Alumni Essay

God Has a Plan

When I came to Catholic University in 1989 as a musical theatre major, I was bound. But God had a different plan. Little by little, over the course of the following four years, he drew me ever closer to Him. So instead of the stage, I headed to the convent.

I was perfectly convinced that when I joined the Dominicans, I was giving up music forever. But once again God had a better plan. Within a year of entering the community of the Nashville Dominicans of St. Cecilia, I was asked to play the organ for Divine Office and Mass. It was a year of entering the community of the Nashville Dominicans of St. Cecilia, I was asked to play the organ for Divine Office and Mass.

This year, the Pontifical Institute’s choir has sung alongside the choir of the Sistine Chapel at certain pontifical events. On Ash Wednesday, I sat behind Pope Benedict XVI in St. Peter’s Basilica, my heart full of joy and gratitude. The electricity among the thousands of worshippers was something I will never forget.

On the day of the announcement of the new Pope, I watched in awe as the crowd of thousands celebrated in St. Peter’s Square. The news of Pope Francis being elected was a turning point in my life. I was perfectly convinced that when I joined the Dominicans, I was giving up music forever. But once again God had a better plan. Within a year of entering the community of the Nashville Dominicans of St. Cecilia, I was asked to play the organ for Divine Office and Mass.

The Holy Spirit has blessed us with a priest who is humble, a man of tenderness and prayer. Pope Francis has been a model of the Christian life, a man of simplicity and poverty.

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In December 1939 the Harlequin Club of CUA and the Department of Speech and Drama produced an original musical biography of the life of George M. Cohan, Yankee Doodle Boy. This play became the inspiration for the 1942 Warner Brothers film starring James Cagney. We are currently gathering information for a fall 2013 exhibit. If you have information or memories about this CUA production, contact Maurice Taylor, CUA music librarian, at Taylor@cua.edu or 202-319-5364.

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Class Notes

1952
Thomas P. Melady, M.A. 1952, Ph.D. 1955 (A&S), of Washington, D.C., has been appointed interim dean of the Whithead School of Diplomacy and International Relations at Seton Hall University.

1957
Sir Peter Hennis, B.S. 1957 (NURS), serves in the Office of Black Ministry and the Interfaith Ministry at the Interchurch Center in New York City. Her ministry focuses on the spiritual, cultural, and social needs of African-American, African, and Caribbean-American Catholics, as well as the larger black community. She is also a long-standing association with the Graymoor Ecumenical and Interreligious Institute, a ministry of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement, for which she has worked for the promotion of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity as well as other ecumenical concerns.

1962
Monsignor Lorenzo Albacete, B.M.E. 1962, M.S. 1965 (ENGR), S.T.B. 1973 (THEO), celebrated the 60th anniversary of his ordination. He is a retired priest in the Archdiocese of Washington, after serving in recent years as scholar in residence at St. Joseph Seminary/Yonkers, N.Y.

1964
Anthony Doherty, B.M. 1964 (MUSIC), of Antвоз, Calif., has been appointed staff arranger by the acclaimed Contra Costa Children’s Chorus (CCCC). He will compose and arrange works for the CCCC training programs, choral music education, and provide choral coaching for the CCCC’s music education program.

1970
Sara Riser, M.S.N. 1970 (NURS), has been appointed assistant nurse manager at the Grace Center, a community-based agency that provides long-term care services to people with AIDS.

1972
Monsignor Richard Burton, M.A. 1972 (A&S), has been named the first chairman of the department of religious education at Seton Hall University.

1975
Dan Maffey, B.A. 1975 (A&S), of Reston, Va., has been named partner in the law firm of Ballard Spahr in Washington, D.C. He has more than 28 years of experience.

