PROVIDENCE COLLEGE MAGAZINE

SPRING 2024

YOU'RE NEVER ALONE IN FRIARTOWN
GIVING FRIARS
A generous act by first-year men in Raymond Hall resonates across the nation.

FACULTY FOCUS
Meet Jonathan Jackson, Ph.D., director of the graduate program in business analytics.

RUNNING POINT
Rick Cordella ’99, basketball walk-on, is president of NBC Sports.

CLASS NOTES
Job changes, authors, weddings, births, and more.

THE LAST WORD

At the Center
Personal Counseling Center counselors like Micki Searight ’93 offer services to students at no additional cost.

The Lucky 1%
Supported by coaches and staff, Lisa McNamara ’23, ’24G overcame an eating challenge to return as field hockey captain.

Loving the Friars
Support for Friar basketball is at an all-time high. This was the scene when the women’s team played UConn in March at Alumni Hall.

Advocate for Honesty
Patrick J. Kennedy ’91 helped Congress enact mental health parity — and opened up about his own mental health struggles.

The Career-sphere
Coaches in the Chirico Career Center equip students like Jenna Coby ’24 to land roles at employers from Fenway Park to the White House.
DEAR PC

PROVIDENCE COLLEGE
SPRING 2024

PROVIDENCE COLLEGE MAGAZINE
FALL 2023

→ I have just finished reading your fall 2023 magazine and wanted to reach out and say “thank you” for the best one I have ever read! I enjoyed “The Haas Years,” understanding for the first time why I had to get up at 8 every morning for Civ. I do know that it was the backbone of my education, as I went on to become a Catholic educator. I was most moved by “Quig’s” “Growing Old” article! Remembering his lectures and having visited Rome and Pope Francis recently, I believe that the article captures what it is to be a Catholic at our age and his “winter years” advice is much appreciated.

I also enjoyed the new coaches and Brian Burke’s snapshot. This magazine seemed created truly for our alumni community! Thanks, we will treasure our copy!
— Carol Conaty Lehmann ’76 and Thomas Lehmann ’74

→ Congrats on the recent issue. Loved the pieces on Brad’s and Father Haas, among others. Well done!
— Raymond Lombra ’67
Professor of Economics,
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Penn State University

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— Mike Lynch ’81

→ To Mario DiNunzio, Ph.D. ’57, ’22Hon.: I so enjoyed your article on Father Haas. I was the first directly elected alumni representative on the Corporation, and I came to know him briefly but well during my final student years and on the board. I admired him greatly, and you have captured so well his immense positive influence during turbulent times. He gave me a copy of his dissertation on Charles Peirce, which we then discussed. I consider the Dominicans to be too conservative in many ways, but he was not. He brought fresh air into the institution in many ways, but especially in supporting innovative and dedicated faculty. If there was anything missing from your article, it was recognition of your own contributions as part of this vanguard.

Best wishes to you and thanks for all your contributions over the years. I did not have you in class, but your contributions to this movement were clear.
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SEEKING SAINT DOMINIC
Twenty-seven students, alumni, and Dominicans journeyed for 11 days from Spain to southern France in the footsteps of Saint Dominic.

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The Ben Mondor Center for Nursing and Health Sciences, opening in January 2025, will include six Anatomage Tables, which are the most technologically advanced anatomy visualization systems on the market. They contain a virtual library of human cadavers and serve as clinical diagnostic tools, allowing users to view an array of medical scans. Three tables already are in use in newly renovated learning spaces in the Feinstein Academic Center (formerly Stephen Hall). Brett Romano Ely, Ph.D., assistant professor of health sciences, second from right, demonstrates the table to nursing students Olivia Borum ’27, Katherine Jurczak ’27, and Jillian Vichi ’27.
The Campus Ministry Center on the lower level of St. Dominic Chapel is a place where students can see the friendly faces of peers, campus ministers, and chaplains (like Rev. Damian Marie Day, O.P. ’15, assistant chaplain, playing ping pong with a student). Today they also see the faces of 17 saints — vowed religious, clergy, and laypeople — whose photographs are framed on the walls, including Saint Teresa of Calcutta, Saint Maximilian Kolbe, and Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati. The images are scaled to be life size, and since they are photographs, depict saints who lived in modern times. “Our role as chaplains and campus ministers is to help students become saints who might one day be featured on these walls too,” said Father Damian.

STILL TICKING

Providence-based band Deer Tick, whose bassist is Christopher Dale Ryan ’07, released its eighth studio album, Emotional Contracts, and spent five months on a national tour in 2023. Deer Tick’s sound defies easy classification, blending folk and blues influences with rock. After years of performing locally, including at Lupo’s in Providence (now The Strand), Deer Tick began touring nationally and at its busiest performed more than 200 shows a year. Ryan joined following his graduation from PC, where he studied music and had many opportunities to practice because “it seemed like every ensemble needed someone to play bass.” The son of Lynne Ryan, Ph.D., professor of education, and the late Dale Ryan ’64, he lives in North Providence and remains “willing to play with anyone who needs a bassist.”

Mary Gifford ’26, a social science major from Wenham, Massachusetts, noticed how regularly her classmates traded and gave away clothing. She saw this neighborly practice as one that could be scaled to maximize selection, savings, and sustainability. Supported with grants from the Providentia Endowed Fund and the Donald Ryan Incubator for Entrepreneurship in the Arts and Sciences, Gifford launched Friartown’s Closet, a consignment shop for students that opened in April 2024 in the Feinstein Academic Center. Gifford hopes Friartown’s Closet will reduce clothing waste, especially with one-time use items, such as formal attire for dances and color-themed outfits for basketball games. Her entrepreneurship landed her a spot in this year’s BIG EAST Startup Challenge.
Thoughtfulness of Raymond Hall students warms hearts across nation

A kind-hearted gesture by first-year men living on the fourth floor of Raymond Hall, assisted by their sophomore resident assistant, reverberated around the country in March. The students decided to raise money so that their building’s overnight security guard, James Mogaji, could visit his family in Nigeria for the first time in more than 11 years. Through a GoFundMe account, the students collected $3,000 in just seven days.

A video captured Mogaji’s reaction when the students presented him with the card and gift on March 6, 2024. He fell to his knees in surprise to a chorus of “We love you, James!”

“He’s just the kindest soul anyone has ever met in this building. He means so much to us,” said Brandon Reichert ’27, from Carver, Massachusetts, who helped organize the fundraiser. “It was amazing how fast everyone connected and we were able to put it together for him.”

The video was viewed a million times on social media and caught the attention of Hoda Kotb, who highlighted it as a Morning Boost on NBC’s Today show.

College brand strategy receives national award

The college won a top national award from CASE, the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education, for its brand initiative that presents PC as a place “For Those Who Seek.” The college was selected for a Gold Circle of Excellence Award for creative achievement in the institutional branding category. The brand was developed by the college’s Division of Marketing and Communications.

Another applications record

Providence College received 12,518 applications, the most in its history, from high school students wishing to join the Class of 2028. The previous record was set by the Class of 2027. More than 1,400 students applied to study nursing and health sciences, two of the college’s newest majors.

Business school top ranked

For the fifth straight year, the School of Business was ranked in the top 50 by Poets&Quants for Undergrads, reaching #37 in the 2014 ranking. The school was listed as #28 in the academic experience category among 91 ranked business schools.
QUOTABLE

Discussing her book, Parenting: The Complex and Beautiful Vocation of Raising Children:
"In all the ins and outs of daily life — diapers and meltdowns, forgotten uniforms and screen-time battles — God is constantly seeking to draw both (parents) and their children more fully into the purposes of love."
— Holly Taylor Coolman, Ph.D., assistant professor of theology
Church Blogmatics

Discussing her book, Banking on Slavery: Financing Southern Expansion in the Antebellum United States, at George Washington University:
"In the South, banks regularly accepted enslaved people as mortgage collateral for the securitization of existing short-term loans."
— Sharon Ann Murphy, Ph.D., professor of history
GW Today

On her research into whether, with habitat loss and lawn chemicals, insect pollinators get a well-rounded diet:
"If they’re healthier, they’re going to be able to deal with (any) environmental stressor better."
— Rachael Bonan, Ph.D., assistant professor of biology
ecoRI News

On the importance of mass transit, smaller cars, more dense cities, and battery recycling:
“We’re at the beginning of an energy transition, and we want to ask what type of energy transition it should be, and how it should be organized. What makes it meet just and most rapid.""nEla Riofrancos, Ph.D., associate professor of political science
The New Yorker

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"In all the ins and outs of daily life — diapers and meltdowns, forgotten uniforms and screen-time battles — God is constantly seeking to draw both (parents) and their children more fully into the purposes of love."
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Providence College’s commitment to the well-being of every student — mind, body, and soul — is evident in its investment in the Personal Counseling Center, which reopened in August 2022 in the lower level of Bedford Hall with 16 full- and part-time licensed counselors and advanced trainers.

The on-campus mental health clinic offers students confidential, professional assistance from licensed providers. Psychologists, clinical social workers, and mental health counselors — including specialists in substance use and addiction treatment, student-athlete mental health, and diversity-related concerns — provide 45-minute psychotherapy sessions on a regular or as-needed basis to students with or without a diagnosed mental health issue.

Because the center operates outside the health insurance system, there is no additional cost to students or their families, and no cap on the number of visits. A consulting psychiatrist is available multiple days a week to manage medication to complement therapy.

Rosemary Fernandes Mugan, Psy.D. ’98, the center’s executive director, said about 20% of the student body is served by the Personal Counseling Center in a given academic year, up from about 9% when she began working at the college almost two decades ago. The increase is due in part to the decrease in stigma associated with seeking help and aligns with national trends. The American Psychiatric Association said the rate of reported mental health challenges among college students increased by nearly 50% in the last decade.

