Mission Accomplished:
Renewing CUA’s Catholic Identity
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Some Final Thoughts

Legacy. I have heard that word often in recent months as I prepare to take my leave of the presidency of The Catholic University of America. People ask me over and again, “What will be your legacy?” I must confess, it has not been a question I have asked myself much, even as my tenure draws to a close.

In the grand scheme of things, 12 years is not a very long time. In the lives of American university presidents, though, it is roughly four years beyond the national average. In the history of The Catholic University of America, it is the second-longest tenure among the institution’s leaders.

When I think back over these years, many memories come to mind, one chief among them. I recall resolving to create a vision for the future based upon CUA’s historic identity and mission. That was most important to me. Everything good for the university that we could plan or dream about had to be rooted in a strong sense of Catholic identity, since we were and remain the national university of the Catholic Church in our country. As far as legacies go, perhaps that sounds a bit abstract. It wasn’t and isn’t to me.

Presidents point to bricks and mortar, increased enrollments, soaring endowments, institutional reputation and visibility — all critically important things if a university is to thrive and remain competitive in today’s higher education marketplace. These are the tangible, measurable things by which a president judges success. There is no doubt, CUA has made great progress in all these areas and has been successful. But none of these things mean much if the university loses sight of its reason for being and for enduring.

To foster and strengthen our Catholic identity — who we are — can only foster and strengthen our mission — what we do. To discover or, in our case, to “rediscover” who we are, has enabled us to do so much more. It has given us a reason and motivation to recruit, appoint and tenure the very best faculty — the best in their fields and the best in their faith — and to hire the most dedicated staff. It has given us a compelling argument for alumni loyalty, pride and support, and for institutional advancement. It has given us a voice to address contemporary society and to challenge culture in ways that reflect our university values and traditions. It has given us the ability to proclaim a message to the young people who come to campus that resonates not only in their minds but also in their hearts and souls and lives. It has given us the opportunity to inspire and nurture in them something positive and significant to take into the world. “Reason. Faith. Service.” These flow from our identity as The Catholic University of America. They are our rallying points and they continue to influence every dimension of our community here.

Yes, I can point to a lot of good things that have happened at CUA in this “decade plus two years.” What makes me happiest and most satisfied, however, is the realization that whatever presidential legacy I can point to is one that I have shared and always will share with the many others who were here during these years. What we leave behind, it has been said, is not as important as how we lived.

An unknown American writer of the early 20th century best expresses my thoughts on legacy as I close my tenure and move on to another new adventure in life:

To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children; to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better … to know even one life has breathed easier because you lived. This is to have succeeded.

Thank you for the privilege of serving as your president. May God bless you and The Catholic University of America!
Founded at CUA, Catholic Charities USA to Celebrate 100 Years

In 1910, immigration from Europe brought the Catholic population in the United States to more than 16 million. Although many needed social services, there was no cohesive organization to care for them. Members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society worked with CUA’s rector, Monsignor Thomas Shahan, to found the National Conference of Catholic Charities. That organization, now known as Catholic Charities USA, has become the nation’s largest Catholic charitable organization, each year helping more than 8.5 million people of all faiths.

Catholic Charities was based at CUA until 1921; the university became the official repository for the records of the organization, one of the five largest collections housed in CUA’s American Catholic History Research Center and University Archives.

To celebrate the 100th anniversary of the organization’s founding, Catholic Charities and CUA are working on a few special projects. University Archives will create two websites. One, a “greatest hits” site, will summarize the history of Catholic Charities and feature 20 to 30 documents from the university’s collection that illuminate that history.

The second website will be a resource for Catholic school teachers about Catholic Charities’ role in drafting Social Security legislation in the 1930s and 1940s. The organization worked with congressmen on the Social Security Act of 1935 and subsequent amendments.

University Archives is also planning an on-campus exhibition (also to be posted online) of photos in CUA’s Catholic Charities collection to coincide with the Washington, D.C., celebration of the charity group’s Sept. 25–28 centennial — the same dates as the organization’s first meeting at CUA in 1910. The celebration, which is open to the public, will feature liturgy at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, speakers such as CUA alumnus and New York Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan, and a visit to congressional offices.

Finally, CUA Education Archivist Maria Mazzenga is editing a memoir by Monsignor John O’Grady, a former Catholic University economics professor, whose charisma and drive, says Mazzenga, helped him become Catholic Charities’ executive secretary in 1920; he ran the organization for the next 41 years. He is also one of the founders and the first dean of CUA’s National Catholic School of Social Service. University Archives is working with Catholic Charities on the manuscript in hopes of publishing it as a book.

— L.C.  

What’s the Impact?

Catholic Charities USA provided the following services during 2008:

- No. of people fed: 6,287,891
- No. provided housing services: 598,953
- No. clothed: 592,899
- No. counseled or provided mental health services: 387,856
- No. provided immigration services: 350,164
- No. provided disaster services: 331,727
- No. given utilities assistance: 330,721

Among its many services, Catholic Charities provides emergency relief services such as rebuilding houses damaged during natural disasters.
Father O’Connell Urges Grads: Stand By What Is Right

In his May 15 Commencement address, Very Rev. David M. O’Connell, C.M., wished the 121st graduating class of Catholic University “the wisdom to choose what is right and to stand by it when the prevailing culture says that’s not necessary or advantageous or comfortable or politically correct.”

His Commencement address began with a story of how President Abraham Lincoln once critiqued a church sermon: Lincoln said the pastor “never asked us to do something great.”

Father O’Connell, who stepped down as president of Catholic University this summer, made it clear to the 1,400 new graduates that he didn’t want to make the same mistake Lincoln’s pastor did.

“I want to ask you ‘to do something great,’ ” he told the graduates and their thousands of family members and friends assembled outside the east entrance of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

“It is for us … to achieve greatness by sacrifice: putting what we have and who we are at the service of others,” he continued. If the graduates will do that, he said, “you probably will not become famous — most of us do not — but you will become known for whom and what you are among those to whom you matter most and who matter most to you.

“The believer,” he said, “acknowledges that he or she is a child of God, created by God in his image and likeness. … That truth of faith plants the seed of greatness in our souls. How we nurture and water and grow that seed is up to us, my dear graduates; it is up to you.”

This was Father O’Connell’s final CUA Commencement as president. On June 4, Pope Benedict XVI named him coadjutor bishop of the Diocese of Trenton, N.J., a position he assumes in August.

The following awards and honors were bestowed at the Commencement:

• Rev. Robert Schlageter, O.F.M. Conv., the university’s chaplain, received the President’s Medal, the university’s highest honor. He also stepped down from his CUA service this summer.

• Ida Cammon Robinson received an honorary degree. In the 1940s and ’50s Robinson earned CUA bachelor’s and master’s degrees in nursing. One of only four women of color in her 1947 graduating class, she went on to serve as director of the School of Nursing at D.C.’s Freedmen’s Hospital and director of education and training at Children’s National Medical Center.

• The CUA Alumni Association’s highest honor recognizing service to the Church, the country or the university, the James Cardinal Gibbons Medal, was awarded to Sister Alice Zachmann, S.S.N.D. In 1982 Sister Zachmann founded the Guatemala Human Rights Commission/USA, which advocates for victims of repression in Guatemala.

• Kara Fitzgerald, a social work major from Newtown, Conn., and Jonathan Jerome, a theology and religious studies major from Charlotte, N.C., received the President’s Award, the highest distinction given graduating seniors in recognition of service, leadership and outstanding scholarship.

On May 28, the Columbus School of Law conferred 300 degrees at its Commencement, which featured Paul R. Michel, chief judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, as speaker. Judge Michel received an honorary degree that day.
7 Up: Alum Honorees Speak About CUA Experiences

James Phippard (B.A. 1954), who helped privatize state-owned banks in Poland and brought water systems to farming communities in Tunisia during his career as an administrator with the aid organizations USAID and ACDI/VOCA, says two important things happened to him at CUA.

The first thing: When he arrived as a freshman, he intended to study business. But there was no business major, so he switched to economics.

"To this day, I’m very grateful that I had to make that switch,” he said to CUA alumni, faculty, family and friends at the university’s annual alumni awards luncheon on April 17, 2010. “It’s been important in business and certainly in the areas of international development.”

The second thing that happened at CUA was his introduction to papal encyclicals on social justice — documents that he said came to life for him while working in international development.

Phippard and the following six CUA graduates received Alumni Achievement Awards at the luncheon held in CUA’s Edward J. Przybyla University Center:

• Meyer Chambers (M.L.M. 1994), founder of the Archdiocese of Boston’s Black Catholic Choir and recipient of the archdiocese’s Augustine Healy Award for his service work
• Dr. Nancy Nielsen (M.S. 1967, Ph.D. 1970), immediate past president of the American Medical Association and senior associate dean for medical education at the University of Buffalo’s School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences
• Sandra Robinson (J.D. 1982), immediate past president of the Civil Justice Foundation, who was voted the 2001 Trial Lawyer of the Year by the Trial Lawyers Association of Metropolitan Washington, D.C.
• Michelle Sakayan (M.Arch. 1993), a civic-minded architect who helped design Oprah Winfrey’s school for girls in South Africa
• Kathy Palomino (B.M. 2003), educator of learning-disabled students, founder of the Ford Center for Reading in Tampa, Fla., and winner of this year’s CUA Young Alumni Merit Award

In receiving her award, Robinson described the nurturing environment at CUA when she was a night student at the Columbus School of Law while holding down a full-time job and raising a child with her husband. “It was a time of camaraderie,” she recalled. “It was exciting to gather and develop friendships.

“It certainly has taken a village to get me to where I am today and I am glad the Columbus School of Law is part of that village,” she said.

Sakayan, who was introduced to architecture when she took a summer course at CUA as a high school student and who returned to CUA for a graduate degree, was asked in 2003 to work on the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls in South Africa. “It was the perfect opportunity to marry my experience and education in design with my focus on social responsibility,” she said at the CUA event.

Nielsen described the unrest in the city during the civil rights movement of the 1960s, when she and her three children marched on campus with other CUA students and sang “We Shall Overcome.”

“I am very thankful for this award and I am incredibly grateful for the wonderful education and nurturing I got here on the campus,” said the former AMA president.

As a reporter covering the Catholic Church, including the clergy sex-abuse crisis, Filteau says that the relationship between truth and love became very important to him.

“Speaking the truth in love has to begin with speaking the truth. But it also has to begin with love,” said the journalist who was a philosophy and theology student at CUA. “Catholic University helped me develop an understanding of the search for truth and how to search for the truth with love.”

New York City TV news anchor Rosanna Scotto, B.F.A. 1980, served as the master of ceremonies.

From left: Sandra Robinson, Michelle Sakayan, Nancy Nielsen, Father O’Connell, Meyer Chambers, James Phippard and Jerry Filteau.
Church Architecture: Connecting Heaven and Earth

More than 125 people from diverse disciplines relating to architecture, art and the Church attended “A Living Presence: Extending and Transforming the Tradition of Catholic Sacred Architecture,” a symposium held April 30 and May 1 at Catholic University.

The symposium was presented by the Partnership for Catholic Sacred Architecture, a collaborative effort between the schools of architecture at The Catholic University of America and the University of Notre Dame.

On Friday night, Cardinal Justin Rigali, archbishop of Philadelphia and CUA trustee, delivered the keynote address. In the lecture, he noted that “the Church has not admitted any [particular] style as her own.”

