you go to school?”

“La Salle.”

“Great hockey school. Did you play?”

“Yes.”
"I wish we had a team here at the college."

"You know, Father, there are enough hockey players from La Salle and other high schools actually attending PC that we could easily start a team."

"Really?! Meet me in the cafeteria at noon."

At the meeting, I suggested that I would contact the students from La Salle and other schools to see if they had interest in starting a team. Most of the guys happily agreed. I told Father Schneider that there was plenty of interest, but what would the college do to support such a team? He had no idea but would look into the possibilities and get back to me.

I knew that there was a new amateur hockey league starting at the Rhode Island Auditorium and that we could get into it, if we acted quickly. I heard back from Father Schneider, and he said the best he could do was to supply the jerseys.

"I don't know any Ray Farrell. What do you want?"

"Who's there?" asked Mr. Pieri.

Knock, knock.

"I already have a hockey team."

"I know, but Providence College is trying to start a hockey program and I'm hoping you will donate your team's old uniforms and some equipment to help us get started."?

"Come in."

"So, how much are you going to pay me for all this?!"

"We don't have any money. Again, I was hoping you would donate it. I am willing to donate the PC team's time to scrape the ice between periods and after each of the Reds' games. In return, we'd also like one or two hours of free ice time for our practice sessions. Is it a deal?!"

"Yeah, I guess so. Go downstairs and see George." What a great man.

I backed up my father's 1931 Model A Ford truck, and Mr. Army filled it with all the practice uniforms and pads, plus sticks and pucks. I returned to the PC campus with the loaded truck and headed for the house where Father Schneider and several of the priests lived. I blew the horn (if you know anything about Model A Fords, you know the "Aroo-gah" sound that it makes). It brought Father Schneider out to the porch, and I joyfully yelled out to him, "Father, WE HAVE A HOCKEY TEAM!!!"

I was able, after a number of tries, to convince my former La Salle hockey coach, Hall of Famer Lou Cimini '44, to coach us. He knew most of us, of course, and was also a PC alum. He finally relented.

Our club team joined the Rhode Island Amateur Hockey Association and at our first game, quite a few priests and professors were in the stands among the cheering students, including Father Robert Slavin, the college president. It was so great being out on the ice and competing with friends Tom Army, Dave Reilly, Bob Petit '53, Howie McGuiness '52, and so many more.

It was a very successful season. We had quickly assembled a team that finished with an 8-2-2 record, tying for the regular season title. With Tom Army leading the league in scoring, it validated the depth of talent we had and promised more success at the varsity level.

With his pledge of unwavering support, there was no greater moment, I'm sure, for Father Schneider, the undisputed founding father of PC hockey. It must have been glorious for him to see that first puck dropped, and a team wearing jerseys with "Friars" emblazoned across the chest playing at the Rhode Island Auditorium. The success we enjoyed was the cherry on top. It was his dream, his passion, his prayer that someday it would become a reality, and here it was.
Emily Sisson ’14 set a new American women’s record of 2:18:29 in the Chicago Marathon in October 2022, shattering the previous record by 43 seconds. She finished second behind Ruth Chepngetich of Kenya, who was 14 seconds off the women’s world record. In May 2022, Sisson set the U.S. women’s half marathon record of 1:07:11 in Indianapolis. She is coached by Ray Treacy ’82, PC’s director of cross country and track.

Julian Gressel ’16, a fullback/midfielder with the Vancouver Whitecaps FC in Major League Soccer, was called up to the U.S. Men’s National Team in January 2023, two months after obtaining U.S. citizenship, and was credited with an assist in his debut. He was drafted by Atlanta United in 2017 and named Rookie of the Year. He also played for D.C. United.

Kris Dunn ’16 was signed to a multi-year deal by the Utah Jazz in March 2023. Over seven NBA seasons, he has averaged 8.3 points, 4.2 assists, 3.4 rebounds, and 1.5 steals in 129 starts with Minnesota, Chicago, Atlanta, Portland, and Utah. He was drafted in the first round, fifth overall, by the Timberwolves in 2016.