Do You Remember the CUA Musical Yankee Doodle Boy?
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Langston Fitzgerald III, M.M. 1969, D.M.A. 1980 (MUSIC), professor of trumpet at Penn State, has been awarded the 2013 Kennedy Center/Stephen Sondheim Inspirational Teacher Award.
1976
Mary Ellen Hettinger, B.A. 1976 (A&S), of Amherst, N.H., communications manager for Girl Scouts of the Green and White Mountains, has become an accredited public relations professional through the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). Hettinger is on the professional development committee of the Yankee Chapter of PRSA. Before coming to Girl Scouts, she won two New Hampshire Press Association awards for her reporting for The Grafton Press, a 200-year-old newspaper group. A freelance writer and book editor, Hettinger also won awards for her work on the Web and in book publishing. She is on the board of the New Hampshire Women’s Initiative.

1977
Gary Smucker, M.S.L.S. 1977 (LS), of Alexandria, Va., volunteered with Cross Cultural Solutions in a school in Villa El Salvador, a neighborhood of Lima, Peru, last fall. He visited Machu Picchu and Caral in Peru and traveled to Paraguay, Bolivia, and Ecuador during his time in South America.

1979
Ovide Lamontagne, B.A. 1979 (A&S), recently became general counsel for Americans United for Life, a top national anti-abortion law firm in Washington, D.C. He also was recently elected chair of Bishop’s Charitable Assistance Fund in Manchester, N.H. The Manchester native, who was the Republican candidate for governor in New Hampshire in 2012, will keep his residence in his home state. Lamontagne serves as general counsel to several not-for-profit organizations and is involved in many civic, charitable, and political organizations and activities.

1980
Mary Anne Gibbons, J.D. 1980 (LAW), of Washington, D.C., retired in May as general counsel and executive vice president of the United States Postal Service. She is the Postal Service’s longest-serving general counsel, having been in that role since January 1999. She joined the Postal Service in June 1985 as a labor law attorney. Gibbons has been an adjunct professor at American and Georgetown universities, and has remained active in church activities, volunteer work with low-income seniors, and her children’s school.

1982
John Montgomery, Ph.D. 1982 (A&S), director of research at the U.S. Naval Research Laboratory in Washington, D.C., has been elected a member of the National Academy of Engineering — one of the highest professional distinctions accorded to an engineer.

1983
Martin Kalfatovic, B.A. 1983 (ARCH), M.S.L.S. 1990 (LS), of Arlington, Va., received the Raymond Von Dran Memorial Award, which is presented to a distinguished library and information science alumnus. Kalfatovic is associate director, Digital Services Division, at the Smithsonian Institution Libraries, and program director of the Biodiversity Heritage Library.

1984
Robert D. Schaub, J.D. 1984 (LAW), was selected to the Pennsylvania Super Lawyers list for 2013 in the area of commercial litigation. An attorney with Rosen, Jenkins & Greenland, of Wilkes-Barre, Pa., he is chair of the firm’s litigation department.

1986
Charles E. Cantine, B.S.Chem.E. 1986 (ENGR), was promoted to partner for the law firm Strock & Strock & Lavan LLP. His practice, based in the New York office, focuses on intellectual property law, including patent, trademark, and trade secret litigation. He has served as trial counsel before federal trial and appellate courts throughout the United States.

1989
David Paterson, B.A. 1989 (A&S), of Mahasset, N.Y., was a write-in candidate for the Mahasset Park district commissioner post and defeated a 12-year incumbent.

1990
Maureen Donohue Feinroth, J.D. 1990 (LAW), is CEO and founder of Capital Privacy Solutions, LLC, a consulting firm specializing in privacy and information management. She has more than 15 years experience in privacy and compliance consulting and is an expert on global compliance and cross border data transfer. She lives in Olney, Md., with husband Mark Feinroth, J.D. 1990 (LAW), and their daughters, Annie, 16, and Caroline, 10.

1992
Gary Anderson, B.M.E. 1992 (ENGR), was promoted to vice president of strategic marketing for Emerson Network Power China. He is living and working in Shenzhen, China, with his wife and three children.

1993
Laura R. Blasberg, B.A. 1993 (A&S), of Stony Brook, N.Y., has been named partner at Meltzer, Lippe, Goldstein & Breitstone LLP. She works in the firm’s tax law practice.