The cardinal commented on how sacred design is an “exalted mission” to glorify God. The artist’s work must develop along a path to “true beauty,” he said. “Beauty changes us. Everything related to the Eucharist should be truly beautiful.”

Speaking about innovative design versus imitation of tradition, Duncan Stroik, associate professor at the University of Notre Dame School of Architecture and principal of Duncan G. Stroik Architect, LLC, said, “Architecture is not about producing copies, but about producing children. [Architects should] learn from the examples of the past.” Stroik discussed how principles of traditional church architecture — cruciform design, bell towers and domes, for example — can be included in innovative current designs.

Many speakers at the symposium talked of how churches offer a connection between earth and heaven.

“Great churches, beautiful churches, both large and small, can offer a glimpse of a world to come,” said Randall Ott, dean of CUA’s School of Architecture and Planning, in his welcoming remarks. “[Churches] are the windows which remind us that there is something — something beautiful — outside the town, the village, the city, the world in which we live.”

The symposium’s final lecture was delivered by Craig Hartman, design partner of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill of San Francisco. He spoke about how his team explored the concept of light as the symbol of Christ in the design of the Cathedral of Christ the Light in Oakland, Calif. The shape of the cathedral itself draws from the idea of fluidity and transformation — mimicking the shape of two fish in water. Wood was chosen as the main building material to imitate the most elemental home of humankind — a primitive hut.

Weaving these themes together into the cathedral’s design, the architectural team created a light-filled “lantern” reflecting God’s presence, said Hartman.

Following their presentations, panelists participated with the audience in a vigorous discussion, agreeing and disagreeing on how best to extend and transform the tradition of Catholic sacred architecture.

“The symposium was held with the hope of finding a path acknowledging — and building upon — what is good in diverse approaches; unified by a love for God and a desire for service to the Church,” said Michael Patrick, chair of the partnership and visiting lecturer at CUA’s architecture and planning school. “Based on comments by participants, it succeeded as a first small step in this large and profound task.” — M.F.M.

Top: Craig Hartman speaks about how his team designed Oakland’s Cathedral of Christ the Light, whose shape alludes to two fish swimming. Bottom: Three members of the Partnership for Catholic Sacred Architecture: (from left) Duncan Stroik, associate professor at the University of Notre Dame; Eric Anderson of Patrick Anderson Partners in Architecture; and Michael Patrick, visiting lecturer in architecture and planning at CUA.
Middle States Reaffirms Catholic University Accreditation

On June 25, 2010, the Middle States Commission on Higher Education reaffirmed accreditation for The Catholic University of America. The commission commended CUA for the quality of its self-study process and the 171-page self-study report prepared by the university steering committee as part of the reaccreditation process. The self-study report addresses how the university meets the Middle States Commission’s standards and documents the university’s progress in many areas, including undergraduate education; support for graduate students; new professional graduate programs; research funding from foundations, corporations and the government; and strategies to strengthen CUA’s financial base.

The reaccreditation process started more than two years ago and involved task forces comprising 145 CUA community members. In April a Middle States team spent four days on CUA’s campus, the final event in the reaccreditation process. James F. Brennan, university provost, noted, “The investment of time and energy for both the self-study and the actual planning of the visit served the university well.”

The Middle States Commission evaluates all universities in D.C., New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland and Delaware every 10 years before deciding whether to reaccredit them.

School of Nursing Marks 75th Anniversary

Seventy-five years after becoming a professional school at Catholic University, the School of Nursing will celebrate its students, faculty and alumni with a series of anniversary events.

On Nov. 15, 2010, the school and the Washington Regional Nursing Research Consortium will co-sponsor a Regional Doctoral Student Research Conference. In 2011, the school will host an anniversary gala on March 19 and, on April 13, the annual Instilling Hope Conference, a psychiatric-mental health nursing conference for nurses, nursing students and consumers of mental health services. CUA alumni are welcome to attend all events.

CUA began offering nursing education courses in 1932. In 1935, the nursing education program and the Division of Public Health Nursing were organized to form a school of nursing. Advanced degree programs were introduced in the 1950s and 1960s. The school, which is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, District of Columbia Board of Nursing and Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, has more than 8,000 alumni.

Helping Out the Students: Approximately 400 people attended the 21st American Cardinals Dinner, held April 23 at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta. America’s Catholic cardinals raised about $1 million for CUA scholarships at the event, which was co-hosted by Most Rev. Wilton D. Gregory, archbishop of Atlanta, and Father O’Connell, CUA’s president.
Kudos

CUA Magazine’s Summer 2008 cover article, “A Visit for the Ages: The CUA Community Welcomes the Successor to St. Peter,” received a Silver Award from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education in the category of best article. CUA Magazine also won five third-place awards from the Catholic Press Association in the following categories: general magazine excellence, best feature article (Fall 2009’s “Priesthood: A Rich Life in a Secularized World”), best cover (Spring 2009’s “The Green Issue”), best magazine website (http://cuamagazine.cua.edu), and best coverage of the Year for Priests.

Milestones

Rev. Jude DeAngelo, O.F.M. Conv., has become CUA’s university chaplain and director of Campus Ministry, succeeding Rev. Robert Schlageter, O.F.M. Conv., who stepped down after 12 years in the position. Franciscan Father DeAngelo was previously the Catholic campus minister at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, N.C.


Michael Mack has been promoted from director of the University Honors Program to dean of undergraduate studies. He is also an associate professor of English.

Patricia McMullen, Ph.D. 2002, has become dean of the School of Nursing, promoted from her previous roles as CUA’s associate provost for academic administration and associate professor of nursing. She succeeds Nalini Jairath, who joins CUA’s full-time faculty.

Sarah M. Phelps was promoted from interim general counsel to general counsel of the university. She succeeds Craig Parker. Phelps came to CUA in 2008 as associate general counsel, having previously held that position at George Washington University.

Peter W. Shoemaker, associate professor of modern languages and literatures, has been named director of the University Honors Program.

Professor of Music Grayson Wagstaff has been named dean of CUA’s Benjamin T. Rome School of Music, effective summer 2010. He is an authority on the history of Catholic liturgical music in Spain and Latin America. He succeeds Murry Sidlin, who will continue at CUA as a professor of music.
Light will someday soon be used to define the exact borders of skin cancer; predict eye disease in diabetics and flag life-threatening circulatory problems for spinal-cord-injury patients, Assistant Professor of Biomedical Engineering Jessica Ramella-Roman says.

Light is a critical tool because it allows researchers such as Ramella-Roman, postdoctoral fellow Paul Lemaitre, and her team of graduate students to see, measure and analyze tissue in a way that, unlike MRIs and X-rays, isn’t damaging to the body. Ramella-Roman is one of two CUA professors working in bio optics, or biophotonics, a relatively new area of biomedical engineering that studies how body tissue responds to light.

In her research, light is shined on a patient, penetrating superficial tissue. While some of this light is absorbed by the body, other light scatters and reflects back to a collection instrument such as a camera.

Knowing that wavelengths of light are absorbed in different ways by different components of tissue, researchers analyze the light that is reflected back to determine properties of the tissue, such as its oxygen and water levels. “If you can quantify those properties, then you have a very strong clinical understanding of what is happening in tissue ... and you can make a number of diagnostic advances,” the professor says.

In the Bio Optics Lab in Pangborn Hall, Ramella-Roman is pursuing three lines of research: using spectroscopy (the study of the spectrum of light emitted or absorbed by matter) to measure oxygenation in the skin and retina; designing fiber-optic probes to shine and collect light; and using polarized light to highlight the borders of skin cancer.

In the past few years, Ramella-Roman’s lab and affiliated institutions have been awarded more than $2 million in grants.

In a collaboration with Johns Hopkins University, for example, “We’re now involved in a clinical study that seeks to prove the hypothesis that deprivation of oxygen in the retina is one of the early signs of diabetic complications that lead to blindness.”

In the past three years, she has been working with CUA colleagues, including Lemaitre, to design a system employing spectroscopy to accomplish something that’s never been done before: measuring oxygen in the retina in a noninvasive way.

Dr. Mohamed Ibrahim of the Wilmer Eye Institute at Johns Hopkins University says Ramella-Roman’s research will expand knowledge about blood flow and oxygen consumption in the retina. “Such findings will help physicians and scientists detect the earliest changes that happen in the retinas of people who suffer from diabetes,” he says. “The information from her research may also help future studies that aim at finding and developing therapies for patients with diabetic retinal disease.”

Ramella-Roman’s goal is to create a system that would be used by an ophthalmologist in a hospital. “If the clinical study proves our hypothesis is correct, then it would probably become a routine exam for diabetics.”

In another use of light, testing at the National Rehabilitation Hospital is determining whether a fiber-optic probe created by Ramella-Roman’s research can provide clues to predict autonomic dysreflexia — the life-threatening high blood pressure and circulatory condition that can result when a spinal-cord-injury patient experiences a stimulus in a part of the body below his injury. In this research, funded by the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation, Ramella-Roman is trying to prove that people who have autonomic dysreflexia have reduced oxygen in their skin. She hopes that a dysreflexia meter can be developed to flag symptoms and alert spinal-cord patients to the need for treatment.

“The Hairball,” an apparatus with 16 tentacles that beams polarized light at different angles onto a patient’s skin, was created by Ramella-Roman with the National Institute of Standards and Technology. The technique produces high-contrast images that could help surgeons better see the borders of skin cancer, reducing the discomfort and cost of biopsy surgery.

Because light penetrates skin shallowly and then scatters, bio optics can be a frustrating field, Ramella-Roman notes. “It’s a real challenge to gather any type of information from the light that comes back. But it’s definitely rewarding when information does result.

“It gives me great satisfaction to give clinicians new tools — new eyes — to work more effectively or to make diagnoses that might not be possible otherwise.”

— K.K.
CUA Men’s Basketball Coach Steve Howes — after five years of trying — finally landed the contest he wanted: an exhibition game at the University of Notre Dame against the Fighting Irish. The timing of the game — Saturday, Nov. 6, 2010 — couldn’t be better; it will be the opening game of the CUA basketball program’s 100th anniversary season.

One person who won’t be in South Bend, Ind., is athletic equipment manager Franny Murray (B.A. 1950). But, having attended every home basketball game during his 63-year CUA career, he remembers a lot of amazing moments in CUA basketball history, including forward Charles Boylan’s school-record 60-point performance in CUA’s 109-76 victory over Washington College in 1965.

“He didn’t want to keep shooting, but the coach put him back in the game and nobody else would shoot,” Murray says. “It seemed like everything he threw up went in. It was just one of those nights.”

The Cardinals have made 13 trips to the NCAA Tournament and have won a national title. It’s a rich history that CUA will be paying tribute to this year in commemoration of the sport’s centennial on campus.

The Early Years

The Cardinals’ very first varsity basketball game was a 42-33 home victory over Gallaudet University on Jan. 7, 1911 — 20 years after the sport of basketball was invented in Springfield, Mass. Fred Rice coached the CUA “Red and Black” for the next 19 years and compiled 176 victories. A group of players known as the “Reindeer” went 38-15 from 1925 to 1928, competing against some of the nation’s top teams.

In 1944, John Long’s only year as coach, the Cards made their first appearance in the eight-team NCAA Tournament after a 17-5 season. They traveled to New York’s Madison Square Garden, where they promptly lost twice. Then, with World War II raging and male enrollment down, the program was suspended during 1944–45.