Major League Soccer team Louisville City FC signed defender Ramel Qawasamy ’22 to a professional contract in February 2023 after a successful preseason trial. As a Friar, Qawasamy received United Soccer Coaches All-East Region First Team and All-Big East Conference Second Team honors. 
But to his surprise, that’s exactly what happened.
Accompanied by his wife, Lisa Carroll-Tremblay '93, and their children, Cole, 22, and Emma, 18, Tremblay arrived at the Lincoln Center in New York City for the January premiere of Knock at the Cabin, a Universal Pictures film based on his 2018 novel and adapted by Shyamalan and screenwriters Steve Desmond and Michael Sherman.

“I was very surreal, the whole red-carpet thing,” Tremblay said. “As a writer, most of the time you’re in your own head. It’s only collaborative towards the end when you’re working with your editor and perhaps your agent. So, to see the whole Hollywood movie machinery at work, and to be able to experience it with my family, was an absolute joy.”

What did Tremblay think of the film? “One hundred percent, from my point of view, the movie is beautifully composed and shot and directed, and the performances are amazing,” he said.

Like the novel, the movie is an apocalyptic thriller about a group of doomsdayers who descend on a family at their vacation cabin. Starring actors Dave Bautista, Rupert Grint, Jonathan Groff, and Nikki Amuka-Bird, the movie takes a lot from the book, according to Tremblay, but also has a “fairly drastic” change to the end.

“I prefer my ending, which better reflects my personal beliefs and intent with the story,” he said. “But at the same time, I enjoyed the movie. I think it’s really good.”

The divergent ending was not a surprise to Tremblay, who had a chance to talk to Shyamalan early in the filmmaking process. He also fielded questions from the screenwriters during script development and even was invited to visit the set in the woods outside Philadelphia for a day of filming in May 2021.

It was a “mind-spinning experience.” “I walked in right before they were going to start shooting,” Tremblay said. “Ben [Aldridge] and Jonathan Groff are tied to chairs, and there’s Bautista and the other actors. And Night came over and gave me a hug. And I was whisked off to watch what they were shooting on the monitor.”

Tremblay's journey to a big-budget movie soundstage, standing beside one of Hollywood's best-known directors, included his experience at Providence College in the early 1990s. He arrived on campus “awkward and not very confident,” he said. “I guess Providence was where I sort of discovered myself.”

It wasn’t until the second semester of his senior year that Tremblay found an interest in writing. Just before graduating as a mathematics and humanities double major, he took an English class to fulfill a missing curriculum requirement. The class was made up of mostly first-year students, but Tremblay connected instantly with the professor, Mark W. McLaughlin, Ph.D., over a mutual love of punk music.

Tremblay remembers writing an essay comparing stories by Joyce Carol Oates and T.C. Boyle to a Jane’s Addiction song. “I didn’t know people wrote things like this. It really excited me,” he said.

Tremblay parlayed this early excitement with writing into a remarkable side hustle. After earning a master’s degree in mathematics from the University of Vermont in 1995, he began a 27-year career as a math instructor at Saint Sebastian’s School in Needham, Massachusetts, where he still teaches (he was on sabbatical this past year).
He finds time to write in the evenings at his home in Stoughton, Massachu- setts, and during free periods at school. He writes on a laptop from ideas and thoughts scribbled in notebooks. “The school has been so supportive of my writing endeavors. They encourage lifelong learning. It’s not just words for them,” Tremblay said.

Providence College brought Paul and Lisa together. An English major, she remembers that he used to ask her, “Do you just read books and talk about them?” Lisa is senior director of marketing for Papa Gino’s & D’Angelo and hosts a podcast, TV is Awesome, with classmate Ken Cornelw’93.

For the most part, as they were raising their family, life was ordinary, focused on the children’s interests and needs, with both parents coaching sports teams. “Something that started out gradually for Paul, deciding to write stories in the late ’90s and then seeing where he is now, feels both like a long adventure and like a late ’90s and then seeing where he is now,” Tremblay said. “Something that was a math teacher. Our kids have grown up knowing Dad had two jobs: teaching and writing. There was a time when they were a little embarrassed that Dad wrote horror books … I think that has all changed now.”