Discussions about mental health services are now part of the college search process. Families of high school students receiving treatment at home want to know that they can continue while at college. Services for the college-age population are also vital because 50% of mental health conditions begin by age 14 and 75% by age 24, although they may not be diagnosed until years later, according to the National Alliance on Mental Illness.
Any student can make an appointment at the Personal Counseling Center, and anyone at the college with concerns about a student can notify the CARE team — the Campus Assessment Response and Evaluation team — which includes representatives from the Personal Counseling Center, Office of Community Standards, Dean of Students, Chaplain’s Office, Office of Public Safety, Student Health Center, and Student Success Center. The message “You’re Never Alone in Friartown,” which was first introduced by PC Athletics, has been embraced by the entire college community.

Until its expansion following the COVID-19 pandemic, the Personal Counseling Center shared space with the Student Health Center, now located in Davis Hall. (Alumni of certain years recall being directed to lower Bedford Hall with the instruction, “If it’s your body that hurts, go right. Your mind, left.”) The clinical suite is comfortable and welcoming, with a waiting room, private offices and consultation rooms, and a large common room for group sessions and staff meetings.

Students are greeted with a display of informational literature about mood disorders, eating disorders, relationships, substance use, gender and sexuality, sleep habits, and more. The waiting area features a photo collage of the staff’s dogs, cats, and other pets (Mugan and her family’s Bernese mountain dog, Finnegan, are training to be a pet therapy team) and there are relaxation items such as mindful coloring pages, activity sheets, and Play-Doh.

Students report feeling relieved or uplifted after even just one session, which has much to do with the posture of openness and non-judgement with which counselors receive them. While a first session is principally an exercise in triage, the cathartic feeling students report speaks to the power of listening. It is the beginning of a process of healing and growth, and the majority return for future appointments.

After the initial visit, each student is matched with a counselor based on personal needs and preferences, and meets consistently with the same person, developing trust and rapport. “The relationship between student and therapist is the biggest predictor for successful treatment or a student meeting their goals for therapy success,” Mugan said. “Our planning for treatment is very individualized. I think it’s why we’re so effective in helping people get well.”

Inspired by the care and guidance she received as an undergraduate, Mugan brings a profound sense of purpose to her role. The Personal Counseling Center was a vital resource in the support network that helped her adjust and excel as a first-generation college student and psychology major in the Honors Program.

Mugan grew up as an only child in New Bedford, Massachusetts. Her father was forced to leave work due to a debilitating inflammatory disease that left him bedridden, and her mother, a native of Madeira, left her job as a seamstress in a curtain factory to care for him. Mugan’s acceptance to PC came with a financial aid package that, while substantial, would still drain the family’s savings. Nevertheless, at her mother’s insistence, Mugan called to say thank you.

Mugan spoke with Brother Kevin O’Connell, O.P., associate director of financial aid, telling him that she would work hard in her studies to be considered for more scholarship assistance in the future. Brother Kevin asked questions about her family circumstances. About a week later, Mugan received another letter from PC, this time saying she had been awarded a scholarship covering full tuition, room, and board for four years.

“This was the first time I experienced the heart of the mission of Providence College, and its commitment to educating first-generation students and students from underprivileged backgrounds,” Mugan said.
The center plays an important role in supporting student safety. Susan Ellingwood, LICSW, clinical counselor and director of substance use services, is one of two clinicians with a specialization in substance use concerns, able to assist students who seek help for themselves or are referred by a friend or family member. PC’s Office of Community Standards also refers students for assessment after behavioral, drug, and alcohol infractions.

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PC as a clinical counselor. She was named interim director in 2015, director in 2016, and executive director in 2023.

Mugan has overseen the center’s expansion, and with help from the staff, has continued to build partnerships across campus, taking part in orientation for new students and their parents, and meeting with first-generation and multicultural students. She and her staff have been invited to speak in classrooms and to provide training to employees.

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“The pandemic created separation, and where there’s separation, there will be fears related to reacclimating,” Mugan said. “Our students endured two years of remote learning in high school against the backdrop of social and political crises. When they ask, ‘What’s next,’ they are faced with economic and climate uncertainty.”

A survey of the Class of 2020 showed that about 47% received services through the Personal Counseling Center at some point in their time at PC. Ellingwood said she believes the college is providing appropriate, maximum access to mental health support.

“Not everyone needs professional mental health services,” Ellingwood said. “A lot of students have strong support networks at home and at the college that positively impact mental health. There are so many ways our students feel held.”

Mugan would love to increase the part-time hours of the staff psychologist to full time, and to be able to accommodate every student request for a weekly appointment. Counselors now see about six students per day and have brief windows between student appointments to coordinate care and outreach.

“We bear witness to things we may not be able to change for students, things that perhaps they are unable to change themselves,” Mugan said. “But we can help them navigate those situations and provide insight on ways to cope with them. We can help students contemplate things they might not otherwise have opportunity to see. Counseling is an opportunity to discover.”

The reward is watching students cross the stage at commencement.

“We are so honored to work with students in times when they’re so vulnerable. We are privileged to work with so many campus partners equally committed to our students. That’s the beauty of working at Providence College. There are helpers everywhere,” Mugan said.

A FUND FOR THE COUNSELING CENTER

The importance of student well-being inspired Steve Duryea ’92, a senior philanthropic officer in PC’s Office of Institutional Advancement, and his wife, Benedicta, to make a $250,000 gift to the college to establish the Alexandra ’17 and Patrick ’98 Endowed Counseling Fund.

Proceeds from the fund make it possible in 2023 for the Personal Counseling Center to add a second clinical counselor/substance use counselor. Other donors are now able to designate gifts to the endowed fund when giving to the college.

TRAINING MENTAL HEALTH NURSES

The School of Nursing and Health Sciences was awarded a $600,000 federal grant to establish a Center for Nursing Education and Research that would address a critical nursing shortage at psychiatric and mental healthcare facilities in Rhode Island. The Interdisciplinary Center for Nursing Education and Research would work in collaboration with acute care and psychiatric hospitals, community healthcare facilities, long-term care facilities, and local organizations in underserved communities. About 70-100 PC nurses in training would have clinical internships at the facilities to gain professional experience working with adults, children, and families.

The new center is one of several initiatives by the School of Nursing and Health Sciences to promote a holistic approach to nursing and healthcare. Students are introduced to mindfulness and resilience as part of their professional development. Within the curriculum, they explore the significance of self-care in nursing and are introduced to practices that contribute to their own well-being. The goal is to help them navigate stressful demands of the profession during their careers as healers.

The School of Nursing and Health Sciences opened in 2023. Its first cohort of nursing students will graduate in 2027. The Ben Mondor Center for Nursing and Health Sciences is under construction and will be completed in January 2025.

INVESTING IN MENTAL HEALTH

THE RISKS OF PROBLEM GAMBLING

Thanks to a $5,000 grant awarded to Patrick Kelly, Ph.D., professor of accountancy, PC students are learning about the risks associated with gambling.

Kelly, who also directs PC’s Ethics in Business Education Program, received the grant from the Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling. In April 2024, he led a program on campus for students to raise awareness of the symptoms of problem gambling, risk factors, and resource options.

Other sessions are planned for faculty members and staff. Students who seek assistance from PC’s Personal Counseling Center are asked about their gambling experiences as part of the initial screening process. The center also offers treatment planning and counseling to address problem gambling.

Care is coordinated through Rhode Island Problem Gambling Services, an additional resource for free and specialized care, including a 24-hour hotline.

Rhode Island legalized online gambling, including online slots and table games, for those over 21 in March 2024. Gambling, particularly sports betting and online gambling on mobile devices, can negatively affect academic performance, finances, and personal well-being.

RICHCOBONO ACADEMIC RESILIENCE FELLOWS FOSTER STUDENT WELL-BEING

Chris Riccobono ’00, founder of the popular apparel brand UNIT QUILT, struggled with anxiety and depression following his graduation from Columbia Business School. The experience taught him the importance of resilience — the ability to perform at one’s best despite the stress of challenging life experiences.

Riccobono and his wife, Amy Parille ’03, established the donor-supported Riccobono Family Mental Health Fund at PC. Among its initiatives is the Riccobono Academ- ic Resilience Faculty Fellowship, which encourages faculty members to incorporate mental well-being strategies and awareness into their courses.

Since 2019, the program has provided mini grants to 35 faculty members. In the past academic year, fellowships were awarded in economics, elementary and special education, health sciences, nursing, psychology, and social work. English professors Elizabeth Bridgham, Ph.D. and Rob Stretter, Ph.D. incorporated well-being awareness into their curriculum. The Global City, for sophomores studying the Development of Western Civilization.

PROVIDENCE COLLEGE SPRING 2024
Never Alone in Friartown” is the reason I got through five years as a Division I student-athlete and, most importantly, is the reason I am a happy and confident young woman today.

Back to when I first arrived at PC. Throughout high school, where I played multiple sports, I struggled with body image and nutrition. Although it was kept somewhat under control, the demands of college athletics, with the necessity of fueling for performance, created tension within me that manifested into an eating disorder. There really is no way to describe how overwhelming my experience was. I cannot recall going more than 30 minutes without thinking about what I was eating or going to eat, whether I perceived it to be too much, all while understanding that I needed to eat to perform and experiencing extreme guilt when giving myself the necessary fuel. Eventually it became too much, and I reached out to John Rock, a resource from that kick-off meeting earlier in the year.

Instantly, he began supporting me. He connected me with a nutritionist and with a clinical psychologist for student-athletes in the Personal Counseling Center, and talked with my athletic trainer and my coaches, who above everything care about us as human beings.

But recovery is not linear. I had resources in place, but COVID-19’s arrival in March 2020 certainly did not help. After a first-year season where I had playing time, in sophomore year, because of my illness, I rarely saw the field. That lack of playing time motivated me to return for my junior year recovered, healthy, and ready to perform at the Division I level. I worked relentlessly to rewire my brain and my thoughts around food and body image. This work didn’t just occur during sessions with my counselor and a nutritionist. Every day I had to commit to learning and doing what was best for me and my health. I wouldn’t have been able to do it without support from our athletics department, Coach Diane Madl, and my teammates. From my junior season to my fifth-year season, I was honored to start every game, serve as team captain for two years, and give my all to my team, the sport, and the field hockey program.