CUA Within the NCAA

From the founding of the NCAA in 1906 through 1955, basketball-playing institutions were not separated into competitive divisions. From 1956 through 1972, teams were classified into a University Division (major colleges) or College Division (small colleges). The Cardinals competed in the latter until the NCAA reorganized into three divisions in 1973: Division I and II schools, which offer scholarships based on athletic ability; and Division III schools, which do not.

CUA opted for the Division II level during the 1973–76 seasons. It then played as a Division I independent for five years (1976–81), before realizing that the monetary commitment to compete at the NCAA’s highest level was more than it wanted to bear. The Cards have played in Division III for the past 29 years.

CUA’s women’s basketball team began playing a varsity schedule in 1959. It enjoyed its greatest success under Coach Maggie Lonergan, when it posted its only 20-win seasons (2003–04 and 2004–05).

Building a Successful Program

When former University of Maryland star Tom Young was named CUA’s head coach in 1958, the men’s program became one of the best on the East Coast, enjoying eight winning seasons over nine years. Franny Murray fondly recalls driving to road games.

“Tom would drive the first team and I’d take the second team,” he says. “The players liked to go with me because I had a station wagon.”
Bill Leahy, a 6-foot-3 senior All-American, led Young's 1963–64 team in points scored (18.5 per game) and rebounds (14.5 per game). That year the Cardinals proceeded to win the school's only Mason-Dixon Conference Tournament championship and qualified for the NCAA Tournament in Hempstead, N.Y. There they lost to host Hofstra University, 92-91, in double overtime. Six Cardinals fouled out and Hofstra won it on a free throw with 12 seconds left.

Murray believes CUA was cheated. "They called that final foul on a guy who was 10 feet away from anyone — unbelievable."

After Young departed in 1967 with 134 victories, the team went through several years when its glory was largely confined to individual stars. Bob Adrion averaged 25.3 points per game in 1971–72 and was named a regional all-star. Glenn Kolonics was the nation's fourth-leading scorer (27.7 points per game) in 1975–76 and earned Division II All-American honors before graduating and playing professional basketball in Argentina. Adrion (2,289 points) and Kolonics (2,190 points) are the Cardinals' all-time leading scorers.

In 1982, former CUA point guard Jack Bruen (B.A. 1972) was hired as coach. To supplement his income, he worked part time as a bartender. Taking over a program that had not posted a winning season in 12 years, Bruen led the team to a 13-12 record and won at the home court of the nation's top-ranked Division III team, Roanoke College. In his seven-year tenure (1982–89), Bruen became CUA's fourth-winningest coach with 110 victories.

The Glory Days
The high point of Cardinals basketball came on March 17, 2001, at the Salem (Va.) Civic Center, when CUA won the NCAA Division III National Championship. Coached by Mike Lonergan (B.A. 1988), the 28-5 Cardinals rallied to defeat William Paterson University, 76-62. Lonergan — the husband of women's basketball coach Maggie — became the winningest basketball coach in CUA history that night and his seniors set a school record by winning their 100th game in a four-year period.

"Winning the national championship was the culmination of years of hard work by many people," says Lonergan, who this past March led the University of Vermont men's team to the NCAA Division I Tournament. "I will never forget cutting down the nets in Salem on St. Patrick's Day as head coach of my alma mater. What a great moment."

Lonergan guided the Cardinals to the NCAA Tournament nine times in his 12 years (1992–2004) and was the only college coach in the nation to win seven straight regular-season conference championships (1997–2004) during those years.

Former CUA Athletic Director Bob Talbot (B.A. 1960) hired Lonergan, who at 26 became the youngest Division III head coach in the country.

"I thought there were probably half a dozen games in which he actually willed the win from the sidelines — just because of his personality," Talbot says. "He pushed the kids to perform better than they actually were."

CUA's current basketball coach, Steve Howes, has continued the winning tradition. He tied Bruen's victory mark last year and has in his six seasons led the Cardinals to five postseason appearances, including two NCAA Tournaments.

— Chris McManes

CUA CAREER LEADERS IN POINTS SCORED


Celebrate the Centenary
For details about the Nov. 6 Notre Dame game that will open CUA basketball's 100th anniversary season, and for news about a package trip to attend the game with other alumni, see Page 30.

Cardinals basketball teams, players and coaches of the past will be honored on Saturday, Jan. 29, 2011, during a centenary celebration reception following the playing of regular-season men's and women's basketball games.

Women's Lacrosse Keeps Championship Streak Alive
The women's lacrosse team won its third straight Landmark Conference championship and advanced to the regional semifinals of the NCAA Tournament before falling to the eventual national champion, Salisbury University.

The Cardinals went undefeated (6-0) in Landmark Conference play and sophomore Mary Swarthout was named conference player of the year.

Dowd Reaches 500-Win Milestone
On March 9, 2010, Men's Tennis Coach Marty Dowd added to his extraordinary record as the winningest coach in CUA history. In his 47th year with the Cardinals, Dowd earned his 500th career win when his team bested Defiance College.

"No one else is even close to 500 wins, but what they don't tell you is that I've also got 333 losses," says Dowd with a laugh. "That, too, is the most in CUA history."
Mission Accomplished: Renewing CUA’s Catholic Identity

By Catherine Lee
Surrounded by about 200 students who packed Campus Ministry's prayer room for the last House Mass of his presidency, Father David O'Connell started giving out Communion. Students filed past him; others followed from the adjoining room, where the doors were propped open with a couple of old fire hydrants.

Afterward Father O'Connell settled into an overstuffed chair while the young people knelt or sat cross-legged on the floor. The room grew quiet as the students and their president, who was dressed in simple white vestments, prayed silently. Faith is not an easy thing to quantify, but on that evening in April, it seemed as tangible as the candles and small altar in the room.

As was his custom after celebrating a House Mass, Father O'Connell answered questions from the students. One asked what he hoped his legacy would be. “I’d like to be remembered for restoring the university’s Catholic identity when it was lost,” he said. “And I hope people will say I was a kind man.”

CUA's second-longest-serving president, Father O'Connell worked tirelessly to strengthen CUA’s identity, taking every opportunity in his writings, speaking engagements and personal interactions to talk about CUA’s roots as the national university of the Church. His positions on issues related to Church teachings sometimes ran counter to popular culture and “political correctness,” but he always stood firm.

CUA’s 14th president raised the university’s profile through his frequent commentary in newspapers and on TV, especially around the time of the death of Pope John Paul II and the succession of Pope Benedict XVI. Father O'Connell hosted Pope Benedict’s April 17, 2008, visit to CUA, where the Holy Father gave a major address to Catholic diocesan education leaders and presidents of Catholic universities.

During his tenure, Father O'Connell also increased CUA’s enrollment to a record-breaking high, expanded the size of campus with the purchase of an additional 49 acres, added several new university buildings and renovated dozens of others, and beautified the campus with new trees, outdoor seating areas and carefully manicured flower beds. He also led the development and implementation of two strategic plans for the university.

“I think Father O’Connell’s clarity of vision has impacted so strongly on the life of Catholic University,” says Most Rev. Donald W. Wuerl, archbishop of Washington and university chancellor. “His vision just drove the whole engine, renewing and recapturing the university’s Catholic identity and enabling CUA to stand tall and proud in her identity.”

Father O’Connell has lost weight over the years and his hair is thinner now. He admits regretting that he didn’t allow himself “to enjoy” his presidency more. “I never wanted to look like I was proud, or too presidential; I always held back a bit.

“But I can honestly say that I stuck to my principles and every one of the struggles has been worth it.”

A member of the Congregation of the Mission, known as the Vincentians, Very Rev. David M. O’Connell, C.M., served as an altar boy growing up in Langhorne, Pa., and knew from the time he was a second-grader that he wanted to be a priest.

He spent his high school years at St. Joseph’s Preparatory Seminary in Princeton, N.J., and earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees at Niagara University and Mary Immaculate Seminary. Ordained in 1982, later in that decade he was a doctoral student in canon law at Catholic University, where he says his professors were “excellent … but CUA’s Catholic identity and mission were not foremost in people’s minds.”

That impression stayed with him as he went on to become academic dean of St. John’s University in New York City, and shaped his vision for CUA when he became its new president and was preparing his inaugural address.

Just 42 at his Nov. 19, 1998, inauguration in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception adjoining CUA’s campus, Father O’Connell recited the profession of faith and the oath of fidelity to Pope John Paul II’s Ex Corde Ecclesiae, an apostolic constitution that lays out the identity and mission of Catholic colleges and universities.

“I wanted to come out of the gate pushing Catholic identity because the university was drifting a bit,” he recalls. “My desire was to re-establish the university in light of its founding mission and not to be the place where, when the Church spoke, people were the first to say what was wrong with it. Rather, I wanted CUA to be the beacon that explained what the Church teaches and why.”

Monsignor Kevin Irwin, then a professor of liturgy and sacramental theology, recalls that the new president’s address was well
received. However, noting Father O’Connell’s youth, “some faculty members were inclined to quote the prophet Isaiah, who says ‘a little child shall lead you,’” observes Monsignor Irwin. But they quickly realized that Father O’Connell was a highly trained canon lawyer and academic administrator whose vision was solid, adds Monsignor Irwin, now dean of CUA’s School of Theology and Religious Studies.

Looking back on Father O’Connell’s tenure, the dean notes that the president always made decisions, especially the tough ones, following considerable research and consultation with his senior staff. “When he was convinced that he had made the right decision, he stood by it,” he says. “He was a profile in courage, in an era, in a city, in a university context where there were sometimes politics involved.”

Monsignor Irwin observes, “We have become as richly Catholic as possible without being narrowly Catholic, in an era when lots of people pick and choose what they like about Catholicism. He brought a breadth and depth to his mission and then invited us to bear the responsibility of that mission as educators and students.”

Early in his presidency, Father O’Connell moved into Nugent Hall, where he lived and worked. Most days, he walked on campus, maybe to Leahy Hall, the Pryzbyla Center or McMahon Hall. His strolls, which he describes as “management by walking,” included stops to greet a student, chat with a public safety officer or check out newly planted flower beds.

In summer 1999, Father O’Connell paid a visit to the Columbus School of Law. Stopping unannounced in the law school reception area, the president asked to see Frank Persico, then serving as associate dean. Persico came out of his office to find the university president dressed in slacks and a madras shirt. Surprised and a bit nervous, Persico escorted the president to his office, where CUA’s top administrator told him that he had been watching him over the past year and that he was doing “a good job,” Persico recalls. The next summer, Father O’Connell again approached Persico at the law school, but this time he offered him a job on his Nugent Hall staff. Could he start in two weeks? Persico said yes immediately.

They worked together for almost 10 years, and Persico, now vice president for university relations and chief of staff, says he learned that Father O’Connell “had a great understanding of people, leadership and the management process.” The new president was also a compassionate person who cared deeply about the CUA community, he adds.

For faculty and staff, Father O’Connell provided what he called president’s holidays — extra days off — and a summer schedule that included afternoons off on Friday. His annual Christmas party — a reception in the Pryzbyla Center with food and generous raffle prizes — was legendary.

When the 2008 recession prompted belt-tightening at CUA, and many universities instituted furloughs and layoffs, Father O’Connell suspended annual raises, but he made sure that no one at CUA lost their job. Alumnus Jim Dinegar, B.A. 1982, president of the Greater Washington Board of Trade, recalls a conversation with the president during “one of the low points of the recession.” When the conversation turned to the question of layoffs, Father O’Connell talked about his concern for the families of faculty and staff. “He was very proud of the fact that he never had to lay anyone off,” Dinegar recalls.