1994
Gary Fekete, B.S. 1994 (CENG), joined Denterlein, a strategic communications firm based in the New York office, focuses on intellectual property law, including patent, trademark, and trade secret litigation. He has served as trial counsel before federal trial and appellate courts throughout the United States.

1995
Mark D. Kurman in the family law practice group. He is living and working in Shenzhen, China, with his wife and three children.

1996
Francis Joseph Francis, B.A. 1996 (A&S), joined Stroock & Stroock & Lavan LLP. His practice, based in the New York office, focuses on intellectual property law, including patent, trademark, and trade secret litigation. He has served as trial counsel before federal trial and appellate courts throughout the United States.

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1998
Yolanda Brown
In 2012, Yolanda Brown, who earned a doctor of ministry degree from Catholic University in 2011, received a Cardinal’s Award from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. The honor, given annually to Angelinos who exemplify dedication to community and Church, recognized Brown for her faithful stewardship in helping people thrive, whether as a bank executive or, now, through her work as parish life director of Blessed Sacrament Parish in Hollywood, Calif.

Brown raised seven children with her husband, Leon, earned bachelor and master’s degrees in business administration, and rose through the ranks in banking to become a senior vice president in Los Angeles, eventually running a bank’s Cash and Straight division, part of its community and investment banking department. However, riding through Los Angeles’ poorest neighborhoods every day on her way to work, Brown felt a stronger pull to help people outside of the business world.

She left her lucrative banking job, earned a master’s degree in theology at Loyola Marymount, and went to work as a pastoral associate at DeSales Mission in East Los Angeles, a position she held for seven years. In 2011, Archbishop José Gomez named Brown pastoral life director at Blessed Sacrament. Her duties, she says, are “essentially identical to a parish’s, except that we work in collaboration with priests who are responsible for promoting liturgy and the sacraments.” Brown oversees the parish, rectory, a pre-school, an elementary school, and a nonprofit social services organization for poor and homeless people.

“I am so grateful to Catholic University,” she says. “During my experience there, I actually could see how the holistic approach to pastoral leadership worked, especially parish administration. At Blessed Sacrament, we work collaboratively for the souls in the parish.”

In her first initiative as parish director, Brown found a perfect melding of her experience and her calling, working with the city of Los Angeles and the city’s banks to formulate the Responsible Banking Ordinance, which called on the banks to invest in the communities, cease foreclosures that were eroding the community, and increase lending to small businesses, particularly those owned and run by minorities.

“We challenged the banks to remember their place in the community and reminded them that Los Angeles is a major deposit,” she says. The ordinance was adopted unanimously by the city council in May 2012.

“The Jesuits have a saying, cura personalis: care of the whole person. Jesus called us to take care of one another,” she says. “At Blessed Sacrament, that is our foundation.” And it remains Brown’s.

C.C.
Dee Shockley

On June 10, Dee sent the first proceeds check for $4,000 to the Sandy Ground Project, which is building 26 playgrounds in storm-affected areas of New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut. The playgrounds will be named after the 26 victims of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shootings in December 2012.

Dee Shockley (B.A. 1991) was raised on the Jersey shore. When she was growing up, her family lived in Middletown, N.J., not far from the beaches they frequented, including Union Beach, where her father owned a family restaurant and bar.

When Superstorm Sandy hit the East Coast in October 2012, Shockley watched in horror from her home in Cary, N.C., as the coastal towns she loved were destroyed.

“It was just awful and I felt so helpless. I felt guilty that this was happening to all my friends and family, and I wasn’t there,” she explains.

She tried to shield her daughters— who are 6, 8, and 10—who are from the news, but it was difficult. Since her daughters were born in New Jersey, they knew well some of the places that were washed away. When she explained to her daughters that there had been a bad storm, they became upset.

“They said, ‘Mummy, what do we do?’ It was such a simple question. As a parent, you usually have an answer, but I didn’t,” she explains.