Tremblay’s breakthrough novel was A Head Full of Ghosts in 2015—the book that scared Stephen King. It received the Bram Stoker Award from the Horror Writers Association for superior achievement in a novel and the Massachusetts Book Award for Fiction. It was followed by Disappearance at Devil’s Rock, which received the British Fantasy Award for best horror novel in 2017.

His writing credits also include Survivi- vor Song, crime novels The Littlest Step and No Sleep till Wonderland, and the short story collections Growing Things and Other Stories and The Beast You Are (due out in July). His essays and short fiction have appeared in The Los Angeles Times, The New York Times, Entertainment Weekly online, and in several year’s best anthologies. “Horror has always felt honest to me. I think horror can get at art’s most difficult questions in interesting ways,” Tremblay said. “And monsters are just cool.”

Though he has never met Stephen King in person, they correspond by email: “He’s been super supportive and a great ear to bend,” Tremblay said. “He did ask me to check his math in an SAT problem, which he put into the novel The Institute. So now, I consider myself his math tutor.” Does Providence College show up in any of his books? “Definitely,” Tremblay said. Specifically, in The Pallbearers Club, which came out in 2022, “there’s a big chunk of the book that takes place in Prov- ence. It is essentially a very fictional- ized autobiography, but it imagines a different path I might have taken if I had dropped out of Providence College when I was a junior to try to become a punk musician.”

“Horror has always felt honest to me ... And monsters are just cool.”

Geoffrey Gneudha ‘70 of New York, New York, delivered the inaugural lecture, “Diego Velázquez: Paneter of Truth,” at Art Gallery 53 in New York City in January 2023. Gneudha is a figurative and representational artist whose portrait of Servant of God Dorothy Day is in the permanent collection of the Archdiocese of New York and is the official image for her canonization cause. She served as her chaplain in the late 1970s and was the eulogist at her funeral.

Jim Larranaga ‘71 of Miami, Florida, recorded his 300th career victory as a men’s basketball coach when Miami defeated Providence College in the Basketball Hall of Fame Tip-Off at Mohegan Sun in November 2022. Larranaga has coached for 39 seasons, with previous stints at American International, Bowing Green, and George Mason.

Danny Devito, star of the Netflix series It’s Always Sunny in Philadelphia, was featured in Humans of New York, a photojournalism project by Brandon Stanton. Graffiti artist and administrator of HumansofNewYork.com, he has written three books, numerous book chapters, peer-reviewed articles, and encyclopedias entries on social work education, legal issues facing social workers, ethics, and family law. He holds a law degree from St. John’s University School of Law, and administers HumansofNewYork.com.

Robert Madden, LCNW, J.D. ’79 of Deep River, Connecticut, was honored with a lifetime achievement award from the National Asso- ciation of Social Workers, Connecticut Chap- ter. He is a professor of social work and exe- cutive community practice at the University of St. Joseph, where he also serves as director of the MSW Program. Madden, who began his career as a social worker at a shelter for runaways, is a licensed social worker and attorney well known in New England for social work ethics and law. He has written three books, numerous book chapters, peer-reviewed articles, and encyclopedias entries on social work education, legal issues facing social workers, ethics, and family law. He holds a law degree from St. John’s University School of Law.

Father Holt in Humans of New York

REV. WILLIAM HOLT, O.P. ’72, became internet famous in October 2022 when he was featured in Humans of New York, a photojournalism project by Brandon Stan- ton that has produced two New York Times best-selling books. Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter readers were captivated by Father Holt’s optimistic outlook. “From all sour faced saints, deliver me O’ Lord. I don’t want to be with a grouch, a crook, a crocodile in a crowd,” he said.

Father Holt, a native of Jersey City, New Jersey, has been a Dominican priest for more than 40 years. He celebrates weekday Masses at St. Vincent Ferrer in New York City, home base of the Dominican Order of St. Joseph, which founded and administers PC.

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from the University of Connecticut and a master’s degree from Columbia University School of Social Work.