Last April, Monsignor Irwin was having dinner with Father O’Connell in a downtown Washington, D.C., restaurant when the president got an e-mail about a staff member who had been found dead in his home. “He said to me: ‘I know him,’” says Monsignor Irwin. “Father O’Connell was visibly saddened by the news.”

A self-described “fact person,” Father O’Connell likes to tell people that he shares his birthday with England’s monarch, Queen Elizabeth. His easy recall of data and ability to focus intensely on the task at hand proved invaluable during his early years at CUA when he started working on fundraising and planning for the university’s future.

Craig Parker, who served as general counsel under Father O’Connell, notes that his former boss “can sit in a meeting with someone who’s an expert and learn everything he needs to know.” Father O’Connell recognizes the value of good workplace relationships and makes a point of getting to know those around him, which enables him to build consensus, Parker says. Also, he thanks everyone on campus “from the landscaper to the food service worker to the vice president.”

In addition to purchasing extra land adjoining campus from the Armed Forces Retirement Home, Father O’Connell opened a
long-awaited student center and entered into an agreement to develop almost nine acres of South Campus as residential and retail space.

Frank Persico says it was Father O’Connell’s personal relationship with Eddie Pryzbyla, a 1925 graduate from Chicopee, Mass., that led to the alumnus’s multi-million-dollar gift for the construction of the student center named in his honor and dedicated in April 2003. Pryzbyla had given money in the past, but primarily for the planting of trees or other campus beautification projects.

During the donor’s semi-annual visits to campus, he and Father O’Connell would share Pryzbyla’s favorite lunch of mashed potatoes and chopped sirloin, tour campus to check on Pryzbyla’s numerous campus projects and talk about the university’s needs. Over time, Father O’Connell was able to persuade Pryzbyla to make a “bricks and mortar” gift that would fund the student center. “Father was selling something he really believed in,” says Persico. “He had a vision for the building and he was able to help Eddie see it.”

The university’s April 2004 purchase of additional land — the largest undeveloped parcel in the District of Columbia — ensures CUA’s future ability to expand.

Cathy Wood, CUA’s vice president for finance and treasurer, notes that Father O’Connell’s handling of the university’s agreement with Washington, D.C.’s Abdo Development to develop part of South Campus along Michigan Avenue and Monroe Street in D.C.’s Brookland neighborhood shows that “he’s very progressive.”

“The project will transform the area surrounding the university’s front entrance and the neighborhood, and it may not have happened without Father O’Connell’s guidance and vision,” Wood says.

Last December, the Washington, D.C., Zoning Commission gave final approval to a plan submitted by Abdo to redevelop the land, which is currently home to Conaty, Spellman and Spalding halls. The development and construction company will build 761 residential units and 85,000 square feet of retail and restaurant space in buildings up to six stories high. Plans also call for a public square with a clock tower and an arts walk with 27 art studios.

At a faculty-staff reception honoring Father O’Connell in May, Ernest Suarez, chairman of the English department and a longtime friend of the president, noted that “it’s absolutely indisposable that this university is so much better than when he got here.”

Father O’Connell left his mark on the academic side of Catholic University by boosting faculty salaries and devoting more resources to sponsored research. He also introduced a process that ensured, as a condition of their employment, that each newly hired dean and faculty member understood the Catholic mission of the university and affirmed their readiness to support it.

He also provided opportunities for faculty members to meet and socialize at faculty luncheons, which led to greater collaboration among departments and schools.

In addition, Father O’Connell hosted several major academic conferences: for example, on natural law, on the Year of St. Paul and on the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the Vatican and the United States. Held just three weeks prior to Pope Benedict XVI’s visit to campus, the March 2008 natural law symposium drew a “who’s who” list of the world’s leading philosophers, theologians and political scientists to CUA’s Columbus School of Law.

Under Father O’Connell’s watch, the Department of Canon Law became CUA’s 11th school and the college for adult learners, renamed the Metropolitan School for Professional Studies, its 12th. The media studies program, which had been part of the English department, became the Department of Media Studies in August 2006. Father O’Connell also oversaw a $6 million renovation of the John K. Mullen of Denver Memorial Library that made its holdings more accessible and its interior more inviting and comfortable.

The Vincentian priest says the happiest moment of his presidency was Pope Benedict XVI’s 2008 visit to campus. The visit followed four months of intensive planning by an 18-member committee of CUA administrators led by Father O’Connell, in conjunction with officials from the United States Secret Service, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Basilica and the Archdiocese of Washington.

While waiting for the pope to arrive on campus, Father O’Connell let the educators gathered in the Pryzbyla Center in on a little secret. He told them he planned to break with protocol and ask the Holy Father, when he stepped from the limousine outside the center, to address the students who had been waiting for hours on the law school lawn.
About 30 minutes later, the university presidents and diocesan educators waiting in the hall watched on large TV screens as Father O’Connell, greeting the Holy Father outdoors, pointed to the students and whispered his request to the pontiff. Pope Benedict XVI paused, then shook his head no. The hall full of educators erupted in laughter. But no one could say that CUA’s president hadn’t tried.

CNN anchor Wolf Blitzer first met Father O’Connell when the president appeared on his show, “The Situation Room,” on March 31, 2005, just two days before the death of Pope John Paul II. Since then he’s appeared on Blitzer’s show numerous times and the two have become good friends.

“Father O’Connell is great at explaining complicated issues and speaks in excellent sound bites,” says the award-winning journalist who received an honorary doctorate from CUA when he gave the 2006 commencement address. “He doesn’t ramble, he doesn’t try ‘to spin.’ He’s always candid and thoughtful.”

CNN was not the only media outlet that tapped Father O’Connell for interviews during the papal transition and throughout his presidency. He was also a commentator for the “NewsHour with Jim Lehrer”; ABC’s “Nightline,” Fox News, NPR and major U.S. newspapers and magazines, including The Washington Post, The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal.

One of Father O’Connell’s greatest joys was getting to know students. Many used to e-mail him; on his walks he would often stop at the Pryzbyla Center and join a group for lunch; in the evening he’d sometimes have dinner or go to the movies with students.

During his tenure, he created the President’s Society, a group of seniors who answer the phone at Nugent Hall, run errands and volunteer at events on campus. In April, society members travel to the archdiocese that hosts the annual American Cardinals Dinner — a fundraiser for CUA scholarships — and help out at the gala.

This year’s Cardinals Dinner was held at the Hyatt Regency Atlanta. The day of the event was very full for Father O’Connell: last-minute meetings, a press conference, Mass at Atlanta’s Cathedral of Christ the King, a reception and then the dinner itself. Though clearly tired at the end of the evening, Father O’Connell said yes when the President’s Society members invited him to join them in singing karaoke at a small bar near the hotel.

He recalls (with a hint of pride in his voice) that he sang the 1971 hit “American Pie”; the students performed “Benny and the Jets” and the Beyoncé song, “Single Ladies.” Their final number was “Don’t Stop Believin’” by the band Journey. The other bar patrons took pictures of the students performing and seemed genuinely disappointed when the CUA group left, he says.

“It struck me that, if we can get our students to leave CUA saying to one another ‘don’t stop believing,’ then we’ve done our job,” he says. “When our students graduate, I know they’re going to be successful because they were here at this critical time in their lives. Catholic University opens the door to faith and our students learn to see that faith fits into the career they choose to pursue.”

After giving this year’s commencement address on May 15, Father O’Connell might have expected that his schedule would slow down a bit, but June proved to be an eventful month. On the 4th, the Vatican announced that he had been appointed coadjutor bishop of the Diocese of Trenton, N.J., in line to become the 10th bishop of Trenton when Most Rev. John Mortimer Smith resigns.

On June 7, during a blessedly cool evening that arrived like a gift after several hot days in Washington, the Board of Trustees hosted “A Legacy of Leadership: A Tribute to Father David O’Connell.”

Over the next few hours, CUA trustees, alumni, faculty and staff celebrated the leader they had come to know and love. A video about his presidency captured his passion for the job and his affection for the university. The video’s climax was the ceremonial unveiling of Father O’Connell Hall, formerly called Cardinal Hall and renamed to honor him for his accomplishments.

Frank Persico presented him with a leatherbound book of 35 essays that Father O’Connell had written for CUA Magazine.

At the end of the evening, an emotional Father O’Connell addressed the crowd with words simple and yet profound. “Thank you for letting me care about you. Thank you for letting me care with you.”

For more information about Bishop O’Connell’s tenure, including the video tribute to him, visit http://tribute.cua.edu.
On the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, then archbishop of Washington and Catholic University chancellor, asked Father O’Connell to summon the university community for Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. The president and Rev. Robert Schlageter, O.F.M. Conv., university chaplain and Campus Ministry director, walked together to the Basilica. The two priests had worked together since fall 1998, when Father O’Connell hired Father Bob, as he is known. But never before had they been called upon to provide spiritual support in the midst of an international crisis.

Father Bob recalls his boss saying, “Look at us, a kid from Philly and a kid from Buffalo facing this huge challenge.” Father Bob says he remembers describing the situation as “kind of scary.” But Father O’Connell reassured him they would find the right words to comfort the stunned CUA community. In the end, the standing-room-only Mass was “a beautiful pastoral response” to the tragedy, says the Buffalo native who was reassigned in July to a parish in Connecticut.

During their time at CUA, the priests shared a common vision for campus ministry and enhanced the spiritual life of students with a wide variety of worship services, fellowship opportunities and social-service activities. And what they did has worked. Fifty percent of CUA students who identify themselves as Catholic go to Mass on campus every Sunday, roughly double the national average for college students. In the past 12 years, more than 80 young men and 30 young women have decided to enter religious life or the priesthood after graduation from the university.

On special occasions, the two priests would break out cigars and stroll around campus. They lit up stogies for the last time together following Commencement on May 15, when Father Bob received the President’s Medal, the university’s highest honor. Prior to Commencement, Father Bob celebrated two Masses at St. Vincent de Paul Chapel, one in the morning for alumni and the other at the popular 9 p.m. Sunday Eucharist for students. In his homily, he shared four words that he says brought him comfort when he thought about leaving CUA: trust, surrender, believe, receive. As the self-described “kids’ priest,” it’s what he asked of them. His record of success at CUA shows that they responded.
A few years ago the CUA-trained actress Siobhan Fallon Hogan landed a recurring role on a television series that seemed perfect for her. It was filmed in New York City so it would be easy to get to from her New Jersey home, she loved the character, and the regular pay would help her and her husband provide for their children and maybe even send them to college.

Then the show’s writers decided to have her character, a churchgoing Catholic, have an affair — an affair that would begin at Mass. Her character would drop her missalette, a guy would pick it up, they would lock eyes, and it would take off from there.

That was a problem for her. Fallon Hogan said to herself, “Agh, this is the perfect job — and I can’t do it anymore. Because I’m not having an affair, and, especially, why did the writers have to start the affair at Mass?”

So, reluctantly, she quit the show. “Which was hideous,” says the actress, “because I hadn’t even finished the episode I was in, so I had to go to work having quit — and who likes a quitter? Finishing that episode was like working in the enemy camp, or like being the 8th-grade girl that everybody hates and nobody wants to sit with.”