Dee, her husband, Tim (B.A. 1993), and their daughters sat down to brainstorm about what they could realistically do to help those affected by the storm. As a family project, they decided to write a book about how much they loved the Jersey shore and then sell homemade copies of the girls’ lemonade stand. Dee wrote the story, with input from her family. Tim sent the story to an artist friend in New York. The artist designed the cover and then sell homemade copies at the girls’ lemonade stand. Dee wrote the story, with input from her family. Tim sent the story to an artist friend in New York. The artist designed the cover and

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Arrivals
Jennifer Anne (McCormac) Gormley, B.A. 1998 (A&S), and husband Matthew welcomed their third child, Nicole Maryann, on Sept. 15, 2012. She joins her siblings, Matthew Evan, 4, and Taylor Anne, 3. The family lives in Gaithersburg, Md.

George Sinnott, B.A. 2001 (A&S), and wife Jessica announce the birth of their daughter, Caroline Jane, on March 10, 2013. Caroline joins her brother, George, at their home in Brooklyn, N.Y.


Alexander Pino, B.A. 2005 (A&S), and wife Dara welcomed their first daughter, Tamarah Tikhonovna, on Aug. 4, 2012. Alexander is a graduate student at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology in Brookline, Mass. The family lives in Union City, N.J.

Books


Edward Dickewagwar, M.A. 1973, (THEO), is co-author with Kim Farris-Berg of Training Teachers with School Success: What Happens When Teachers Call the Shots (R.I.L. Education, October 2012). The book presents the perspective that training teachers is the key to school success. Dickewagwar is a senior associate at Education Evolving, a Minnesota-based group of thought leaders in education reform.


Alan Moss, Ph.D. 1980 (A&S), of Fairfield, N.J., wrote his second book, Insidious Deception (Whiskey Creek Press, March 2013). The story concerns a corporate conspiracy to corner the market for rare earth minerals that collides with Middle East diplomacy during the Arab Spring.


Rev. John Orr, Ph.B. 1991 (PHIL), of Knoxville, Tenn., has written two books, The Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) and The Interpretation of Sacred Scripture (CreateSpace, 2011) and Dogmatic Questions and Answers for the Year of Faith, (CreateSpace, 2012).

Susan Elizabeth (Treuer) Nus, M.A. 1992 (A&S), of Fort Worth, Texas, wrote Italian Flacin: Two Words and Essential Vocabulary (CreateSpace, 2012), with classmate Jeanne Pettenati, M.A. 1993 (A&S), as one of her editors. It is a unique vocabulary companion that explores the language through wit, wisdom, and humor.

Conor Gallagher, M.A. 2005 (PHIL), J.D. 2005 (LAW), wrote If Godfather’s Kid had an iPod: Ancient Wisdom for Modern Parents (Saint Benedect Press, October 2012). In this guide for parents, he weaves together Aristotle’s ancient philosophy, scientific studies, pop culture, and parenting tales. Gallagher is vice president of Saint Benedict Press and Tan Books, and executive producer of Catholic Courses. He and wife Ashley live in Fort Mill, S.C., and are parents to eight children.

Erin Swift, B.A. 2005 (A&S), of New York City, published her first design book, French Accents: At Home With Persian Objects And Details (Clarkson Potter, 2013). This lavishly illustrated volume shows how to choose French decorating details to create interiors with an unforgettable sense of sophistication and charm. Swift is a set designer and interiors and prop stylist.

Calleen (Johnson) Swaim, B.A. 2004 (A&S) and her husband, Matt, wrote Year College Faith: Own It (Liguori, 2013). The book explores the challenges of living as a young adult in catholic college. Swaim is also the author of Adult: Stories of Daring Teen Saints and Radiate: More Stories of Daring Teen Saints. The Swaims live in Cincinnati with their son.

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Two Alumni Commemorate War of 1812

David Hildebrandt

In 1812, Americans were again at war with the British. Two Catholic University alumni — a historian and a musician — are bringing this period to life for new audiences through words and music.

The War of 1812 was a war of sea battles and land engagements pitting a smaller, weaker American navy and militia against the large, superior British navy and troops. The bicentennial of the war, which lasted until 1815, is currently being commemorated throughout the country.