It has been one of the greatest blessings and privileges of my life to be a member of Providence College field hockey. I know that the athletics department’s commitment to ensuring “You are Never Alone in Friartown” — that all student-athletes develop as human beings successful and joyful in life beyond our sports — is what really made me “the lucky 1%.”

Lisa McNamara ’23, ’24G, from Barre, Vermont, majored in global studies with minors in business and innovation and in Black studies. While completing an MBA degree, she worked as a graduate assistant in the Office of Student Athlete Development supporting the Friar Edge program, which helps student-athletes develop as learners, leaders, and citizens.
The relationships MacKay established were tested in the early morning hours of December 13, 1977, when she was awakened by a telephone call and asked to come to campus. There had been a fire during the night. Students had died. The words were so terrible that she hoped it was a nightmare.

“In those days there was no internet,” MacKay said. “There was little in literature about survivor’s guilt or how to deal with grief and loss.”

MacKay worked with Rev. John J. Reid, O.P., the college chaplain, and health professionals in the community. She partnered with Sally Thibodeau, Ph.D. ’66G, ’21Hon., assistant dean of undergraduate studies. She visited students and their families in hospitals and attended wakes and funerals. Even as she looked out for others, students looked out for her. A small group, including James Drinan ’78, Susan Martin-Phipps ’79, and Jane Hickey Silvestri ’78, provided support and even cooked meals for her.

Before students returned to campus in January 1978, MacKay arranged for J. Eugene Knott, Ph.D., a professor at the University of Rhode Island who ran a support group on grief and loss, to speak to resident assistants.

The Counseling and Career Placement Center was renamed the Student Development Center in 1985. In 1988, it split into three separate entities dedicated to personal counseling, career education, and student services. John T. Hogan, Ph.D., a staff counselor since 1981, became director of personal counseling. He retired in 2013. MacKay became assistant vice president for academic administration. They married in 1981.

“I’m especially thrilled with the growth of the Personal Counseling Center,” MacKay said. “So many families are grateful that our counseling services are so comprehensive. We don’t put limits on the number of sessions. We have counselors with experience and expertise in serving a broad range of needs. The college has made a real commitment to students and their well-being. We have stayed true to our mission. I’ve loved seeing it come full circle.”

Even in those years, students sought help for a range of mental health issues, including depression and anxiety, despite the great stigma attached to seeking help at that time.

“On the national level, it wasn’t until the mid-1980s that services for students were viewed as integral to the college experience,” MacKay said. “It was no longer just about learning in the classroom, but also learning about the self, relationships, and the impact on learning of everything that takes place outside the classroom.”

The Counseling and Career Placement Center was re-established to face the college’s greatest challenge — the Aquinas Hall fire.

FROM THE BEGINNING

BY VICKI-ANN DOWNING ’21G

No one is prouder of the gains made by the Personal Counseling Center than Jacqueline Kiernan MacKay, now director of the college’s Parent and Family Program.

In September 1973, MacKay, newly graduated with a master’s degree in counseling psychology from Assumption University, joined PC’s fledgling Counseling and Career Placement Center. Within four years she was the director, and seven months after that, drew on the relationships she established to face the college’s greatest challenge — the Aquinas Hall fire.

Anxieties about the future were foremost in the minds of students. The college needed a central location from which to provide not only counseling services, but resources for career direction, academic success, and course selection. The Cowell said. Such a center, modeled on one at The College of the Holy Cross, could help lower the dropout rate — 100 students had left PC without completing a degree the previous year, Brum reported.

The Counseling and Career Placement Center that MacKay joined as full-time counselor was a response to those concerns, though academic advising was handled by the Dean’s Office. The center also included a part-time counselor and a career placement director. College President Rev. Thomas R. Peterson, O.P. ’51, ’85Hon., gave MacKay free rein.

“There was no identity for the center whatsoever,” MacKay said. “I needed to create a sense of trust within the campus community so that faculty and staff would feel comfortable referring students there. I went to the faculty lounge in Harkins Hall every day just to build relationships. I reached out to Donna McAfferly (75G, 78Ph.D., 80G) in Residence Life and arranged to hold trainings with hall directors and resident assistants. I worked closely with the Chaplain’s Office and the Dean’s Office.”

To identify places to refer students for services beyond what was available on campus, MacKay connected with facilities such as the Providence Center on Hope Street. It was all about building a strong foundation.
Patrick J. Kennedy ’91 didn’t have a typical student experience at Providence College.

The son of Massachusetts Senator Edward M. Kennedy and the nephew of President John F. Kennedy, he struggled privately with addiction and bipolar disorder from his early teens. When he withdrew from Georgetown University after only a few weeks, his father’s friend, Connecticut Senator Christopher J. Dodd ’66, ’83Hon., suggested he try Providence, which might be “a fresh start in a smaller fishbowl.”

Kennedy majored in social science. Terrified that his mental health struggles would become public and embarrass his family, he lived alone in an apartment off campus. Getting out of bed for class was a challenge. Picking up his mail in Slavin Center sometimes caused total panic. He regularly saw a psychiatrist, Peter Kramer, M.D., who taught at Brown University and later became famous for his book, Listening to Prozac.

Some experiences were familiar, though, Kennedy said in a Zoom interview in January 2024. “Western Civ,” Kennedy said. “Being in the library listening to all the tapes all the time” because he couldn’t take notes fast enough in lectures.

History professor Raymond Sickinger, Ph.D. ’71 “was a terrific mentor for me, providing guidance through all my years at PC,” Kennedy said. He mentioned other Friars with whom he remains in touch: Jim Valle ‘88, Student Congress president and now a partner at Nixon Peabody LLP; Bill Daley ’94, managing director at Goldman Sachs; Chris Vitale ’95, principal at Capital City Group.

At airports, “you always run into a few Friars,” Kennedy said.

Despite his health challenges in college, Kennedy launched his political career while a student. He began with an internship at the Rhode Island State House, then ran for state representative at the start of his junior year for the district that includes PC. He served two terms before running for U.S. Congress in 1994. He represented Rhode Island’s first congressional district in the House of Representatives for 16 years. His signature achievement came in 2008 — passage of the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act, which requires health insurance companies to provide coverage for mental illness and addiction treatment as they would other illnesses.

The Senate version of the parity bill, co-sponsored by Kennedy’s father and backed by health insurance and pharmaceutical companies, did not mandate coverage for substance use disorders. The version Patrick co-sponsored in the House did. He and colleagues campaigned hard for their version and held field hearings around the country. In the end, addiction treatment was included in the final bill signed into law by President George W. Bush. It ended the discrimination that is at the heart of the stigma of brain disorders, Kennedy said.

Over the course of Kennedy’s 16 years in Washington, he became more open about his struggles. He admitted in 2000 that he had been treated for depression and

YOU'RE NEVER ALONE IN FRIARTOWN

PATRICK J. KENNEDY ’91 IS A LEADING ADVOCATE FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION CARE

Patrick J. Kennedy ’91 is a leading advocate for mental health and addiction care.
in 2006 that he was addicted to painkillers. Even so, as he acknowledges in his book, A Common Struggle: A Journey Through the Past and Future of Mental Health Illness and Addiction, he didn’t fully tackle his mental health and addiction issues until after leaving Congress in 2011, when he began the longest period of sobriety he had experienced since age 13.

“Our secrets are our most formidable adversaries,” Kennedy wrote. “The older I get, the more I see secrecy as ‘the enemy within,’ which blocks recovery not only for individuals but for society itself.”

Since leaving Congress, Kennedy has resided in Brigantine, New Jersey, with his wife, Amy, and their five children. He is one of the nation’s leading voices on mental illness and addiction. He established the Kennedy Forum, a mental health leadership initiative created to enforce the parity act, strive for improved care, and build a nationwide community of mental health experts and advocates. He is the co-founder of One Mind, a nonprofit that focuses on funding for international brain science research. He continues to work with Smart Approaches to Marijuana, an organization concerned that commercialization could create the next Big Tobacco and that the full effect of THC on the brain remains unknown.

In his new book, Profiles in Mental Health Courage, published in time for Mental Health Awareness Month in May 2024, he chronicles the stories of a dozen people who share their struggles with mental health and addiction, many for the first time.

In January, Kennedy announced that he would join Healthsperien LLC, a healthcare consultancy based in Washington, D.C., as a partner and lobbyist on issues related to mental health and addiction.

For nearly two decades, Kennedy has continued to advocate for honesty to reduce stigma. He remembers how relieved he was as a PC sophomore to be diagnosed with a benign tumor of the spinal cord because it was a health issue he could be open about and that drew sympathy from others. He remembers the overwhelming support his family received when his older brother was diagnosed with bone cancer and contrasts it with the reaction when his mother admitted her battle with alcoholism.

What message would he offer PC students? Don’t be ashamed to seek help, because help will make you stronger. Just look at the Green Berets.

Kennedy recalls a visit to the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where the Army trains its Special Forces. General Hugh Shelton told Kennedy that “Special Ops” had the best mental healthcare of any branch of the service. When Kennedy asked why, Bragg told him, “We don’t look at mental healthcare as a safety net. We look at it as a force multiplier.”

“Stigma is based on the sense that you are weak if you need mental healthcare,” Kennedy said. “But what do the Green Berets rely on for their lives in the field of battle? They need to know they won’t have intrusive thoughts or be ruminating about what happened last week. They can’t be worried that their inability to channel their thoughts will impact their duty to be aware and manage their surroundings. They manage counterproductive thought patterns. They aren’t the only ones. Corporations now have coaches to support their C-suite employees and make their executive workforce more productive.