Fallon Hogan had told the producers that she didn’t mean to be a thorn in their side but she had to get out of the show because she had no idea the character was going to go down the path that was now being projected. She said to the producers, “I have a 12-year-old daughter and I’ve taught her certain things and if I do this, I’m nothing more than a big hypocrite to my family.”

One of them asked her, “Can’t you just tell your kids you’re playing a role and you’re acting?” She replied, “No, I can’t.”

Fallon Hogan (whose first name is pronounced “Sha-vaun”) is one of an unusual and very small cadre of Hollywood actors: those who are very much in demand for major movies and TV shows, but who let their Catholic faith and desire to protect the morality of viewers determine the roles they take and the parts they turn down.

Her credits are impressive: being in the regular cast of “Saturday Night Live,” multiple episodes of “Seinfeld,” and roles in “Forrest Gump,” “Men in Black” and dozens of other movies.

“The good thing is, because I’m so goofy looking, I normally don’t run into the situation that happened on the TV series I dropped out of. I’m usually the dowdy character who is affair-free,” Fallon Hogan quips in her habitual mode of self-deprecating humor. “Like I said to the producers of that show, ‘I should be flattered. Whoever would have thunk that in this visual medium the audience would care to see me in a compromising position?’ ”

Good Reviews

Though her movie parts are often short in screen time, reviewers have frequently praised her portrayals as being among the best in the pictures she’s been in.

Of her role as the wife of a farmer whose body gets appropriated by an alien at the beginning of “Men in Black,” The Hollywood Reporter called her a “standout,” and film critic Chris Hewitt said, “In the blink-and-you-miss-her role, Siobhan Fallon is a little, blissfully idiotic, gem.”

“The best of the bunch [of supporting actors]” in the 2001 Danny DeVito/Martin Lawrence movie “What’s the Worst That Could Happen?” “is the exuberantly talented Siobhan Fallon,” opined St. Paul, Minn.’s Pioneer Press. “She has, as usual, a small role and, as usual, she’s great. Fallon’s odd timing — a farm-fresh mix of warmth and sarcasm goes into every line — makes this minor character indelible.”

In the 2009 Renee Zellweger/Harry Connick Jr. movie “New in Town,” Fallon Hogan “steals the show,” according to themovieduguy.com. In the 2010 Jennifer Aniston/Gerard Butler movie “The Bounty Hunter,” Fallon Hogan “has only three or four lines total, but there is more comedy found there than the rest of the movie combined,” says a review on filmschoolrejects.com.

Describing the art of being a character actress, she quips, “I play quirky, odd-looking characters for whom I come up with a limp and an accent, a twitch or [a habit of] blinking a lot.”

These are not glamorous roles. “Fortunately, the worse I look, the more I work,” Fallon Hogan jokes. “A lot of the scripts I get now will describe my character like [here she speaks in a hushed voice], ‘Sue has a lot of city miles on her face. She’s had a hard life, and it shows,’ or ‘Jill is 53, fat, looks like hell and drinks too much.’ ”

“I call up my agent,” she jokes, “and say, ‘Are you sure you have me for the right role? That can’t possibly be me!’ ”

Faith-Filled and Funny — An Actress With Gumption

By Richard Wilkinson
Not So Easy to Say No
Fallon Hogan admits that the decision on whether to be in a movie or TV show can be tough, and says she’s by no means perfect.

“Recently there was a pilot for a television series that would have meant big money. And my part wasn’t dirty,” she relates. “But in the surrounding roles, the young women were living in the fast lane and having a lot of affairs to get ahead in their careers.”

For two days she told herself, “I’ll just go in and meet the producers.” She also tried to convince herself that she needed to do it for the money.

Finally, though, she concluded, “I can’t do this. My stomach has been upset for two days — and what’s a stronger indicator than your gut?” So she called the producers and told them the project wasn’t her cup of tea.

Through situations like this, she says she’s learned that movies are better for her, because one’s role is fixed, while in a television series one doesn’t know what one’s character is going to be asked to do. Focusing on movies also lets her work only a couple of months per year, so that she has plenty of time to join her husband, commodities trader Peter Hogan, in parenting their children, Bernadette, 14; Peter, 11; and Sinead, 8.

When she’s on longer film shoots, she has even managed to bring her children along to be schooled where she works, which she did in Australia while playing the farmer’s wife for the 2006 movie “Charlotte’s Web” and in Scandinavia for the 2000 and 2003 art films “Dancer in the Dark” and “Dogville.”

During the 10 or so months of the year when she’s not working as an actress, Fallon Hogan finds the time to attend a weekly rosary group, deliver Communion to elderly patients at a local nursing home every other week, serve as an officer on the PTA of her children’s Catholic school, cook her family’s meals and clean the house. “I’m cleaning the sink as I’m talking to you,” she says while being interviewed over the phone.

Being in a rosary group “doesn’t mean that out of five decades of the rosary, my mind isn’t wandering on four and a half of them about what groceries I have to get,” she says. “So I’m not a really good Catholic; I just want to be a good Catholic.”

Acting only a couple months per year works out perfectly, she says with a laugh, “because so many scripts are disrespectful to women, deny the dignity of human beings, or mock Christianity or some other religion.” Those scripts end up in the trash.

“My faith has had a terrible effect on my career! I could have made a lot more do-re-mi!” Fallon Hogan kvetches, only partly tongue-in-check. “But I figure when it’s all over, God’s not going to care how much money I made. I may, but him … no.

“I feel really sorry for kids going into this business in their 20s because there are more and more scripts that I would never touch,” she says. “And when you say no to a project, people basically think you’re insane. They’re like, ‘What, are you kidding me? Don’t you realize what this could do for your career?’ ”

Talking the Walk
Fallon Hogan not only lets her faith guide her roles but — especially in recent years — she hasn’t shied away from speaking about her faith to her co-workers.

When the cast and crew of the movie “New in Town” gathered for a meal before filming started, one of the producers, a former Catholic, asked Fallon Hogan, “You’re a practicing Catholic, are you? It’s just a cultural thing, isn’t it?”

She replied, “No, I’m a big fat holy roller!” The producer and other crew members proceeded to ask her challenging questions like why a good God would allow the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami — so what was supposed to be a warm get-together became a religious debate.

“I think the other actors and director at the table were, like, ‘Oh my gosh.’ But I had no choice,” she says. “It was so personal to me that I had to defend myself.”
Happily, the outcome was good: “It developed into a great friendship between myself and the producer,” she says. “The conversation was a way to get to know what a person is all about right away, instead of getting to know someone over the course of the two and a half months of filming. I sang ‘Getting to Know You’ to everyone as we exited the restaurant.”

As she told christiancinema.com, “There’s a feeling among a lot of Christians that there’s this conspiracy against Christianity, but there isn’t. People are interested and they want to hear [about] your faith. I think a lot of times we’re afraid to talk about it. As I get older, I’m becoming less afraid to talk about it. I think people find that interesting, just as I find it interesting to talk with people of other faiths and religious backgrounds.”

Humor helps her a lot, she admits. “I can get away with a lot more than many other people can — I don’t think people think I’m preaching or arrogant or holier than thou. My approach is, ‘OK, this is the way it is, and like it or lump it,’ but with a sense of humor.

“My mother used to tell me, ‘You’re just like your father, you have no inhibitions,’ ” she reveals. “I’m not patting myself on the back. A lot of people are impressed with others. I’m not impressed, so I’m not nervous. I think if you have a really strong faith, you’re not really impressed by people. They’re just people. Who cares if they have a big title? But this quality can be mistaken for being flip or irreverent, when, in fact, I do respect those who have gone before me, but people are just people to me.”

That disinclination to put anyone on a pedestal means she gets along well with the famous people she has performed with, including Renee Zellweger, Lauren Bacall, Kirk Douglas, Lily Tomlin and Harry Connick Jr., as well as with the non-celebrities she interacts with in her daily life.

**A Born Performer**

Raised by devout parents in a suburb of Syracuse, N.Y., Fallon Hogan calls herself an “uninteresting Catholic, who never veered away or had a period of doubt.”

Her mother was even stricter about movies than she is. “I remember inviting a friend to see a movie with my mother and
Faith-Filled and Funny

me when I was 13,” the actress relates. “A character in the film said the word ‘prostitute’ and we were up and out of the theater in two seconds. My mother told the ticket agent, ‘I think it’s disgusting.’

“Until then, I didn’t know what a prostitute was,” Fallon Hogan says.

Even as a little girl, she loved to perform in plays, a quality also possessed by her late father, who was a lawyer. After graduating as an English major from LeMoyne University in Syracuse, she decided to become an actress. She happened to meet CUA alumna Linda Miller, the daughter of TV actor Jackie Gleason, who suggested she earn a Master of Fine Arts in acting at Catholic University; Fallon Hogan followed that advice, graduating in 1985.

In addition to the skills and techniques of acting, she learned two lessons at CUA that proved crucial to her future success. One was being steered toward being a character actress through what she calls a humbling remark.

“I considered myself to be an ingénue — on the good-looking side of the spectrum,” recalls Fallon Hogan. “But Professor Jim Waring, who was casting a Catholic University play, said I was a character actress. I asked him, ‘What do you mean?’ He replied, ‘Ingénues are the beauties, and you’re more of a character actress.’ ” Initially nonplussed, she was later thankful for his comment.

Her other lesson came from having to do a solo graduate thesis performance consisting of two comedic pieces from plays, two classic pieces and a song.

“Nobody would ever do a one-woman show unless they were forced to,” she says, “but once you’ve done one, it’s like having a child — you figure out you could actually do it again.”

That lesson proved to be her entree to success. Four years after graduating from Catholic University, while working as a receptionist in New York City and consistently getting turned down for roles in plays, she wrote a one-woman play in which she performed 10 comedic pieces about different characters. The characters included a Midwestern standup comedian who isn’t funny, a no-nonsense cheerleading coach, and a little girl selling paintings door-to-door who wears a sweatshirt on her head because she is afraid of bats swooping down and getting stuck in her hair.

Fallon Hogan performed the play, titled Bat Girl, in the lobby of the Westside Arts Theatre in 1989, the same year she got married. Reviewing the show, the New York Post hailed her as “comedy’s newest girl most likely,” and Back Stage magazine dubbed her the most promising new female comedian.

That show plus her critically acclaimed performance in a production of the Vince Waldron play American Splendor led to her playing the role of Elaine’s roommate on “Seinfeld,” which led to “Saturday Night Live” hiring her onto its acting ensemble in 1991. On the latter program she went on to play such roles as the smartest woman in the world, a dimwit community college student, a single person eating Lonely Choice dinners, and a gossipy sorority sister constantly blurting, “Oh, my God!”

And how did she feel about the skits on “Saturday Night Live” that some might consider to be morally questionable? The answer came just three weeks after joining the cast. She was asked to be in a sketch that she was very uncomfortable with and refused to be in, despite her fellow cast members’ repeated pleading.

“But they started to get to know that about me and respect that,” says Fallon Hogan, who speaks well of the series: “I will forever be grateful for the doors that my time on SNL opened for me.”

Though she left after one year, SNL did, indeed, prove a springboard to movie roles, which have been her bread and butter ever since. She also does guest spots on TV situation comedies and dramas. Besides playing Elaine’s roommate on three episodes of “Seinfeld” and Alec Baldwin’s sister on “30 Rock,” she has appeared on “Law and Order,” for example.

