

## IN YOUR WORDS

Comments from the University Community



Reading my @CatholicUniv mag when – great line: “As for those suffering with the disease [addiction], we need to tell them they matter, that they have value, and they have something to offer society”

– @CREIGHTONC

Thanks to all readers who took the time to respond to our winter issue. We regret that space does not allow us to print all responses. Visit the magazine website at [catholicmagazine.catholic.edu](http://catholicmagazine.catholic.edu) to read more. We love hearing from you. Please continue to stay in touch.

– THE EDITORS

### PSYCHOLOGY AT 125

I majored in psychology with a minor in Spanish and graduated in 2016. I entered Catholic University with no clue what direction I would go and no real understanding of the crucial impacts of mental health in society. Ultimately, through my work with children, which began in D.C., I decided to pursue social work to help children in low-income communities have an equal chance of success as children born without racial discrimination, economic hardship, or familial trauma. I enrolled in the Columbia University School of Social Work straight after graduating from Catholic University. Here, I interned at a public school in the South Bronx working with students living in temporary housing. Now, I'm interning at the New York Center for Children providing play, art, and talk therapies to kids who have been through trauma including physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.

I am eternally grateful for my foundation from Catholic University, which gave me a great understanding of the biological components of trauma. I am also grateful to the city of D.C. for inspiring me to begin working with children in under-resourced communities. I hope to return to Washington and enter the world of advocating for educational policy to help ensure that such communities are being allocated the resources needed to succeed and gain social and emotional coping skills.

– ALEXANDRA AMANDA MAXWELL, B.A. 2016

I received my master's degree in psychology in 1983. My degree has played a key role in my personal and professional life. I applied my degree on a daily basis for years as an early childhood educator, as well as in my current role as the head of lower school (preschool–grade 5). Though mindfulness was not part of the curriculum when I was a student, I have since completed the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction training program founded by Jon Kabat-Zinn. I have enjoyed bringing that profound personal experience into my professional role.

On a side note, I thoroughly enjoy *CatholicU* magazine. The fall and winter issues touched on topics (innovation, service, mindfulness, social/emotional development, etc.) that our school is totally focused on and are top of mind for us as educators. Well done!

– PATTY (BERTELLI) PONTARELLI, M.A. 1983

### “TO SERVE, WITH LOVE”

My wife and I read with great interest the article on long-term service. You might say that the two of us have been in long-term service through the Church, primarily to the poor, for quite some time. We met at Catholic University in 1966. I received my M.A. in Religious Education there in 1967, and Lyn her B.A. in 1968. We were married in 1968 (50 years ago), and from the very beginning wanted to spend our lives in service. This took many forms over the years, from serving runaways in New York's East Village in the late 1960s and early '70s (with the assistance of Dorothy Day), to beginning LAMP Catholic Ministries in 1981. Pope Francis made a very striking statement in “The Joy of the Gospel” when he wrote: “The worst discrimination which the poor suffer is the lack of spiritual care” (Para. 200). LAMP missionaries go door to door in shelters for homeless families, visit youth detention centers, large city hospitals, nursing homes in poverty areas, and participate in various street outreaches, pro-life ministry, etc.

– TOM SCHEURING, M.A. 1967,  
AND LYN SCHEURING, B.A. 1968

After seeing the article on long-term service, I want to share my after-retirement experiences. After teaching and counseling full time for 36 years, I then continued part-time teaching and counseling. Since 2001, I have been volunteering one day a week at the Salvatorian Mission Warehouse in New Holstein, Wis., packing supplies, and volunteering another day each week at St. Joseph's Food Program in Menasha, Wis., where I help distribute food. I have added many retired volunteers to my list of friends.

– DENIS E. DEWING, B.A. 1963

### “RECOVERY: ‘I FOUND I HAD A PURPOSE’”

Kenny Baldwin's story moved me to tears. His regret for time wasted is something I've felt at times. But I am certain that the rough experiences refine us for something we would otherwise be unprepared for. God bless you, Mr. Baldwin.

– LINDA DAVIS, B.S.N. 1984