“If you’re able to self-modulate, manage stress, and have coping skills, it makes a better result,” Kennedy said. “Students won’t just ace Western Civ, they’ll learn how to understand their own mental health, and at the end of the day, this is premium value.”

PHOTOS: PAGE 24, COURTESY OF PATRICK KENNEDY. PAGE 25, PC ARCHIVES.

DESPITE HIS HEALTH CHALLENGES IN COLLEGE, KENNEDY LAUNCHED HIS POLITICAL CAREER WHILE A STUDENT.
The Chirico Career Center Prepares Students for Success After PC

By Liz F. Kay
Photography by Karin Dailey and Justin James Muir

Liz Lombard ’18G, associate director for diversity, inclusion, and early engagement in the Chirico Career Center.
REGARDLESS OF WHAT

Providence College students want to do after graduation, the coaches at the Chirico Career Center are ready to help them explore professions and graduate schools, network with alumni, find internships, earn certifications, refine resumes and cover letters, practice for job interviews, and more.

In the last decade, the college has nearly doubled the number of career center staff to 12 to help students achieve post-graduate success, recognizing that it’s a reason why students and families make the financial sacrifice to invest in a college education.

“The topic of college return on investment continues to dominate higher education conversations,” said Eileen Wisnewski, the career center’s executive director, who has worked at PC since 2011. “The resources, programs, and services offered by the Chirico Career Center are a critical component of how the college demonstrates a commitment to ensuring a return on a family’s investment in a PC education.”

Taking advantage of the opportunities pays off — literally. The data show that college students who use career services receive more job offers than those who don’t. According to a nationwide survey by the National Association of Colleges and Employers, graduates in the Class of 2022 who used at least one service at their career centers received an average of 1.24 job offers compared to just one for those who didn’t utilize them.

According to the college’s Office of Institutional Research, 97% of graduates in PC’s Class of 2023 were employed or attending graduate school within six months of graduation, with 89% working in their chosen fields.

The Chirico Career Center, located in Slavin Center, is named in recognition of a 2019 gift from Jim Chirico ’80 and his wife, Bridget. Alumni support through the Friar alumni network is integral to the post-graduate success of PC students. Students and alumni can connect through an online networking platform. Another online platform provides a database of internships, jobs, and other opportunities that alumni and students can search.

The opportunities aren’t just virtual. Career center staff accompany students on four-day trips to learn more about professions and talk with alumni about their careers, including PC in Hollywood, which takes place in January.
and PC in DC, which happens in May. There are also trips to Boston and New York City. Alumni host students for in-person job shadowing during school breaks and visit campus to participate in career panels.

At the career center’s Career Expo, held each fall and spring, students can meet potential employers at the job and internship fair, consider education options at the graduate and professional school fair, learn more about volunteer service opportunities, and have a professional photograph taken for a LinkedIn profile.

The career center offers daily drop-in hours so students can receive feedback on resumes and cover letters, get answers to quick questions about jobs, internships, or fellowships, and help create or update a career plan. It provides Microsoft certification courses in Excel, Word, and PowerPoint. Students can reserve quiet rooms for virtual or telephone job and internship interviews. They chat informally with employers who come to campus to participate in “Snacks with Students.” The center also hosts events such as “The Masked Major,” modeled on “The Masked Singer” game show, in which students ask alumni questions to try to figure out their undergraduate major.

There’s a lot to be done. That’s why “Don’t Wait... Slavin 108” is emblazoned on the center’s T-shirts and why students meet career coaches right from the start, during the summer and fall orientation sessions as first-year students.

“The ‘Don’t Wait’ message is directed toward all students — don’t wait to have a coaching appointment or participate in one of our programs or events,” Wisnewski said. “The sooner students step on the career development pathway, the easier it will be for them.”

CONTINUES ON PAGE 32

SANTIAGO NAJARRO CANO ‘24
L’ORÉAL USA, NEW YORK CITY

Santiago Najarro Cano ’24, a marketing major and theatre minor from Pawtucket, Rhode Island, turned to Liz Lombard ’18G, associate director for diversity, inclusion, and early engagement in the Chirico Career Center, for advice about internships for the summer of 2023. Lombard mentioned a connection at L’Oréal USA. “She set the foundation and I had to execute,” said Santi — including three interviews in a single day, one of them a case study with other candidates on Zoom. Santi was selected to be a brand engagement intern for Thayers, a L’Oréal facial toner brand, developing Instagram and TikTok content. As a summer project, he helped execute a Generation Z content incubator campaign for Thayers — and was rewarded with a full-time job as a marketing and management trainee in September 2024.

CONNOR FLYNN ’25
MASSACHUSETTS GOVERNOR’S OFFICE, STATE HOUSE, BOSTON

Connor Flynn ’25, a double major in history and political science and president of the Class of 2025, volunteered with the U.S. Senate campaign of Massachusetts Congressman Joseph P. Kennedy III while a student at Natick High School. An internship with Governor Maura Healey at the State House in Boston after his sophomore year at PC seemed a natural step. The 10-week internship was unpaid, but a $4,000 Veritas grant through the Chirico Career Center made it feasible. Connor worked in the Office of Constituent Services, answering phone calls, letters, and email, and meeting constituents. “That is government at its best, helping people,” said Connor. “I was most impressed that so many of the governor’s staff were young people. It shows the faith she has in them and the future.”
An increasingly important component of the college experience is a career-related internship. At PC, 94% of students in the Class of 2023 reported participating in at least one internship or career-related experience. Because some internships are unpaid, the college offers grants to make the experiences possible. For example, the Veritas Funded Internship Program offers $4,000 stipends to qualifying students. While some Friars visit the Career Center as first-year students, the coaches recognize that not everyone does. “We believe that each person’s journey is individual and should be treated as such,” Wisnewski said. “A junior may visit the center for the first time and still need to go through some of the earlier steps. Our coaches are dedicated to meeting students where they are and assisting and encouraging them as they move through the process.”

Each of the college’s four schools — Arts and Sciences, Business, Education and Social Work, and Nursing and Health Sciences — has a dedicated career coach who understands the requirements for the school’s majors, the expectations of industries, and the most common professions that students pursue.

Liz Lombard ’18G, who has worked at the career center in a variety of roles since 2013, serves in the newly created role of associate director for diversity, inclusion, and early engagement. She coordinates outreach to students who may be less likely to take advantage of services, such as students of color, students who are the first in their families to attend college, and students who are otherwise underrepresented on campus.

Lombard began her outreach by working with students in the Friar Foundations Program, a summer bridge program that helps first-year students with the transition to college. Now she is a regularly scheduled guest during Transitions, a pre-orientation program for multicultural students, and for Horizons, a mentoring program for first-year students of color. Lombard has also worked with clubs such as the college’s chapter of the National Association of Black Accountants.

As an internship for her master’s degree in higher education counseling, Lombard created a “Real Talk” series at PC for sophomores, juniors, and seniors to help them understand the resources available to them throughout campus. Staff from the Student Success Center presented about time management, study skills, and how to manage advising. Representatives from the Personal Counseling Center discussed mental and physical health.

Inspired by the success of Real Talk, Lombard worked with students to develop the first Thrive Summit, a day-long conference held in March to help students “thrive in life” after graduation. Students from all class years attended workshops on personal and professional development.

The goal is to get students to come to a one-on-one meeting with a career coach such as Lombard. Once they are in the room, the conversations are much more holistic.

“It’s not just a resume and a cover letter. I’m trying to help them navigate,” Lombard said.

She asks students who have not chosen a major about their passions and interests, why they chose PC, and where else they applied. Even if PC was not their first choice, she wants to help them make the most of the college.

The follow up is always key. Before students leave, she reviews their “homework” — tasks they need to complete before they return for another meeting, which she also schedules on the spot.

The reward is the relationships built with students, especially as they continue their careers as alumni.

“I get to celebrate their wins, and I work with them through their losses, too,” Lombard said. “I get to celebrate their wins, and I work with them through their losses, too,” Lombard said. II
television. It’s part of a long tradition of fandom that includes the Phantom Friar, the Blues Brothers, and the students who in 1971 dribbled a basketball to Madison Square Garden for the NIT.

Providence College sold out of men’s basketball season tickets for the 2023-2024 season six months before the first game. Those who wished to be added to the wait list paid a $100 fee. Demand for the 1,500 student season tickets was so high that students were required to enter a lottery for the first time this season. (After the Friars won the BIG EAST regular season title in 2022, student season tickets sold out in three weeks.) Students who purchased season tickets were required to claim game tickets during a five-day window before each game. Unclaimed tickets were made available for purchase by students 48 hours before game time.

The excitement generated by the new head basketball coaches, Kim English and Erin Batth, also spread to women’s basketball. Students attended games in Mullaney Gym for free, but to encourage other fans to buy season tickets, PC Athletics offered each buyer a name plate on a reserved seat. The number of season tickets holders went from 60 to more than 300. On average, attendance at women’s games doubled from 2022-2023 and tripled compared to 2021-2022.

The most valuable sixth player for Providence College men’s basketball isn’t anyone who comes off the bench. It’s the Friar fans who pack Amica Mutual Pavilion every game day. The vibrant and boisterous student section is a potent weapon. In the three seasons since resuming play before fans following the pandemic, the Friars have lost only 7 times at home while winning 45 games.

School buses carry students from campus to the AMP hours before gametime. The Friar Fanatics, a student group that establishes themes for each game, is on board, along with the Pep Band, Dance Team, and Cheerleaders — the official spirit squad. Since 2019, the sight of students on their feet singing Taylor Swift’s “You Belong With Me” is common to anyone attending a home game or watching on

**Friar Fanatics**

BY VICKI-ANN DOWNING ’21G

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JUSTIN JAMES MUIR

The most valuable sixth player for Providence College men’s basketball isn’t anyone who comes off the bench. It’s the Friar fans who pack Amica Mutual Pavilion every game day. The vibrant and boisterous student section is a potent weapon. In the three seasons since resuming play before fans following the pandemic, the Friars have lost only 7 times at home while winning 45 games.