Last year a reporter visited her home and asked if her part in “New in Town” was her biggest role to date. Fallon Hogan’s husband, Peter, was in the room and interrupted at that point: “Whoa, whoa, whoa, her first big break was when she auditioned to be my wife. I cast her in the biggest role of her life.”

Coming Attractions

Catch Siobhan Fallon Hogan playing the mother of children’s Internet comedy sensation Fred Figglehorn in “Fred: The Movie,” which is scheduled to premier on the Nickelodeon television network in August. Also catch her in the movie “We Need to Talk About Kevin,” starring Tilda Swinton and John C. Reilly, which is tentatively scheduled to reach theaters in early 2011.
Pat Carroll is another actress who took classes in CUA’s drama department and has turned down many parts that she felt would compromise her Catholic faith.

Primarily a stage and television actress, she won a 1956 Emmy for her role in Sid Caesar’s “Caesar’s Hour,” has been nominated for two other Emmys, was nominated for a Tony Award for her role in the Broadway singing revue Catch a Star, and received a platinum record for the soundtrack of the animated movie hit “The Little Mermaid,” in which she acted/sang the part of the flamboyant sea-witch Ursula (see photo at left). In addition, Carroll won best-actress awards from the New York Outer Critics Circle and from the Drama Desk for her performance in the one-woman play Gertrude Stein, Gertrude Stein, Gertrude Stein, which she also commissioned the writing of and produced.

The actress says that whenever she is sent a play script to consider, she asks two questions: “One, is the character fascinating? And two, if my mother and father were sitting on the front row along with the five nuns who taught me in school, would they be upset about seeing me in this play? Would seeing me in the play make their faces fall?”

“I have turned down many a play thinking of that group of seven in the front row,” she says.

“This rule has saved me from some rather large mistakes,” she adds. “Sometimes the role I turned down was fascinating and I wanted to say I could push my rule aside. But I knew that the jury in the first row would stop me from any pleasure in playing it.”

What nixes a script for her is not vulgarity, which she says is sometimes an important part of the character. Nor, she says, does she require her character to have religious piety, or “to be a goody-two-shoes, which is boring as hell.” On the contrary, she says she loves playing evil characters, who can be a wonderful challenge to try to understand and portray.

What nixes a play for her is a boring script or “something immoral being lauded.”

Back in 1949, Carroll was producing and directing theater productions for troops stationed at the Fort Meade military base in Maryland. Asked to open a new theater at another base and to teach theater classes there, she felt she needed more training, so she took classes in CUA’s drama department.

She never enjoyed a class more than Professor Walter Kerr’s on aesthetic theory, she says, though she admits she only got a C in it. Thirty years later, in 1979, she took the one-woman play about writer Gertrude Stein to an off-Broadway theater. Kerr, who by then had left CUA’s faculty and become the main theater reviewer for The New York Times, gave the play a rave review.

The actress took the occasion to write him at the Times saying, “Walter, I didn’t do too well in your class, but I feel like with your review, I’ve just passed.”
CUA
Warmly Welcomes New President

By Carol Casey

Right: Scenes from welcoming reception for President Garvey and his wife, Jeanne, who is pictured in the center photograph, second from the left.
On the morning of June 15, when the university had been effectively shut down by a broken water main, Great Room B of the Edward J. Pryzbyla University Center nevertheless was packed with approximately 350 students, faculty and staff who came out to welcome new university President John H. Garvey to campus.

After the opening prayer by outgoing president and newly named Bishop David M. O’Connell and an introduction by Archbishop Allen Vigneron, the excited crowd greeted Garvey with sustained applause. Obviously moved, Garvey responded, “It is the greatest honor I have received to be asked to undertake this job and have the privilege of serving as the president of Catholic University.”

Garvey, officially named that day as CUA’s 15th president, is the third layperson to lead the national university of the Catholic Church. In his introduction, Most Rev. Vigneron, archbishop of Detroit, who is chair of the Catholic University Board of Trustees, chair of the presidential search committee, and an alumnus of CUA, said, “The man we have found is profoundly equipped, exceptionally equipped, to be our leader. He’s a distinguished jurist, renowned for his scholarship and his teaching, a proven leader in the world of higher education in the United States and he is himself a man of great faith. In President Garvey we have found a man of the Church who will lead the university forward on the basis of what Bishop O’Connell has done.”

Acknowledging Bishop O’Connell’s accomplishments as president of CUA, Garvey said, “The appeal of this position for me was much greater than it might have been 10 or 12 years ago, because of the changes that Bishop O’Connell has made at the university and what a great place it has become. In walking around the campus with him, I’ve seen what affection you all hold for him in your hearts. If I can approach that in my term of service I’ll consider myself happy.”

Appointed Boston College Law School dean in 1999, Garvey served as a professor at the University of Notre Dame Law School from 1994 to 1999, a visiting professor at the University of Michigan Law School from 1985 to 1986, and a professor at the University of Kentucky College of Law from 1976 to 1994. He is no stranger to Washington, having served from 1981 to 1984 in the U.S. Department of Justice as assistant to the solicitor general.

At age 34 he was elected to the American Law Institute. From 2008 to 2009, he served as the president of The Association of American Law Schools.

Garvey is the author of What Are Freedoms For? (Harvard University Press, 1996) and the co-author of four books, including Sexuality and the U.S. Catholic Church (Herder & Herder 2007) and Religion and the Constitution (Aspen, second edition 2006). He earned a J.D. in 1974 at Harvard Law School, where he served as treasurer of the Harvard Law Review. He earned an A.B. in 1970 at the University of Notre Dame.

Despite 30 years as a professor and administrator in higher education, Garvey said, “All my experience has been in law schools, so there’s a lot I don’t know. In the coming year, I’m going to be listening a lot.”

“When I came to Boston College in 1999, I was new to that institution. My plan was to go around listening. ‘Well, John,’ said one faculty member, ‘around here we have a lot of people who talk, but we don’t have a lot who listen.’ So, if Catholic University has a similar deficiency, I hope to supply that.”

In a speech frequently punctuated by laughter from the crowd, Garvey talked about what attracted him to the job, beginning with his and his wife’s commitment to Catholic higher education. “We have five children who collectively have 92 years of Catholic education.”

Beyond that, he also sees much opportunity for CUA to serve the Church and the Catholic community by “raising its own ambitions as an institution of higher education. If we want our voices to be heard, we need to be better than our academic counterparts,” he said, adding that he looked forward to working with everyone on campus to achieve that goal.

But most important, he said, “We must never forget that this university exists in the first and the last instance for its students. What we are doing is preparing these young people for their futures of service to the Church and the country.”

Prior to moving on to a reception in his honor in Great Room A, Garvey said, “I can’t tell you how heartwarming it is to see such a large crowd of you in spite of the fact that there is no water. I know what a sacrifice it is and I don’t want to keep you.” But the crowd was in no hurry to leave, forming a line of well-wishers that kept growing. An hour and a half later, Garvey, his wife, Jeanne, and Bishop O’Connell left the Pryzbyla Center, late for their luncheon.

Garvey assumed the presidency effective July 1.

To view a video of the new president’s introduction to the CUA community, see http://live.cua.edu/garvey.cfm.
God Talk
By Kate Kennedy

One hundred years and differences in language, tradition and geography separated the lives and writings of St. Bonaventure and Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali.

Neither the Franciscan theologian nor the Muslim philosopher/theologian envisioned that anyone would be comparing his writing with that of an author of another faith. Yet that is what Rev. Sidney Griffith, S.T., and advanced students in the course Muslim God, Christian God did when they read St. Bonaventure’s *The Soul’s Journey to God* and al-Ghazali’s *The Niche of Lights* during the spring 2010 semester.

Students discovered in the words of Bonaventure, who died in what is now France in 1274, and al-Ghazali, who died in Persia in 1111, a shared focus on spiritual growth. Despite their religious differences, they wrote with similar themes, including the use of light as a metaphor. “Light is a metaphor for God, of course,” Father Griffith says, “and for what it is that God communicates to creatures.”

It’s those similarities — and differences — in writings of Christian and Muslim thinkers that is the point for the graduate theology class. “We’re reading texts by different authors in the two different traditions precisely for the purpose of comparing,” says Father Griffith, professor and chair of the Department of Semitic and Egyptian Languages and Literatures and a priest of the Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity. “We’re looking for similarities and dissimilarities in themes, in concepts, in recommendations for spiritual practice.”

The Muslim God, Christian God course is most often taken by students in the religion and culture concentration of CUA’s School of Theology and Religious Studies. But it is also open to students attending the 13 other schools in the Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area. Three Georgetown University students were in the class last spring, including Rev. Diego Sarrio, a priest with the Missionaries of Africa. “It fits perfectly with my program of studies at Georgetown, which focuses on a comparative approach to religious pluralism,” the first-year doctoral student says.

The students brought a diversity of religions, languages and backgrounds to the course. Meeting each Tuesday afternoon, the class included a Muslim woman, a Catholic priest from Spain (Father Sarrio), a French seminarian and a Mormon man. A Lutheran woman from Europe and a Frederick, Md., man rounded out the class of six students.

Zeyneb Sayilgan, a second-year doctoral student in theology at Georgetown, was born and raised in Germany as the child of Kurdish immigrants from Turkey. “It is always an enrichment when members of different faith traditions are represented in class,” she says. “That adds to our learning and deepens our understanding. It is also valuable when a variety of perspectives can be offered on a particular issue or concept.”

Father Griffith agrees. “When we read the texts, often the Muslim students will have a slightly different or sometimes a considerably different take on them. It definitely enriches the course.”
Starting with the establishment of Islam, the course examines writings from different historical periods with an eye toward identifying interaction between the two faith communities.

During a class meeting early in the semester, the professor and students examined the Quran for references to Christians, including critiques of Christian doctrine and practices, to get a sense of how Muslims might regard Christians.

Father Griffith cited a passage that he says shows “the Quran expects there to be conversations between Muslims and Christians at the very least. These conversations are meant to be in the manner of actually arguing about religion. Arguing about religion was not politically incorrect, as perhaps it is in our era.”

He points out that the language in the Quran is not temperate. It “offends modern sensibilities,” he notes. “But it is nevertheless a conversation.”

The writings of Muslim philosophers and of Christian thinkers such as St. John of Damascus and St. Thomas Aquinas are read in the following weeks. “I attempt to choose texts in such a way that we’re always talking about God,” Father Griffith says.

Some believe that the ways in which Christians and Muslims talk about God are so different that they are talking about different Gods. But Father Griffith says that thinking goes too far. Despite the differences in the writings and the way they critique the other religion, he says, “there are many things that are comparable — the way that different writers speak about God, the way that different writers speak about living a responsible life and response to God’s call.

“Both Muslims and Christians are willing to speak of the one God who is the creator of all that exists, the God of Jacob, of Abraham, Ishmael and Isaac,” Father Griffith says.

“So is this the same God or not?” he asks. “I personally think that Muslims and Christians are talking about the same God. But that they have very different theologies, and the very different theologies have very different thematic emphases and even affirmations that are in some instances mutually contradictory — the Christian affirmation that Jesus is the Son of God versus the Islamic denial that this is the case.”

The author of the book The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque: Christians and Muslims in the World of Islam, Father Griffith studies and writes about the millions of Christians who have lived alongside Muslims in the Arabic-speaking world and how they have responded to challenges from Islam.