David Lafrenie ’82 of Conundum, Flor- ida, retired from the LPGA Tour after 14 years with the organization. He was named head coach of men’s basketball at Mercy College in Dunkirk, New York, in March 2013. He has served as interim coach since October 2012. He previously was associ- ated with St. John’s University and the Office of the President and an assistant coach at Mercy. He led Notre Dame Catholic High School to the 2013 Division I state championship and was named USA Dame Catholic High School to the 2018 Division I state championship and was named USA

Chris Watts ’91 of Denver, Colorado, joined UpHealth, a global digital health company, as chief growth officer. She is responsible for global market sales and business development at UpHealth. She studied mathematics and economics at PC.

Mike Ryland ’79 of Coventry, Connecticut, is managing director, state and local taxes, for KPMG in Hartford. He has more than 20 years of experience in the tax industry, includ- ing 15 years as senior manager and manager of local taxes at Stanley Black & Decker. Mike also spent two years at United Technologies Corporation and eight years at EY. He has a master of laws degree in taxation from Boston University School of Law, a law degree from Suffolk University Law School, and a bachelor’s degree in political science from PC.

David Ballam ’95 of Bentonville, Ar- kansas, retired on September 1, 2012, after 14 years with General Mills. His sales career, which began in California in 1988, eventually led to roles in Arizona, Idaho, and Minne- sota before he relocated to Arkansas in 2011 to support the world’s largest retailer. His business travels included trips to Mumbai, India. David and his wife, Heather, are look- ing forward to travel and relaxation in their retirement years.

Gregg Amore ’88 of East Providence, Rhode Island, was sworn in as Rhode Island secretary of state in January 2023. He was a longtime social studies teacher, coach, and athlete administrator at East Providence High School and represented the city in the General As- sembly for 10 years. At PC, he studied history, history, and economics. His wife, played baseball, and later was a Friars assistant coach. He holds a master’s degree in public policy from New England College.

Elena Yates Havranovitch ’99 of Cranston, Rhode Island, is senior vice president, direc- tor of human resources at BankNewport. She is responsible for all human resources functions for BankNewport and its affiliate, the OceanPoint Financial Partners MHC, and affiliates. Prior to joining BankNewport in 2019, she was director of benefits at Talbot’s in Hingham, Massachusetts. She studied busi- ness administration at PC.

Chris Watts ’91 of Phoenix, Arizona, retired after 14 years as an executive in the food in- dustry. He now coaches high school varsity football and varsity track at Dyer High School in El Mirage and is a substitute teacher.

Joe Magennis ’84 of Ottawa, Onta- rio, joined Davis Malm, a banking, business, and real estate at- torney with Davis Malm, was recognized as a assistant and a trustee of the Boys & Girls

The RFK Community Alliance (Perkins Advisory Council. He serves on the board of

Michael F. Connolly, Esq. ’84 of Milton, Mas- sachusetts, a banking, business, and real estate at- torney with Davis Malm, was recognized as a

Joe Magennis ’84 of Cambrod, Rhode Island, is director of strategic implementation at Providence College, where he oversees initiatives related to the college’s new School of Nursing and Health Sciences and supports the execution of objectives in the PC2020 strategic plan. He previously spent 10 years at Johnson & Wales University, most recent- ly as director of enrollment planning and strategy, with experience in university market- ing, IT, and digital services.

John Sivilia ’84 of Peoria, Arizona, retired after 14 years as an executive in the food in- dustry. He now coaches high school varsity football and varsity track at Dyer High School in El Mirage and is a substitute teacher.

Charles Debevoise ’80 of Dover, New Hamp- shire, is interim head lacrosse coach at Widener University School of Law.

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Charles Debevoise ’80 of Dover, New Hamp- shire, is interim head lacrosse coach at Widener University School of Law.
Supporting a fellow Friar

JOHN MCALEAVE‘90 of New Providence, New Jersey, host of the QuadCast podcast, was honored at the 40th anniversary gala of the Cheshire Home for Florham Park, New Jersey, for his contributions to the spinal cord injury community.

On hand to celebrate with John and his Canine Companions service dog, YoKen, were his friends from the fourth floor of Raymond Hall, from left, Jacques Lamore ‘90, Bill Coates ‘90, Tom Whalen ‘89, and Mark Jessup ‘80.