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In his role as president of NBC Sports, Rick Cordella ’99 is a point guard. The ball always seems to be in his hands, and nothing is achieved without collaboration on the floor.

“Everyone comes from a different background and has different points of view, but we coalesce around one common goal. It’s no different if you’re on the basketball court or in a professional environment,” Cordella said.

“We’re trying to put on the best 2024 Summer Olympic Games in Paris. We’re trying to do the best NFL Sunday Night Football production that we can. We’re trying to run the best sports business that we can for the company.”

Cordella visited campus in November 2023 to speak to students in the School of Business chapter of Delta Sigma Pi, the professional business fraternity. He offered anecdotes about the 1996-1997 men’s basketball team that was a jump shot away from the NCAA Final Four, and he detailed the steps that led to his career success.

Wearing a blue sweater, gray pants, and a crisp white shirt, he stood as a shining example of perseverance and hard work—a person who found the right path and never strayed from it.

“For where I am in the professional word, I owe a lot to Providence College,” Cordella said.

A native of Foxboro, Massachusetts, Cordella captained the football, basketball, and baseball teams at Foxboro High School and was two-time team MVP in basketball, including his senior year, when the team won the league championship. When he came to PC to major in management and minor in computer science, he was a walk-on for the men’s team, joining the Friars without being recruited or awarded an athletic scholarship.

“Being part of the team as a walk-on, there was a little humility of knowing your role and purpose. You’re running the same wind sprints as everyone else and working for the same goal of winning basketball games and advancing as far as possible in the NCAA Tournament,” Cordella said.

“From where I am today, working in sports and having experience on the other side of the camera and seeing how athletes prepare for games, it gives me a perspective that’s unique in my industry.”

Four of Cordella’s teammates went to the NBA—Austin Croshere ’97, Ruben Garces ’97, Jamel Thomas ’99, and God Shammgod ’15. It was an unforgettable squad that caught fire at the right time, during the NCAA Tournament’s March Madness, and is still held in esteem by fans more than 25 years after that magical run.

“All of the possessions at the end of the Arizona game are engrained in my memory,” said Cordella, reflecting on the Elite Eight contest that ended in an overtime loss against the team that eventually captured the tournament. “We had a great run.”
Cordella had a rapport with Coach Pete Gillen. In the spring of 1998, when Gillen left for Virginia and was replaced by Tim Welsh, Cordella stepped away from the basketball program. With one year to go as an undergraduate, he could finally answer the question of how students filled their time between 3-7 p.m. each day. Previously, he was practicing in the gym at Alumni Hall or gearing up for a game.

“Senior year was an opportunity to experience life as a student,” Cordella said. “I didn’t know what the next step was. You’re coming out of the athletics world not knowing what you want to be or what you want to do.”

He discovered that his education served him well.

“At PC, you know you’re going to get a great education. And when you arrive in the business world, you understand how things work,” Cordella said. “But PC helps you develop emotional intelligence and personal values, not just academic intelligence, and that is really important.”

Cordella went to work in computer programming as an entry-level position with the dot-com industry was gathering steam. While pursuing an MBA at Boston College, he felt compelled to follow his passion for sports.

“With Tim Welsh, Cordella stepped away from the basketball program. He found an entry-level position with a dot-com company. Suddenly Cordella was an NBC Universal employee. Suddenly Cordella was an NBC Universal employee making in-roads with people who noticed his take-charge demeanor. Eventually working in the digital media division, he was one of the point men for the network’s coverage of the 2012 Summer Olympics in London, and he helped spearhead NBC’s dive into sports streaming, which has enabled consumers to watch games on mobile devices. For his efforts, Cordella is a six-time Sports Emmy Award-winner and was named to Sports Business Journal’s “Forty Under Forty” list in 2012 and 2014. “How you treat people plays into how you get from entry-level positions to the top. It’s always about relationships,” Cordella said.

Cordella was named president of NBC Sports in September 2013 after serving as president of programming. He oversees NBC Sports, NBC Olympics, Golf Channel, NBC Sports Digital, GolfNow, and SportsEngine, as well as rights deals and relationships with the NFL, PGA Tour, Premier League, NASCAR, WWE, Big Ten Conference, Notre Dame, and the IOC.

“It’s a job that keeps him in constant motion — as does his family. Cordella and his wife, Jennifer, live in Westport, Connecticut, and are the parents of five children. §§
When Johnny Moran was born with Wiesacker Wolf Syndrome, a rare debilitating condition that affects the central and peripheral nervous systems, his parents, Laura Hughes Moran `00 and Dan Moran `00, found themselves in uncharted waters: a future without a child’s ability to walk, talk, and breathe on his own.

After more than a decade, Johnny’s Jog has had thousands of participants and raised more than $800,000 for local charities, including the Miracle League of Connecticut, The Molly Ann Tangu Memorial Foundation, and Covenant Preparatory School, a tuition-free middle school. The race, with bagpipers and bands, has become an annual calendar highlight, drawing volunteers from the local schools and their athletic teams. And it’s become a festival,” said Laura. And it’s become a festival,” said Laura. “Our goal was to pay it forward and make a difference in the lives of others,” she said. The proof? Many of Johnny’s former classmates and nurses, caretakers, and their families return annually for the race as volunteers, vendors, or sponsors.

Johnny’s health difficulties and death were “beyond a blow, and until you experience that, it’s hard to know how that feels,” Laura said. “But you start to see the value of life in many ways, and how much other people feel. He drew people into our circle who are irreplaceable. Johnny really affected them.”

Not to mention the beneficiaries of his namesake race. “It’s incredible to see the ripple effect of Johnny’s life.”

When Johnny died in 2016 at age 9, the event became a celebration of his enduring legacy. Blessed with two pronounced dimples, a deep belly laugh, and twinkling eyes, he was an undeniable people magnet — not to mention his superhuman resilience in the face of countless medical trials. “He would go through a battle, and genuinely come out with a smile on his face. He was such a love,” said Laura.

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Michael Healy Flanagan ‘01 was diagnosed with leukemia at the end of his sophomore year at Providence College. During a more than three-year struggle that included two bone marrow transplants, he lived with courage, integrity, and faith. In November 2001, two days after Rev. Mark Nowel, O.P. presented him with his diploma in his hospital room, he died at age 23.

Michael, an honors student and three-sport athlete in high school, always wanted to be a Friar. His parents, Michael Flanagan ’57 and Kathleen Flanagan, and his sister and brother-in-law, Christine Flanagan Griffin ’91 and Stephen Griffin ’98, never forget the support he received from PC — how history professor Richard Grace ’62, ‘71Hon. tutored him, and how Chaplain Rev. Joseph Barranger, O.P. visited him in Boston and celebrated his funeral Mass.

The Flanagan family wanted to share the love and support they received during Michael’s illness. In 2002, on the first anniversary of his death, they raised $25,000 through a catered event and silent auction at their home in Barrington, Rhode Island, and established a foundation in his name.

Over the course of 22 years, with Christine as director of its 13-member board, the foundation has provided almost 3 million to make patients with leukemia more comfortable. At Tufts Medical Center, Miriam Hospital, Rhode Island Hospital, and Roger Williams Hospital, the foundation has renovated family rooms, purchased infusion chairs and massage tables, granted nursing scholarships, offered grants to nurses, and provided computers for waiting areas. Each patient, upon admission, receives a signature canvas comfort bag containing a deck of cards, soft tissues, a warm fleece hat, lotion and lip balm, a soft toothbrush, a music card, a journal — items the family knows help to ease the ordeal of leukemia patients undergoing treatment.

OncoLogist social workers at each hospital discern the needs and work directly with Christine, who promptly brings requests to the board for consideration. “The mission of the Michael H. Flanagan Foundation is to provide comfort,” Christine said. “Mike’s legacy of courage, integrity, and faith has helped many while keeping his memory alive.”

PHOTOS COURTESY OF MORAN FAMILY AND FLANAGAN FAMILY
Providence College

Theology from St. Mary’s Seminary and University in Baltimore. He was ordained a priest and is looking forward to seeing classmates at the Reunion June 7-9.

John DeMarco ’69

He is professor and chair of pathology. In recognition of his career success, he received a lifetime Achievement Award from the Society of Cardiovascular Pathology.

Nicholas DiGiannvanni ’70 of Newburyport, Massachusetts, an attorney with Morgan, Brown & Joy of Boston, was recognized in 2022 for his work in “Flash in the Heat,” a 2020 psychological thriller written and directed by Don de Jongh. Brundage studied music and English at PC and has worked as a mathematician, teacher, librarian, classical music engraver–editor, and semi-professional French horn player.

Don de Jongh ’71

Brundage studied music and English at PC and has worked as a mathematician, teacher, librarian, classical music engraver–editor, and semi-professional French horn player. He graduated from St. John’s College in 1973 and was awarded an American Council of Learned Societies fellowship in 1981.

Anthony Azar, Ed.D. ’90G

He has been a member of the Providence College Board of Directors since 1999 and is a member of the University of San Diego Board of Trustees. He is a senior client partner at Korn Ferry and has served on the boards of the Rhode Island Foundation, the Rhode Island Board of Higher Education, and the Rhode Island Community College System. He is also a member of the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation and the Rhode Island Business Foundation.

Father Ruggieri named bishop

REV. JAMES RUGGIERI ’90, pastor of two Providence parishes and founder of St. Patrick Academy, has been named bishop of the Diocese of Portland, Maine, by Pope Francis. A Mass of installation and installation will be celebrated on May 7, 2024, at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Portland.

Father Ruggieri was honored in February 2024 with PC’s Pro-Life Award. He is a leader in the pro-life movement and has been an advocate for life since he was a child. He is a member of the board of directors of the National Right to Life Committee and is a member of the board of directors of the National Catholic Welfare Conference.