A scholar in comparative theology, he is a well-known expert in the field of Christian-Muslim relations. “It was always my desire to take one of his courses and benefit from his extraordinary knowledge,” Sayilgan says.

Father Griffith’s goal is to help students realize that they can study other religions in an objective way — “that one can try to gain a sense of the perspective that one religion brings in its attitudes to another religion, especially when critique is involved,” he says.

Centuries have passed since many of the religious texts being studied were published. Yet these writings have a bearing on contemporary attitudes and current events.

“We have had more than a millennium of mutual hostility on a religious level,” Father Griffith says. “Both Muslims and Christians have a large fund of inherited prejudices and negative attitudes and stereotyping with regard to one another.”

As Carl Cranney, a CUA doctoral student in systematic theology and a Mormon, notes, “Any attempt to increase understanding of another faith’s tradition cannot help but increase understanding among people hailing from disparate faiths.”

For Brandon Turner, a CUA doctoral candidate from Frederick, Md., perspective on current events is found in the writings of Timothy I of Baghdad, a patriarch of the Nestorian Christian Church who lived from 727 to 823. “He understood what the Quran itself says, took seriously its critique of Christianity, while also taking seriously the orthodoxies of his own faith.”

To complete the course, students do a research project. The subject of Father Sarrio’s project was Ahmad ibn Taymiyya, a Muslim theologian of the 14th century. During one class meeting, Father Sarrio suggests to his classmates that Ibn Taymiyya might have believed that Christians and Muslims worship different Gods.

Father Griffith — who wants students to come to their own conclusions about the two faiths based on their reading and study — found Father Sarrio’s comment interesting. “But,” Father Griffith cautions, “I think we have to make a distinction between the talk about God and the God about whom we are talking. That’s at the heart of the matter.”
**The Presidential Pardon Power**
By Jeffrey Crouch, Ph.D. in politics, 2007
University Press of Kansas

An assistant professor of politics at American University, Crouch shows in 149 well-written pages how the use of the presidential pardon power has changed since Gerald Ford pardoned Richard Nixon. Whereas Ford granted Nixon’s pardon for the good of the country, Crouch argues, subsequent presidents have had self-preservation and repayment of monetary favors foremost among their motivations. In this evenhanded work, the author traces the roots of federal executive clemency, dissects the ways and circumstances in which presidents Ford, George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush wielded the power, and speculates on why it has been invoked relatively infrequently in recent times.

**The Human Drummer: Thoughts on the Life Percussive**
By Hal Howland, M.A. in musicology, 1976
SeaStory Press

With a distinctive, personal writing voice, classical and jazz percussionist Howland presents the ABCs of making a life in music and, by extension, in any of the arts. Professional musicians as well as music students and their parents will find solid advice about day jobs, fitness, and equipment care, among many other things, as well as Howland’s extensive research on timpani. General-interest readers can enjoy Howland’s musical memories and informed opinions as well as his interviews with drummers John Densmore of The Doors and Graeme Edge of the Moody Blues. Reference sections include a professional directory and an irreverent but useful glossary.

**Embedded With Organized Labor: Journalistic Reflections on the Class War at Home**
By Steve Early, J.D. 1975
Monthly Review Press

Combining the scrappy approach of a union organizer, the intellectual rigor of a lawyer and the skills of a seasoned journalist, Early looks at the American labor movement from within, informed by his deep commitment to the Catholic social teaching that workers have a fundamental right to organize and join unions.

**Advice to the Young Physician: On the Art of Medicine**
By Dr. Richard Colgan, B.A. in biology, 1977
Springer Science+Business Media

This award-winning professor at the University of Maryland School of Medicine offers history, practical advice and inspiration to help young doctors become healers rather than mere technicians in straight-ahead prose with a liberal sprinkling of anecdotes. The first half of the book profiles inspiring physicians — from Hippocrates to bioethicist and former CUA president Edmund Pellegrino — on their contributions to the art of medicine. Colgan turns to more practical matters in the second half, advising on communicating well and with civility, establishing a good practice, “searching for the true poetry of life” in the midst of one’s work, and facing the sometimes quixotic task of caring for and healing fellow human beings.

**“let the little children come to me”**: Childhood and Children in Early Christianity
By Cornelia B. Horn (M.A. 1997, Ph.D. 2001, in early Christian studies) and John W. Martens
CUA Press

This book has much to offer those interested in the lives of children or in the early centuries of Christianity. Clearly written and extensively researched using patristic and biblical sources, apocryphal literature, and other Greco-Roman and Jewish texts, “let the little children come to me” examines how Christianity changed and didn’t change the lives of children within ancient Greek, Roman, Jewish and Christian cultures. Children of the wealthy and children who were slaves are equally in the book’s purview. Readers will find that this comprehensive, honest and sympathetic study of Christian children’s lives reinforces our common humanity with the ancients who struggled to put Christ’s words into practice.

— C.C.
Join the 2010 Ireland Pub and Shopping Tour (Dec. 1–6)

It’s our fourth trip in as many years! Over the past four years, more than 170 alumni and friends have traveled to Ireland with the CUA alumni relations staff to soak up culture, friendship and fun. This year’s itinerary is brand-new and includes:

- Belfast, a city that has emerged from decades of strife to become a vibrant, buzzing destination
- The Giant’s Causeway — an impressive geological formation over 60 million years old that gave rise to many Irish legends
- Delightful Donegal, with soaring cliffs rising almost 1,000 feet above the North Atlantic, delicious seafood and beautiful woolen goods
- Plenty of free time to explore these charming cities and villages, or to find a quaint old pub to while away an hour, or two!

Even if you’ve been to Ireland before, you haven’t been there with us! Make friends and memories with fellow CUA alumni.

Make plans now: limited seating available.

For more information, call the Office of Alumni Relations at 202-319-5608 (800-288-ALUM toll-free) or visit www.cuatoday.com.

Note: Dates and times are subject to change.
Homecoming and Reunions Weekend 2010
October 1–3, 2010
DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN…
Your college attire — cringe-worthy now — was at the peak of fashion? 
Your friend was crowned in the Homecoming Court? 
School Masses and favorite priests made going to CUA special? 
College memories last forever, and will make you laugh, cry, swoon, giggle and, most important, reminisce.

Are you celebrating a reunion? If you are in the class of ’60, ’65, ’70, ’75, ’80, ’85, ’90, ’95, ’00, ’05 or ’09, you are! The alumni office wants to hear your favorite memories from your time at Catholic University. To share anecdotes, please e-mail Meghan Comey at comey@cua.edu.

Help make new memories and re-live old ones at Homecoming and Reunions Weekend — Oct. 1–3, 2010. For details, visit www.cuatoday.com. Or, to join your Reunions Committee, e-mail comey@cua.edu.

A Well-Chosen Gift
A gift of CUA chairs and lamps is the perfect way to honor your CUA graduate, family member, retiree, faculty member or employee. These heirloom-quality pieces are your gift of lasting beauty for that special someone.

The beautiful CUA crest is laser-engraved in intricate detail on each handcrafted chair or lamp, making this a treasured gift for years to come. Add your own laser-engraved inscription if you wish.

Place your order today. Simply visit www.standardchair.com or call Standard Chair of Gardner at 800-352-5885 and ask to order your Catholic University chair or lamp. Please mention CUA’s alumni relations office, as a portion of your purchase benefits alumni programming.

CUA takes on the Irish November 6!
Take a trip with CUA alumni to South Bend, Ind., to see the CUA men’s basketball team play the Fighting Irish of Notre Dame. For the low price of $125 you will get:

- Bus from Chicago’s O’Hare Airport to South Bend on Saturday morning, Nov. 6
- Behind-the-scenes tour of Notre Dame’s campus (including the football stadium)
- Pre-game reception
- Game ticket
- Hotel room for Saturday night
- Bus back to O’Hare on Sunday, Nov. 7


For more details, see www.cuatoday.com/notredame.
Nominate Fellow Alums for Awards

Each year, Catholic University's Alumni Association recognizes successful alumni by bestowing achievement awards on them. Nominate deserving alumni and others for these awards by completing this form and sending it to: Office of Alumni Relations, The Catholic University of America, Washington, DC 20064. Please indicate the award that best represents each nominee's accomplishments. You may also submit a nomination online by visiting www.cuatoday.com, entering your security code (which, if you're a first-time registrant, can be found above your name on the mailing label of each issue of CUA Magazine), and clicking on “Alumni Recognition.”

Award for Consideration:

- James Cardinal Gibbons Medal — for service to Church, nation or CUA*
- Frank A. Kuntz '07 Award — for unsung heroes in service to CUA*
- George J. Quinn ’50 Distinguished Service Award — for service to the CUA Alumni Association

* Can be awarded to a non-alumnus.

General Alumni Awards:

- Alumni Achievement Award
- Young Alumni Merit Award

CUA Athletics Awards:

- CUA Athletic Hall of Fame Award (nominate an alumnus, team or coach)

Award Nominee Information

Nominee's Name: __________________________________________________________
CUA Degree: _____________________________________________________________
Nominee’s Class Year: ______________ Nominee’s School: ________________________
Street Address: ____________________________________________________________
City: ______________________________________ State: ___________ Zip: _________
Home Phone: ________________________ Work Phone: _________________________
E-mail Address: ____________________________________________________________
Accomplishments and Honors: _______________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Reasons for Nomination: ____________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Nominator’s Information

Nominator's Name: _________________________________________________________
Street Address: ____________________________________________________________
City: ______________________________________ State: ___________ Zip: _________
Home Phone: ________________________ Work Phone: _________________________
E-mail Address: ____________________________________________________________

60 Years of Brotherhood Between ADG and CUA

On Oct. 2, the Alpha Delta Gamma (ADG) national Catholic social fraternity will be celebrating the 60th anniversary of its Kappa Chapter at CUA. ADG is one of the oldest student organizations on CUA’s campus.

ADG was founded in 1924 upon the Jesuit ideals of true manhood, sound learning and the unity of fraternal brotherhood. Members strive to advance brotherhood and personal development through five “S’s”: Spiritual, Social, Service, School Spirit, and Scholastic. In 1950, several World War II veterans who were in CUA’s architecture program identified with these ideals and brought an ADG chapter to CUA. The rest, as they say, is history — and a rich history at that!

The brothers of ADG, whether at Orientation or Homecoming, have made their positive presence known at CUA. Distinguished ADG alumni include Cardinal Theodore McCarrick, former CUA chancellor, and Maj. Gen. Donald Lamontagne, recent inductee into the university’s Athletic Hall of Fame. On a more ordinary scale, all brothers go on to establish productive lives — whether, for example, as a police officer, an attorney at one of America’s top law firms, or the consummate family man. The reason for these results is simple: the bond of brotherhood, coupled with a CUA education, ensures that every Alphadelt is a well-rounded student and member of society.

On a personal note, I take great pride in the fact that my circle of friends from CUA includes not only those with whom I graduated, but also ADG alumni older and younger than me. I know that I have a common bond with these men who believe in the same Jesuit and fraternal ideals that were brought to our campus six decades ago.

For more information on the CUA chapter’s 60th anniversary celebration, visit http://www.alphadeltagamma.org/ccaa/60th.htm.

— William J. Phelan IV (B.A. 2004, M.A./J.D. 2007), president, ADG Capital City Alumni Association
Class Notes ...