The Cheshire Home helps young adults with spinal cord injuries and neurological impairments regain independence.

John, who was a guest on the PC Podcast in 2020, calls his podcast “OT/PT for the soul.” His nephew, Charles Sarlund ‘26, is attending PC.

Brian Bowen ‘80 of Kailua, Hawaii, published the third edition of The Diversity of Fishes with Wiley-Blackwell. It is the most widely used fish textbook in the world. Bowen is a research professor at University of Hawaii and Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology. A biology major at PC, he received a master’s degree in marine science from Virginia Institute of Marine Science in 1986 and a Ph.D. in genetics from the University of Georgia in 1992.

Paul Dienne ‘65 of Auburn, Maine, has written two books, The Priestess and the Pope and its sequel, Madeleine’s Inquisition, novels about the leadership role of women in the early church and their subordination in the rise of Christianity. He studied history at PC and was a decorated Army lieutenant during Vietnam. After his discharge, he graduated from the University of Maine School of Law. He served as mayor of Lewiston, Maine, from 1980-1986. He is married to two children and five grandchildren.

John Lee Dumas ‘02 of Westfield, Massachusetts, is the host of the Entrepreneurs on Fire podcast, which is written by Entrepreneur and published by the Troy Book Makers. A former software developer, Dumas is an expert on marketing and helps people build their online businesses. He is a self-published author and is an authority on entrepreneurship and personal development.

Moses Mordecai Twersky ‘15 of Providence, Rhode Island, host of the Tishrei Channel, recently died in 2021. He was a prominent Jewish communal leader and was an important figure in the Providence Jewish community.

Megan N. (Welsh) Masters, Ph.D. ‘04 of Laurel, Maryland, published her first book, Longitudinal Studies of Second Language Learning Outcomes: Quantitative Methods and Outcomes, a how-to guide for choosing, using, and understanding quantitative longitudinal research and sampling methods in second and foreign language learning. She is director of academic technology expertise in the University of Maryland College Park’s Division of Information Technology and serves as associate faculty with the Second Language Acquisition program as a lecturer within the College of Education’s Human Development and Organizations program. After studying Spanish and secondary education at Providence College Spring 2023
PC, she earned a master’s degree and a Ph.D. in second language acquisition from the University of Maryland, College Park. Through her work as a project manager researcher at UMD’s Applied Research Lab for Intelligence and Security, and her current work overseeing the implementation of educational technologies, she has 10 years of experience working with complex, institutional data sources focused on analytics related to large-scale program evaluation, second-language learning, and learning analytics. She is nationally recognized for her expertise in data visualization and data information. She is the chief operations officer of a company bringing cutting-edge solutions to process real-time B2B payments and was named a Best Place to Work by Providence Business News.

**Lauren Jones ’05** of Hyde Park, Massachusetts, was named secretary of labor and workforce development in January 2023 by Massachusetts Gov. Maura Healey and is a senior leader in management from the Massachusetts Business Roundtable. She previously was named secretary of labor and workforce development in January 2023 by Massachusetts Gov. Maura Healey and is a senior leader in management from the Massachusetts Business Roundtable.

**Tricia Frappier Forte ’07** of Cranston is an associate attorney with Hackman & Phillips Elder Law RI LLC, practicing in elder law and drafting decisions for the judges at the Rhode Island Superior Court. She represents clients in all aspects of domestic relations, including divorce, guardianship, child support, alimony, custody, modification, actions, paternity, restraining orders, domestic violence, domestic relations, financial issues, and business valuations. She also assists clients with issues relating to the Department of Children and Families. Previously, Ms. Frappier served as a law clerk, researching and drafting decisions for the judges at the Probate and Family Court. Her practice also focuses on professional practice and serves as the liaison to the Greater Rhode Island Legal Services and the Victim Rights Law Center.