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He has been a member of the Providence College Board of Directors since 1999 and is a member of the University of San Diego Board of Trustees. He is a senior client partner at Korn Ferry and has served on the boards of the Rhode Island Foundation, the Rhode Island Board of Higher Education, and the Rhode Island Community College System. He is also a member of the Rhode Island Commerce Corporation and the Rhode Island Business Foundation.

Father Ruggieri majored in religious studies at PC and has a master’s degree in theology from St. Mary’s Seminary and University in Baltimore. He was ordained in 1995.

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That pickleball bond

Like many retirees, BOB MAYERICK ’81, a Connecticut native residing in coastal Connecticut, embraced the sport of pickleball after a four-decade Wall Street career. Playing in an indoor facility in Lewes, he was approached by a younger man who noticed his gray Providence College T-shirt. KEN QUEZADA ’08, who studied for an MBA at Wilmington University after a decade with the University of Pennsylvania Health System, introduced himself with the universal greeting, “Go Friars!”

“Whenever I meet a fellow Friar there is an instant bond,” said Quezada, who grew up in Lewes. “Although Bob and I attended PC many years apart, our love for the Friars runs deep. We refer to each other as our Friar brother.” I’m honored to be part of the Friar family.”

The team looks to build on its historic season in 2024, which began play in April. Contact Coach Emily-Anne Patt ’06 at emily-anne.patt@gmail.com to join the team as a player or a fan.

The 2023 season was the best in the 17-year history of the PC in DC alumni softball team, which competes in the Capital Alumni Network in the shadow of D.C.’s famous landmarks. CAN Softball includes alumni teams from 50 colleges and universities, including Providence, which saw Friars competing in class universites, including Providence,

PROVIDENCE COLLEGE SPRING 2024
Thanks for the inspiration

On his way to the Rhode Island State House in December 2023 to be sworn in as the new state senator serving District 1, which includes Providence College, Jake Bissauillon ’09, ’10 stopped by the home of retired political science professor Mark Hyde, Ph.D., who inspired his interest in public service.

Bissauillon, a former chief of staff for Senate President Dominick Ruggerio ’74, was elected to fill a seat left vacant by the death of Majority Whip Maryellen McDaid, a leadership coach, speaker, and facilitator. He is chairman of the Rhode Island Democratic Party, member of the Providence County Democratic Committee, and a board member of the Rhode Island Democratic Party. His goal is to produce feature films in the Ocean State. Their next feature-length film, a dark comedy, "Burying Doris," will begin filming in the fall in Rhode Island, directed by Michael. Their proof of concept short film, "Last Laugh," is on the film festival circuit.

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Dr. Karen Kane-Roby ’05, a retired professor of management at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, has been named as the interim president of the Rhode Island School of Design. Kane-Roby, who was appointed by the Rhode Island Board of Regents for Higher Education, will serve until a search committee finds a permanent president. Kane-Roby has been a faculty member and department chair at RISD since 2016 and served as interim president in 2022. She has over 20 years of experience as a business leader and has served in a variety of executive roles for leading companies, including Google, Apple, and Microsoft.

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In addition to her work at RISD, Kane-Roby has served as a consultant to a number of organizations, including Google, Apple, and Microsoft, where she advised senior leaders on strategy and operations. She has also served as a member of the board of directors for several non-profit organizations, including the Rhode Island Federation of Business Women and the Rhode Island Women’s Foundation.

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Island Health and Educational Building Corporation, NCAA eligibility. College search to athletic recruitment and counseling. He has presented nationally on college admissions and for scholarships. He has worked in admission in August 2023. He chairs the Coordinator in PC's Chico Career Center beginning in 2022. He was assistant director of diversity, and Inclusion. He majored in public and community service studies at PC and earned a master's degree in higher education.

Selee Rose '00 of Providence was named executive director of Inspiring Minds in January 2014. The organization believes children deserve an educational environment that nurtures a sense of belonging and purpose shared with the community. It works with school districts, higher education institutions, civic groups, and the community to produce programs that provide culturally responsive, academic, and social-emotional learning strategies vital to the educational and personal lives of students. Rose is excited to continue the work to recruit volunteers to tutor and mentor in Providence, send students to summer learning programs, provide workforce development and mentoring to aspiring teachers, and teach mindfulness education across the state. He earned a master's degree in education and taught and in the Master of Education in Urban Teaching Program. A professional dancer, artist, educator, and advocate, he had been director of PC's Center at Moore Hall since July 2021.

Julie Parise Millot '09 of Millwood, New York, joined WPIX-TV Channel 11 in New York City as a morning reporter. She previously was an investigative reporter at WAVY-TV, an NBC affiliate in Portsmouth, Virginia, and has worked for stations in Philadelphia, Milwaukee, and Georgia. She began her career at age 20 as a producer with WCBS-TV in New York City. She studied political science at PC and was a member of the cheerleading team.

**Frisias of the Last Decade**

'16 Katie Stephan '16 of San Jose, California, was named film reporter for Variety, where she focuses on features, reviews, and analysis-related content deals and business activity at Hollywood's major studios and independent film distributors. She also serves as Variety's primary reporter covering talent agencies and management firms. Stephan joined Variety in 2021 as a social media editor and nearly doubled its social footprint across major platforms. Before joining Variety, Stephan worked for Access Hollywood and BuzzFeed News. She has a master's degree in journalism from the University of Southern California.

'18 Kathi Mattice Baker '18 of Bloomington, Indiana, and her husband, David, ran Baker's Bodyline, a Harrisville business that offers design and fabrication of hard-to-find automotive parts, prototyping and classic car mechanics, and laser cutting and engraving of art, signs, jewelry, and other home products. Baker earned a master's degree in counseling at PC and worked in central reservation coordination in PC's Chico Career Center before launching the business.

'20 Perla Castillo Caldeiron '20, '22 of Providence was named director of PC's Center at Moore Hall in January 2022. The center has been a multi-cultural space on campus since 2013, offering arts programming, lectures, and meeting spaces for students and faculty. Caldeiron previously was assistant director of diversity, equity, and inclusion for student success in the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. She majored in public and community service studies at PC and earned a master's degree in higher education.

Meghan Welsh Hermann '06 and her husband, Karl Hermann, of Alexandria, Virginia, welcomed a baby boy on August 18, 2023.

Rowan Joseph Hermann joins his big sister, Reagan Katherine, on September 16, 2023. The family resides in Winter Garden, Florida.

Haley Germain '22 of Walpole, Massachusetts, is a graduate student at the Heller School for Social Policy and Management at Brandeis University pursuing a master's degree in public policy with a concentration in health policy. She majored in health policy and management and in theology at PC. She also works for the Massachusetts Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence, where she advises policy initiatives and writes testimony.

Aidan Arone '23 of Pembroke, Massachusetts, is a financial representative with The Bullock Group, a wealth management firm headquartered in Needham, Massachusetts. Aidan was a summer intern with the firm in 2022 and performed talent acquisition research in 2021. A double major in finance and management at PC, he was recognized at graduation with the Mary Piddel Award for Outstanding Achievement in Management, presented for academic achievement and embodiment of the mission and values of the School of Business. He also received the Poets&Quants for Undergrads – Best and Brightest 2023 designation.}

**John Balliro '05, '07G and Katie Leonard Balliro '06 welcomed their first child, a son, Francis Joseph Balliro, on September 15, 2023. John and Katie were married at St. Dominic Chapel in July 2022. The family lives in Malden, Massachusetts.**

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**Christian E. Darby '09 and her husband, Daniel, welcomed a daughter, Harper Elinne Lynch, on December 6, 2022. She has a big brother, Desmond, who started kindergarten in August 2023. The family resides in Winter Garden, Florida.**

**Alyssa Loring Tirella '08 and her husband, Mark Plummer '04 and his wife, Justine, of East Greenwich, Rhode Island, welcomed a third child, Mark Redney Plummer, on June 25, 2023. They are thrilled to add another Friar fan to the family.**

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FRIARS WEDDINGS


Mary Goggin ’14 and Edward Carey married on October 21, 2023, at St. Vincent Parish in Newport, Rhode Island. Rachel received master’s degree in higher education teacher and board-certified in counseling, and PhD student in marketing. The couple resides in New York City.

Lauren Cramer ’17 and Michael Finnerty ’14 married on October 14, 2023, in Dennis Parish in Stoneham, Massachusetts. They reside in Glastonbury, Connecticut.

Doindro Bednar ’18, ’170 and Kevin Gallant ’16, ’170 married on October 6, 2023, at St. Agnes Cathedral in Rockville Centre, New York. They reside in New York City.

Kathryn Maloney ’17 and Steven Cannell ’17 of Stamford, Connecticut, married on October 6, 2023, at The Mill Lakeside Manor in Spring Lake, New Jersey. They met at orientation during their first days at PC and have been together ever since. They are now married and live in New York City.

Keake Frimpeng ’14 and Samantha Rodriguez ’14 married on September 23, 2023, in Old St. Patrick’s Church in Chicago. The reception at the Fairlie Chicago was attended by Friar friends, including Dan Horne, Ph.D., professor of marketing.

Victoria Esper ’19 and Christian Larizza ’19, ’200 married on September 16, 2023, in St. Dominic Chapel. They were accompanied by 38 fellow Friar friends, family, and professors, including College President Rev. Kenneth R. Sicard, O.P. ’78, ’82G, Ed.D. ’75. They reside in Providence.

Emilie Cameron ’18 and Brian Sparke ’16 married on September 16, 2023, in Fallmouth, Massachusetts. They reside in North Kingstown, Rhode Island.

Hannah Stroever ’16 and Michael Murphy ’16 married on September 16, 2023, in Dennis Port, Massachusetts. They reside in Clinton, Massachusetts.

Billy Ricci ’14 married Kate Sullivan on September 9, 2023, at Camp Agnus in Center Harbor, New Hampshire, with more than 20 Friars in attendance. Billy hosts the Friar Podcast covering the men’s basketball team. The couple lives in Dedham, Massachusetts.