“I have been preparing for this anniversary for 30 years,” says historian, college writing instructor, and novelist Beri Hubinger (M.A. 1999). “The war is the setting for my novel 1812: Rights of Passage. I’ve studied extensively every historical detail of the War of 1812,” he says. “The events that happened in Washington and Baltimore were monumental, but the story has not been told well.”

Heavily researched, Hubinger’s novel centers around the exploits of fictional Baltimore native seaman Nathan Jeffries. Hubinger says he took much inspiration for his lead character from Joshua Barney, who helped prepare the Baltimore defenses; the city later succeeded in holding off the British attack.

Hubinger says his stories (a second novel, 1812: Rights of Passage, is scheduled for publication this year) reveal a history of the “young nation’s fight for survival.”

The nation’s most famous song and its national anthem, The Star-Spangled Banner, written by Francis Scott Key, was inspired by the Battle of Baltimore. And it was Colonial music that was a natural lead-in to the music of the period.

Benjamin T. Rome School of Music. And it was Colonial music that was a natural lead-in to the music of the period, he says. As a performer of colonial music for his lead character from Joshua Barney, who helped prepare the Baltimore defenses, he jumped at the idea of researching the topic from a musical perspective.

Author, historian and musician Brother Anthony C. O’Connor, F.S.C., says his music history background had done so, “I’ve studied extensively every historical detail of the War of 1812,” he says. “The events that happened in Washington and Baltimore were monumental, but the story has not been told well.”

“Fighting for survival is the story, and that of other music of the period, that musicologist David Hildebrandt (Ph.D. 1992) loves to tell.

“Among the War of 1812 was something scholars had been studying, but no one with a music history background had done so,” he says. As a performer of colonial music and an instructor of American music history for the last 20 years, he jumped at the idea of researching the topic from a musical perspective.

Hildebrandt’s love of folk and colonial music led him to Catholic University’s Benjamin F. Rome School of Music. And it was Colonial music that was a natural lead-in to the music of the period.

“One way for me to read up on why we went to war, the main arenas of battle, the issues,” he says.

His nonprofit educational organization, The Colonial Music Institute, has produced a number of song books, CD recordings, videos, and radio programs on colonial and War of 1812 music. The institute most recently produced a DVD for Maryland Public Television titled America, The Story Behind The Star-Spangled Banner. — J.C.

In Memoriam


Patricia Ann Hosley, attended the University from 1943 to 1944, of Mount Pleasant, S.C., March 3, 2013.


Mary E. O’Halloran, M.S.W. 1947, of Providence, R.I., Feb. 9, 2013.


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In Memoriam

A Former President and a Former Trustee

Edmund Pellegrino

Edmund Pellegrino, M.D., who served as the President of The Catholic University of America from 1978 to 1982, passed away June 15 at the age of 92.

During Pellegrino’s tenure as the University’s President, Pope John Paul II made his historic visit to campus in 1979 and addressed Catholic educators. He was the second layman to hold the position of University President.

“With the passing of Dr. Edmund Pellegrino, the 11th president of The Catholic University of America, we remember a distinguished scholar and educator who was lauded during his presidency for his administrative ability and his rapport with students, faculty, and staff,” said University President John Garvey.

Pellegrino was a graduate of St. John’s University and New York University. He published more than 600 articles and chapters and 23 books on medical science, philosophy, and ethics, and was a member of several editorial boards.

Pellegrino was the founding editor of the Journal of Medicine and Philosophy, and the founding director of Georgetown University’s Center for Clinical Bioethics. He was the recipient of 52 honorary doctorates in addition to numerous other awards and honors.

Joseph A. Unanue

Joseph A. Unanue, longtime chief executive at Goya Foods Inc., CUA alumnus, and former member of the University’s Board of Trustees, died June 12 at age 88.

Unanue earned his Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering at Catholic University in 1950. He continued his involvement with the University over the years as a member of the Board of Trustees and the namuscase of Unanue, one of the student residence buildings located in Centennial Village. In 2012, Unanue and his wife, Carmen, were honored for their service and generosity with Doctor of Humane Letters.

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