**Ned Thompson ’06G** of Warren, Rhode Island, was elevated to partner in the law firm representing clients throughout the Commonwealth. He is national director, diversity, equity, and inclusion for Boys & Girls Clubs of America, head-quartered in Atlanta, Georgia. He started the position in January 2022 after two years as senior director of diversity, equity, and inclusion at LandUseRI.com. He also is a senior planner in the Department of Planning and Economic Development in the City of Warwick. He previously was director of business advisory firm BLG Inc. and is the author of two books, Getting Digital Marketing Right and Digital Marketing Guide. He holds an MBA from PC.

**Cody Fine ’15SCE, ’21G** of Cranston, Rhode Island, is executive director of workforce partnerships at the Community College of Rhode Island. He previously was assistant director of business advisory firm BLG Inc. and is the author of two books, Getting Digital Marketing Right and Digital Marketing Guide. He holds an MBA from PC.
JohnPaul Bettinelli '20 and Katie Healy married on November 26, 2022, at St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Norwood, Massachusetts, with fellow Patriot Battalion Army ROTC alumni in attendance. They reside in Cranston.

Kayla Misto '15 and Giovanni Illiano '14 married on October 8, 2022, at St. Paul the Apostle Church in Foster, Rhode Island. Kayla is the daughter of Karla Misto and the great-niece of the late Sister Leona Misto, RSM, '79G, former vice president of Salve Regina University. Kayla is employed as a project manager at Amgen. They reside in Cranston.

Alex Vescera '15 and Lauren Palva '15, married on September 3, 2022, in Newport, Rhode Island, with many members of the Friar family in attendance. Lauren was a student-athlete on the softball team. She and Alex met while studying the nonexistent MBA program. They reside in Portsmouth.

Catherine Scarcella '19 and Bradley Hickey '19 of Brooklyn were married on September 3, 2022, in New York with Rev. Peter Martyr Yongeinth, O.P., former PC chaplain, officiating. Among the wedding guests were Rev. James Cuddy, O.P. '98 and Rev. Dominic Verner, O.P.

Sean Flanagan '13 and Brianna Luts '13 married on July 2, 2022, in Westport, Connecticut. They met and began dating as students at PC. A crew of their best friends from the Class of 2013 attended the wedding, many of them also PC couples, and there were four Friars in the wedding party. Sean and Brianna live in Stamford.

Briania Reynolds '16 and Greg FilMasques '16 married on May 21, 2022, in Rockville Centre, New York. They reside in Centerport.

John Lee Dumas '02 and Kate Lynn Erickson married on April 23, 2022, in Puerto Rico, with many Friars attending, including Jeff White '02, Matt Meegan '02, Ryan Kelly '02, Melanie Dumas '06, Colin Woods '02, Tim Zabbo '02, Mike Dunn '02, and Kristie Zabbo '06. They have been happily soaking in the Caribbean sun on the lovely island of Puerto Rico for seven years now, in the amazing community of Palmas Del Mar.

Katelyn Turano '18 and Michael Curtis of Middletown, Rhode Island, welcomed their first child, Isabella, on October 19, 2022.
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Maggie Stalter '19, an MBA at the University of Connecticut. Commissioner Val Ackerman '20 Hon. to mark external relations at Trinity College-Hartford, populations.

Robert D. Walton '50

Azia Johnson '22, of Lincoln, Rhode Island, is principal of the Agnes E. College School of Business, is the school’s communications coordinator. Richardson, who majored in sociology and public and community service studies, completed a master’s degree in higher education administration from Boston College in 2012. She serves as the associate director of development.

Two alumni from the Class of 2022 are studying for a master’s degree in public health at the Brown University School of Public Health. A biology and psychology double major at PC, she is pursuing a concentration in maternal and child health. Joseph Polisena Jr. '21G, of Johnston, Rhode Island, was named early childhood director at the Gordon School, a private school in Providence, for children in nursery through eighth grade. He joined the faculty in 2007 as a second grade teacher and has taken on multiple roles since, including as a cooperating teacher in Gordon’s teacher residency program, where she mentors new teachers, and as early childhood and lower school curriculum coordinator. In 2018, she was elected by her colleagues to be faculty representative on the school’s board of directors. A native of the Dominican Republic, she holds a bachelor’s degree in human development, family, and community studies with a concentration in early childhood from the University of Rhode Island and a master of education degree in school leadership from PC.