Casey Tenney ’14, ’160 married Michelle Bellebone on September 9, 2023, at The Bohlin in Newport, Rhode Island, surrounded by family, friends, their two French bulldogs, and many Friars, including Stephen Motley ’10, who officiated. Casey is an investment officer for a private trust, and Rhode Island and Manchester. The couple resides in Boston. They reside in South Boston.

Caragh Corcoran ’10 and Max Schozet ’17 married in Gladstone, New Jersey, on September 2, 2023. They met while volunteering at Reunion Weekend in June 2014 as members of the Student Alumni Association. Several members of the Class of 2017 celebrated with them at the wedding.

Jenna Marsala ’18 and Nick Komas ’18 celebrated their wedding day with fellow Friars. They married on August 26, 2023, at Land’s End Waterfront Catering in Sayville, Long Island.

Rose Turner ’16 and Eric Lizzad ’16 married in St. Dominic Chapel on August 5, 2023, with Rev. Jordan Zajac, O.P. ’04 officiating. The reception was held at Rhode’s on the Pawtuxet. Joining them were Jordan Rodman ’16, Allison Simone ’16, Colleen Higginson ’16, Nicholas Wolf ’16, Karla Accorto Kozak ’18, Stephen Kozak ’16, Nicholas Ten ’16, Justin Krebs ’81, the couple resides in Glastonbury, Connecticut.

Emily Cameron ’18 and Brian Sparke ’16 married on September 16, 2023, in Fallmouth, Massachusetts. They reside in North Kingstown, Rhode Island.

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Peter (Perry) Butler ‘90 of Littleton, Colorado, wrote a historical essay about a homeless vagabond who traveled a 365-mile route through Connecticut and New York every 34 days from 1856-1889. The Leatherman rarely spoke, made little money, and frequented a Misfit FBI Agent, a wandering vagabond who traveled a 365-mile route through Connecticut and New York every 34 days from 1856-1889. The Leatherman rarely spoke, made little money, and frequented a Misfit FBI Agent, a wandering vagabond who traveled a 365-mile route through Connecticut and New York every 34 days from 1856-1889. The Leatherman rarely spoke, made little money, and frequented a Misfit FBI Agent, a wandering vagabond who traveled a 365-mile route through Connecticut and New York every 34 days from 1856-1889. The Leatherman rarely spoke, made little money, and frequented a Misfit FBI Agent, a wandering vagabond who traveled a 365-mile route through Connecticut and New York every 34 days from 1856-1889. The Leatherman rarely spoke, made little money, and frequented a Misfit FBI Agent, a wandering vagabond who traveled a 365-mile route through Connecticut and New York every 34 days from 1856-1889. The Leatherman rarely spoke, made little money, and frequented a Misfit FBI Agent, a wandering vagabond who traveled a 365-mile route through Connecticut and New York every 34 days from 1856-1889. The Leatherman rarely spoke, made little money, and frequented a Misfit FBI Agent, a wandering vagabond who traveled a 365-mile route through Connecticut and New York every 34 days from 1856-1889. The Leatherman rarely spoke, made little money, and frequented a Misfit FBI Agent, a wandering vagabond who traveled a 365-mile route through Connecticut and New York every 34 days from 1856-1889. The Leatherman rarely spoke, made little money, and frequented a Misfit FBI Agent, a wandering vagabond who traveled a 365-mile route through Connecticut and New York every 34 days from 1856-1889. The Leatherman rarely spoke, made little money, and frequented a Misfit FBI Agent, a wandering vagabond who traveled a 365-mile route through Connecticut and New York every 34 days from 1856-1889. The Leatherman rarely spoke, made little money, and frequented a Misfit FBI Agent, a wandering vagabond who traveled a 365-mile route through Connecticut and New York every 34 days from 1856-1889. The Leatherman rarely spoke, made little money, and frequented a Misfit FBI Agent, a wandering vagabond who traveled a 365-mile route through Connecticut and New York every 34 days from 1856-1889. The Leatherman rarely spoke, made little money, and frequented a Misfit FBI Agent, a wandering vagabond who traveled a 365-mile route through Connecticut and New York every 34 days from 1856-1889. The Leatherman rarely spoke, made little money, and frequented a Misfit FBI Agent, a wandering vagabond who traveled a 365-mile route through Connecticut and New York every 34 days from 1856-1889. The Leatherman rarely spoke, made little money, and frequented a Misfit FBI Agent, a wandering vagabond who traveled a 365-mile route through Connecticut and New York every 34 days from 1856-1889. The Leatherman rarely spoke, made little money, and frequented a Misfit FBI Agent, a wandering vagabond who traveled a 365-mile route through Connecticut and New York every 34 days from 1856-1889. The Leatherman rarely spoke, made little money, and frequented a Misfit FBI Agent, a wandering vagabond who traveled a 365-mile route through Connecticut and New York every 34 days from 1856-1970. He kept a battlefield promise to his unit, which was caught in an ambush on March 1, 1970. He fought a battle to his life and entered the priesthood. As chief of chaplains in the Boston VA Healthcare System, Father Salois spent 40 years ministering to veterans suffering from PTSD. He is retired and lives in North Smithfield.

Steve Gladis, Ph.D. ’88 of Fairfax, Virginia, wrote Misfit Leadership: Lessons Learned from a Misfit FBI Agent, the story of his 23 years as an FBI agent and what it was like to be a “misfit” with dyslexia in a large, bureaucratic organization. Gladis managed to rise to the top by leveraging “weirdness or nonconformity to improve performance and character”—what he calls “misfit leadership.” A retired FBI special agent, Gladis has written 27 books on leadership and executive communication and two novels about his FBI career. He is the CEO of Steve Gladis Leadership Partners, a senior scholar at George Mason University, and a U.S. Marine Corps veteran. His book is available on Amazon and other online sites.

Lifestyle expert Colleen Mullane ‘88 of Larchmont, New York, has written 13 books about entertaining, cocktails, floral design, and weddings. Her latest is Agatha Whiskay, 50 Cocktails to Celebrate the Breathtaking Novelists of All Time, by Sky Horse Publishing. It is a followup to her previous book, Gin Austen, 50 Cocktails Celebrating the Novels of Jane Austen, which won the International Gourmand Drink Culture Award. She is a regular contributor to The Huffington Post and has been featured in InStyle and on HGTV’s Insider’s Garden, ABCNews.com, MSNbc.com, Gannett News, and Martha Stewart Radio.

Kevin O’Connell ’70 of Severna Park, Maryland, is the author of The Derrynane Saga, three novels of historical fiction that chronicle the exploits of a family of the fallen Gaelic aristocracy in 18th century Ireland and at the courts of Versailles and Vienna. A fourth novel, set during the period of the French Revolution, will be released later this year. Beyond Derrynane, Two Journeys Home, and Bittersweet Tapestry have received positive reviews in the United States, United Kingdom, and Europe. O’Connell studied political science at PC and holds a juris doctor degree from American University’s Washington College of Law and a master of laws degree from Georgetown University Law Center. He spent 40 years as an international corporate lawyer before beginning his writing career.

Mary Burke Reid ‘03 of Lemont, Illinois, spent 30 years ministering to emotionally troubled children and adolescents before deciding with the 30th anniversary of the publication of the first edition in 1993. He is a dean at Denver Academy. The essay is available on Kindle.
Jane Lunin Perel, MFA ’15Hon.

Jane Lunin Perel, professor emerita of English and of women’s studies, died February 22, 2024. She was one of the first women hired by the college in 1971, the year that it enrolled its first undergraduate class of women. A poet celebrated, she founded the Providence College Poetry and Fiction Series with her husband, Morton L. Perel, DDS. She led the initiative to establish the Women’s Studies Program in 1994 and served as its first director. One of the college’s first Jewish faculty members, she helped preserve the photographs of Rev. Edward P. Doyle, O.P. ’34, who was present at the liberation of the Nordhausen concentration camp in World War II. She was awarded an honorary doctor of letters degree at commencement in 2015.

Here are some memories of Professor Lunin Perel shared by alumni on social media.

— KATHRYN LAMONTAGNE ‘01, ‘03G

My absolute favorite professor. She had us all in a circle and in 1997 that absolutely blew my mind! She gave the most amazing lectures, and she would speak so eloquently, and use her hands in a way that would just draw you in, and I was absolutely enamored with her jewelry. Being a women’s studies minor is one of the best things I’ve ever done and it’s all thanks to her.

— NICOLE PEDRO ’99

Jane was my undergrad advisor, my first poetry mentor, and my dear friend of over 20 years. My absolute favorite professor. She had us all in a circle and in 1997 that absolutely blew my mind! She gave the most amazing lectures, and she would speak so eloquently, and use her hands in a way that would just draw you in, and I was absolutely enamored with her jewelry. Being a women’s studies minor is one of the best things I’ve ever done and it’s all thanks to her.

— MICHELLE PANNETON GATES ’99

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— CHRISTINE HAYES ’91

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— PETER COMERFORD ’80

She was, simply, amazing. She pushed us all to think critically, consider the experiences of those before us, and remind us that the work was left undone—and it was our job as young women to continue to advocate for change. I can say that she was one of the PC women who greatly influenced my path in academe … and I teach today.

— KATHRYN LAMONTAGNE ’01, ’03G

Jane is a remarkable human! Founded a Women’s Studies Program at an all-male Catholic college. Followed by a second act of leading the way on educating generations on the Holocaust. A versatile and erudite professor. Blessed to know her.

— MICHELLE PANNETON GATES ’99

Jane was an extraordinary teacher and charged us to look at literature, gender, and the world in a unique way. I feel privileged to have been her student.

— MICHELLE PANNETON GATES ’99

One of the Providence College greats! A remarkable professor who pushed her students in the best possible way. She was also an incredible role model for all the young women who crossed her path.