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Two alumni from the Class of 2022 are studying for a master’s degree in public health at the Brown University School of Public Health. A biology and psychology double major at PC, she is pursuing a concentration in maternal and child health. Joseph Polisena Jr. ’21G, of Johnston, Rhode Island, was named early childhood director at the Gordon School, a private school in Providence, for children in nursery through eighth grade. He joined the faculty in 2007 as a second grade teacher and has taken on multiple roles since, including as a cooperating teacher in Gordon’s teacher residency program, where she mentors new teachers, and as early childhood and lower school curriculum coordinator. In 2018, she was elected by her colleagues to be faculty representative on the school’s board of directors. A native of the Dominican Republic, she holds a bachelor’s degree in human development, family, and community studies with a concentration in early childhood from the University of Rhode Island and a master of education degree in school leadership from PC.
WHEN THE SUPREME COURT handed down its decision in Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization, overturning Roe v. Wade, it marked a crucial moment for the protection of unborn life. It also shifted the United States into a new moment in the public discourse. With abortion law returned to the jurisdiction of states, the possibility — and the necessity — of real conversation with fellow citizens suddenly emerged.

Unfortunately, this is easier said than done. Real conversation has become a rarity. We have become more accustomed to slogans and insults hurled back and forth, often with no more nuance than the number of characters allowed by Twitter. But this is a task we have to take up. In the most practical sense, our democratic, pluralistic situation demands it. None of us can simply coerce those who disagree with us. We have to make our case. In the case of abortion law, it is especially important, in fact, that we work to arrive at laws that are well-reasoned and nuanced, and conversation is a powerful tool to reach that end.

For pro-lifers there are even more important motivations at hand. A pro-life position must always be grounded in a commitment to the fundamental dignity of every human being — including those who oppose us on this issue. Recognizing their dignity always includes recognizing and engaging their intellect. As a teacher at a Catholic college, I am committed to the task, and I have also seen a particular challenge up close. We must make the pro-life case to our own young people, many of whom are unconvincing.

With all this in mind, I took part in a simple yet remarkable event at Providence College. At the prompting of President Rev. Kenneth R. Sicard, O.P., a small group of us worked over several months to organize a public event. Two professors representing a pro-choice position and two professors representing a pro-life position — myself included — offered brief, careful presentations of our positions. We then offered short responses to one another’s comments, and, finally, time was reserved for questions.

As I said, it was so simple that it might be hard to see exactly what was accomplished. My sense, though, is something important happened. The level of attention among the 500 or so attendees (including students, faculty, staff, administrators, and a number of the college’s trustees) was striking. All were completely attentive for 90 minutes — listening, absorbing, considering.

In particular, our students saw their teachers engage on a difficult and divisive issue without any of the animus or ad hominems to which they are accustomed. They also heard a pro-life case presented with precision and conviction — and for some of them, this is a first. (One of our Campus Ministry staff reported that several students said the event moved their vague and unexamined pro-choice convictions toward a new openness to a pro-life position.)

I myself left with a renewed conviction that, in this place dedicated to intellectual inquiry, we could address hard questions.

Providence College has a particular legacy in this matter. As our president put it, we are “grounded in the liberal arts and committed to veritas,” and we have “an obligation to explore and discuss issues that are uncomfortable and controversial, and to do so in a thoughtful and respectful manner.” In a place where we often study Thomas Aquinas, Father Sicard noted that “disputation of this type has been a hallmark of Dominican higher education since the 13th century.” An event like this, though, could no doubt inspire many kinds of initiatives in many places.

On this issue, there is so much more to do. For us, this was one small but important step.

BY HOLLY TAYLOR COOLMAN, PH.D.

Editor’s Note: Holly Taylor Coolman, Ph.D., assistant professor of theology, wrote this reflection after participating in “With Mutual Respect: Discussions on Contemporary Challenge,” a series instituted in the Fall 2022 semester by College President Rev. Kenneth R. Sicard, O.P.’78, ’82G. The essay was originally published in Our Sunday Visitor.