— KATHY BISIGA MARITZ ’84

Death

Hon. Milton R. Silva ’64
P. Paul Cottoli, Ed.D. ’69
Robert H. Diandrea ’65
Henry L. Jaitley, Esq. ’69
E. Paul Fachuda, DPM ’70
Francis E. Burke ’71
Editha A. Fachuda ’71
Paul E. Marum, Esq. ’71
Silvio S. Ponza ’71
Paigquelle T. Annarrumme, Esq. ’72
Robert P. Hine ’72
Antonio Montecalvo ’72
Richard P. Pequignat ’72
Robert E. Archambault ’73
Frank A. Canzoni ’73
Paul T. Dunn, Esq. ’73
Jerome H. Kirby ’73
John E. Ryan ’73
Ronald J. Buzoler, DDS ’74
Joseph M. Calabrese ’74
Robert J. Kenney ’74
Edward F. Shevlin ’74
Albert B. West, Esq. ’74
Alexander Lery O’Hanley, M.D. ’75
Robert J. Ryan ’75
Edward L. Scanlon, Jr. ’79Hon.
Paul S. Quinn, Esq. ’79
Robert C. Antonelli ’77
Hubert G. Menner ’77, Ph.D.
W. Moore Sheldon Jr. ’77
Richard A. Cowper ’78
Michael C. McIntyre ’78
Philip J. O’Hara ’78
Joseph A. Neill ’80
Joseph Pacizco ’80
Col. John V. Brennan ’80
La. James Francis ’80
Carmen M. Loscalzo ’80
Joseph R. Mazin, Ph.D. ’80
David J. Morin, Jr. ’80

Guido P. Ricciardi ’59
Paul J. Searle ’59
John N. DeNardo ’60
Joseph A. Janantoun ’60
George Mello ’60
William P. Sinks ’60
Melvin D. Stairman ’60
Charles P. Carroll Jr.
Col. Harold V. Floody, Jr. ’74, ’76
Harold E. Fox, M.D. ’74
Raymond S. Bessel ’74
Robert D. Potier ’74
John W. Crane ’74
Edward A. Malone ’74
William Markby Jr. ’74
Louis V. McDonald III, Ph.D. ’74
Francis Egan, Ph.D. ’74
Frank W. Luth Jr., Ph.D. ’74
Frederick J. Byr ’75
John Quinn Clark ’75
Roger Allen Enges, Ph.D. ’74
John J. Galvain ’74
Francis X. Hartigan, Ph.D. ’74
Raymond Ferguson ’74
David Licino ’74
Anthony R. Leone, Ph.D. ’74
Robert J. Lloyd, Jr. M.D. ’74
Anthony J. Mariannetti ’74
Andre G. Paradie ’74
Robert G. Systre ’74
Roderick A. Cavanaugh, Reg. Esq. ’75
Gerald P. Mortensen ’75
Victor B. Yuma, M.D. ’75
Enrique DeFrost Beit ’76
J. Ernest St. Jean ’76
John A. Thompson, J.D. ’76
Martin P. Tristino ’76
Hayden P. Cram, M.D. ’77
Thomas E. Cavanaugh III ’77
Brian K. Croy, Esq. ’77
Dave R. Dunavi, Jr. ’77

Ronald A. Tuttle ’77
La. Col. John Bernard Champeaux ’78
Gerald C. Pride ’78
Dino R. Roberts ’78, ’79
Vincent Sprenelli ’78
Carl K. Cuccinetti Jr., Esq. ’79
Ralph Labruna ’79
Michael Parent ’79
James L. Richardson ’79
Stephen J. Vanconcolle, J.D. ’79
Edward J. Walsh ’79
Dennis J. Callaghan ’79
Dena W. Parkin ’79
John H. Bugnask Jr. ’79, ’80
William E. Benson ’79
John David Lefrancois Jr. ’79
Sister Virginia Ann Barry, SDC ’79
Barbara J. Cielecki ’79
Walter J. Dillon Jr. ’79
Alfred E. Drenner ’79
Sister Estelle Santarapu, SJS ’79
James M. Connell ’79
Steven A. Nadler ’79
Joseph A. Niczynski Jr. ’79
Neal Anthony Price ’79
Robert E. Potter Jr. ’79
Richard H. Riesman ’79
Edward W. Wauk ’79
Carlton W. Zeik ’79
Ann McNees Cooper ’79
Carlo R. Venosta ’79
Donald A. Johnson Jr. ’79
Muriel Villiard Desjardins ’79
Alan Jolly ’79
Sister Marycyan Lamb, RJUH ’79
Terrell A. Parker ’79
Donald J. Boyle ’79
William P. Rampone, J.D. ’77
Mario J. Carmone ’78

Sister Arlene Kain, SSJ ’78
Richard H. Roy ’78
Walter James Manning Jr. ’78CE
Chris Flegler ’79
William L. Gartpery ’79CE
Michael W. Corrigan ’76
Lynn A. Corrini ’76
Robert L. Houghtaling ’76G
Robert L. O’Connell Jr. ’79
William E. Thibault ’81CE
William E. Barnes Jr. ’81
Richard A. Haines ’81
Gerard M. Conrad, J.D. ’83
Ellen Good Carr ’83
Elena Liming ’83
Kerr-Ann Connolly Kottrekr ’84
Robert Fitzgerald ’87CE
Barbara M. Gilbert ’87CE, ’89G
Norma Santure ’86
Sister Mary Joanne Meehan ’87
Erie Milbank Mulvey Akbar ’87
James Frederick Borger Jr. ’89
Evelina Mattiolla Dyro ’90
Karen Ann McGahay ’90
Margaret Elizabeth Young ’90
Andrea F. Parrella ’92
Joseph P. Mason ’92
Gregory D. Miller ’93
William H. Masteroom ’97
Melody Harrie ’98CE
Gener吃了 S. Kendrick ’98CE
Ann L. Lannotti ’98CE
Pierie F. Norton ’99
Jay Anderson, instructor in graduate school counseling program
Robert Colades, former security officer
Francis Ford, M.A., assistant professor of computer science
Jane Lunin Perel, MFA ’15Hon., professor emerita of English and of women’s studies
“Are you a Catholic priest?”

the caller asked.

“I am,” I said.

“My name is Seth,” he said. “I was tripping on acid last night and Jesus appeared to me and said that I should talk to a Catholic priest as soon as possible. So can you see me right now, please?” His speech was urgent, feverish even, and he hardly paused to catch his breath. Worried that he might still be under the influence of the drug or that it had triggered an incipient psychosis, I told him to meet me at my office.

He was waiting for me when I arrived. Tall, fit, and broad-shouldered, he had a mop of thick, dark hair and a disheveled look. No sooner had we sat down than he began talking, assuring me that he had never used drugs before, “just beer and shots, you know, like everyone else,” but was eager to know, “Why did Jesus appear to me?” I wanted the answer as well, especially after he told me that he was not Christian and, in fact, had a passing acquaintance with religion of any kind.

We spoke for the better part of two hours and as we did, his speech slowed, and he seemed more at ease. So was I. But it also became apparent that Seth had been living multiple lives. On the one hand, he favored the confident, jocular swagger of a frat boy interested in girls, sports, and the upcoming weekend. Less obviously, he was a student in the Honors Program, a double major in English and American studies, and a sensitive soul who always had time to listen to the sad story a forsaken girl or a rueful buddy felt compelled to tell.

Then there was the fact that when he was 13, he came home from school one day to find his mother dead from an overdose. He never shed a tear, not then and not since, and had hardly ever talked about it with anyone, even family members, until now.

Seth and I met weekly for the better part of a year. The work was hard, painfully so. It was not only the buried grief that had to be unearthed but the welter of emotions that attended life in a family riven by secrets and bound by an unspoken agreement never to acknowledge their shared despera-
tion. But Seth persevered and over time, his anguish dissipated and his capacity for joy and hope increased.

He also became particularly attached to an older priest, a professor of literature, who modeled for him the possibility of twinning a rigorous intellectual life with a dedicated life of faith. This led to Seth’s decision to become Catholic, and at his baptism and confirmation he broke down and cried, feeling, perhaps for the first time, the lifting of the weight of his childhood and the light touch of redemption.

He also became particularly attached to an older priest, a professor of literature, who modeled for him the possibility of twinning a rigorous intellectual life with a dedicated life of faith. This led to Seth’s decision to become Catholic, and at his baptism and confirmation he broke down and cried, feeling, perhaps for the first time, the lifting of the weight of his childhood and the light touch of redemption.

After graduation, he went on to graduate school, married, and became a well-known author and commentator on contemporary culture. Sadly, while still in his 30s, Seth died suddenly and unexpect-
edly from a massive heart attack.

Herein may be the answer to Seth’s question, “Why did Jesus appear to me?”

The ancient Greek word psyche encompasses mind, soul, and spirit suggesting the intimate relationship between one’s mental and spiritual life, and therapeuein, translated as therapy, refers to the healing ministrations of a priest. Together they underscore what we are apt to forget, namely that healing is an art exercised on behalf of the whole person rather than the application of a specific remedy to a discreet malady. This poses a challenge both to those who would dismiss the spiritual as a mere efflorescence of the mind and to those who unduly spiritualize suffering in an unwitting denial of the incarnational character of grace.

Herein may be the answer to Seth’s question, “Why did Jesus appear to me?”

In the immediate context, the hallucination was a product of the drug; moreover, Jesus is a cultural artifact even for the non-believer. But finally, it happened because Seth needed to be healed and made whole, to begin a journey as necessary as it was improbable. It is a singular mark of Divine Grace to be forever bent in the direction of human need with the sole purpose of healing and redeeming, employing whatever it deems necessary, be it noble or base, and this for no other reason than love. †

Rev. Joseph J. Guido, O.P. is an assistant professor of psychology, senior staff psychologist in the Personal Counseling Center, and prior of the Priory of St. Thomas Aquinas on PC’s campus.
Inside the Personal Counseling Center

A welcoming and supportive environment where any student can seek confidential help. - PAGE 10