'40s

John A. Cifala, who attended CUA from 1940 to 1942, received the O.J. Snyder Memorial Medal from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine in gratitude for his 50 years as a charter member and two-time president of the college’s alumni association. A proponent of osteopathic principles and practice, he led efforts to ensure that osteopathic physicians received full recognition and licensure in all 50 states. For his lifelong dedication to advancing the profession, he was honored by the American Osteopathic Association’s Bureau of Osteopathic History and Identity as a “great pioneer in osteopathic medicine.” He is married to Laura Amalfitano Cifala, B.S.N. 1945 (NURS), and lives in Arlington, Va.

'50s

Marjorie Perloff, M.A. 1956, Ph.D. 1965 (A&S), has co-edited The Sound of Poetry/The Poetry of Sound (University of Chicago Press), a book of essays that addresses connections between poetry and sound. She is scholar-in-residence at the University of Southern California.

'60s

Frederick Ahearn, M.S.W. 1961 (SOCSV), of Washington, D.C., a CUA professor of social work, has received the 2010 Social Work Hall of Fame Award from his doctoral alma mater, Columbia University. Co-director of CUA’s Center for International Social Development, he received the 2009 Global Education Award from the Council on Social Work Education and the 2008 Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Association of Social Workers.

'Sister Clareck Carroll, M.S.N. 1967 (NURS), retired as an associate professor of obstetrics/gynecology at the University of Mississippi Medical Center in December 2009. In May she began work as a nurse-midwife practitioner at the Alma Mater Hospital in Gros-Morne, Haiti.


Paul G. Gaffney II, M.S.E. 1969 (ENGR), president of Monmouth University in West Long Branch, N.J., has been elected a member of the National Academy of Engineering. Membership honors those who have made outstanding contributions to engineering research, practice or education. Gaffney, a retired Navy vice admiral, formerly commanded both the Naval Research Laboratory and Office of Naval Research. He continues to participate in federal technology policy forums.

'70s


Cathy Hanman Hotka, B.A. 1975 (A&S), and Michael J. Hotka, B.A. 1975 (A&S), celebrated their 35th wedding anniversary this summer. They live in Washington, D.C., and are involved with CUA class reunion plans.

Mary Ellen Green Hettinger, B.A. 1976 (A&S), of Amherst, N.H., has been appointed to the New Hampshire Commission on the Status of Women by Gov. John Lynch. She and her husband, Scott, a project manager for Nokia Siemens Networks, have been married 29 years. They have two children: Marcella, who is a yogi and a finance administrator for the Hard Rock Café in Toronto, and Colin, who is an intern working for the U.S. Soccer Federation in Chicago.

Richard Scheick, B.S. Arch. 1977, M.Arch. 1980 (ARCH), of Clinton Township, N.J., has joined H2M, an architectural, engineering, planning and environmental service firm in Parsippany. His title is senior project architect. Previously, he was an associate project manager at the RBA Group in Parsippany.

'80s

Sister Charlene Smith, F.S.P.A., M.A. 1980 (A&S), M.S.L.S. 1987 (LIS), has co-written Thea’s Song: The Life of Thea Bowman (Orbis Books, 2010), the first major biography of CUA alumna Sister Thea Bowman, F.S.P.A., M.A. 1970, Ph.D. 1973 (A&S), a bridgebuilder between racial groups who has been discussed by many as a possible candidate for beatification. Sister Smith was a close friend of Sister Thea’s and, after the latter’s death in 1990, coordinated the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration’s clearinghouse for issues related to Sister Thea.

Amy Freeman, B.S.N. 1981 (NURS), of Baltimore, has been named president and CEO of Providence Hospital in Washington, D.C., where she began her nursing career more than 30 years ago. Assuming the CEO post in March, she has responsibility over the 408-bed teaching hospital, the 252-bed Carroll Manor Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, and primary health care, senior well-care and mental health/addiction treatment centers in the D.C. area.

Gail Boggio, B.A. 1982 (A&S), completed her term as president of the Women’s Bar Association of the State of New York, a 3,800-member organization. She lives in Scarsdale, N.Y., with her husband of 22 years, Michael Shalhoub.

Mitchell “Mitch” J. Landrieu, B.A. 1982 (A&S), formerly Louisiana’s lieutenant governor, was elected mayor of New Orleans in February. He received more than 65 percent of the votes,
despite the fact he was one of 11 candidates in the race.

In tandem with his wife, Mary, Michael J. McKay, S.T.L. 1984, S.T.D. 1991 (THEO), has launched CatholicQuiz.com to respond to Pope Benedict XVI’s appeal that Catholic schools and parish religious education programs address kids “where they are” on electronic media. The membership website, intended for Catholic families and educators, features 12 games and quizzes that teach Catholic faith knowledge. Seven thousand questions and answers cover 10 knowledge categories and four challenge levels (appropriate for ages 5 to adult). More than 4,200 of the Q&A’s are available in Spanish. The site offers a score-keeping system for tracking players’ achievement, and a Build-A-Quiz capacity for teachers/parents to write and offer their own Q&A’s. McKay is director of refugee services for Catholic Charities in the Diocese of San Diego.


George Kapusinski, B.A. 1988 (A&S), of Catonsville, Md., teaches computer science at Seton Keough High School, an all-girls Catholic school in Baltimore. In May he appeared on CatholicTV to demonstrate innovative things that he is doing in the classroom with technology, including using robots and making green-screen videos (filming a student in front of a green background and then inserting a movie or picture as a background, as is done to make films such as “Avatar”). He has been recognized for his excellent teaching by the Archdiocese of Baltimore and the National Honor Society.

Margaret Luongo, B.A. 1989 (A&S), of Hamilton, Ohio, published her first collection of short stories, If the Heart Is Lean (Louisiana State University Press). She was promoted to associate professor at Miami University (Oxford, Ohio), where she teaches creative writing.


Lola Pickering, M.S.L.S. 1996 (LIS), of Silver Spring, Md., retired from the Library of Congress in January 2008 and says she has been enjoying every minute of retirement.

Matthew Conboy, B.S. Arch. 1999 (ARCH), of Pittsburgh, was selected to create a site-specific art installation at the Mattress Factory in Pittsburgh in May and June. The Mattress Factory is a museum devoted to room-sized installations created by in-residence artists from around the world.

David S. Mao, M.S.L.S. 1999 (LIS), of Olney, Md., has been appointed to the newly created position of deputy law librarian of Congress. He previously worked for the Congressional Research Service in the Library of Congress. In his new position, he will manage the Library of Congress law library’s global legal research portfolio, including the Global Legal Information Network.

Christopher Tittel, M.F.A. 2000, of Key West, Fla., directed At Last Light, the debut production of the People’s Theater of Key West. He is one of the founders and now artistic director of the theater group. His production of At Last Light (written by playwright Kathy Cafferty) played to packed houses at the Tennessee Williams Performing Arts Center in Key West. Tittel has also written several plays, including A Live and Lusty Matter, documenting the rise and fall of film icon Clara Bow.


William Sutton, B.C.E. 2003 (ENGR), of Harrisburg, Pa., has been appointed to the board of directors of the Green Building Association of Central Pennsylvania. He is a project manager and the sustainability chair for Wohlsen Construction Co.

Bernhard Charlemagne, M.A. 2005 (A&S), of Washington, D.C., is a flight instructor at the National Flight Academy and at a Cessna and Diamond flight center. He was appointed a Federal Aviation Administration Gold Seal Flight Instructor and is a mission pilot with the Civil Air Patrol’s National Capital Wing, training pilots of F-16 interceptors in the D.C. area.

Meredith Niles, B.A. 2005 (A&S), was selected to receive the 2010 Emerging Public Policy Leadership Award from the American Institute of Biological Sciences. She is a former Fulbright scholar pursuing a Ph.D. in ecology at the University of California, Davis. Her thesis research on sustainable agriculture practices has implications for climate change mitigation and adaptation. She is a trainee of the National Science Foundation’s Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship program. Her work has included directing a national campaign to increase public awareness of the effects of climate on food production.

Brian Covino, B.A. 2006 (A&S), and Chris Davidson, B.S. Arch. 2006 (ARCH), of Belle Mead, N.J., are working with a small nonprofit in New Jersey called the Center for Faith Justice, an organization rooted in the Catholic tradition that educates younger students about the importance of social justice, community and living one’s faith.

Destiny Ann Hoyle, B.M. 2007, M.M. 2010 (MUSIC), of Hyattsville, Md., a violinist, was one of several first-prize winners of the American Protégé International Piano and Strings Competition in New York City, held in March at Carnegie Hall.

Sherry Supernavage Bohn, Ph.D. 2008 (A&S), of Alexandria, Va., a biosafety and biosecurity specialist with Battelle National Biodefense Institute, is now a member of the National Registry of Certified Microbiologists. In December she became certified as a specialist microbiologist in biological safety microbiology. To earn the credential, she met educational and experiential requirements and passed an examination to demonstrate her ability to develop, implement and manage a comprehensive biological safety program.

Diane Gordy, M.Arch. 2008 (ARCH), received unanimous approval by the Palm Beach, Fla., town council to build her “Main Street House in the Garden,” a 5,800-square-foot owner-occupied duplex project whose design was her CUA thesis project. The building’s design honors Palm Beach’s architectural legacy while its reduction in density mirrors town council goals. Gordy and her husband divide their time between Palm Beach and Washington, D.C., where she has her own interior architecture and design company. When they acquired the Palm Beach property, she was working on her master’s degree at CUA and felt that the development of her vision for her future home represented the perfect design thesis project.

Weddings


Jennifer Bailey, B.A. 2002 (A&S), and Andrew Paul, B.C.E. 2002 (ENGR), were married on Sept. 26, 2009, by Rev. Mark Mahoney, J.C.L. 2002 (CLAW). They live in Boston. Andy is a state traffic engineer and Jennifer is a graduate student at Boston University.

Michael Scoglio, B.M. 2004 (MUSIC), and Jennifer Bacon, B.A. 2005 (A&S), were married on Oct. 11, 2009. They live in Washington, D.C.

Allison Marie Sodo, B.A. 2004 (A&S), and Craig R. Avallone, B.A. 2003 (A&S), were married on Aug. 1, 2009. They live in Hoboken, N.J.

Alison LaRosa, B.M. 2006 (MUSIC), married Noe Montez on June 20, 2009. They live in Cleveland, where Alison is associate managing director of the Cleveland Play House.


Births


Matthew Baehr, B.A. 1999 (A&S), and Mary Roy Baehr, B.A. 2000 (A&S), of Bristow, Va., announce the birth of their daughter, Celia Niamh, on March 17. Celia joins her sister, Madeline.


Kimberly (Johnson) Kavanagh, B.S. Arch. 2001,
M.Arch 2003 (ARCH), and Matthew Kavanagh, B.S.Arch. 2003, M.Arch. 2005 (ARCH), welcomed their first child, Mackenzie Anne, on Dec. 14, 2009. They live in Clarksburg, Md.

Stephanie (Hummel) West, B.M. 2002 (MUSIC), and Rob West, B.E.E. 2001 (ENGR), announce the birth of their first child, Sophia Victoria, on March 7, 2010. They live in Columbia, Md.

Ellis M. Oster, B.A./M.A. 2003 (A&S), and wife Betsy announce the birth of their first child, Caroline Elizabeth, on March 27, 2010. They live in Kansas City, Mo.

Sarah “Sally” (Oram) Santellano, B.A. 2003 (A&S), and husband Louis welcomed their newborn, Rafael Thomas, on April 29, 2009. They live in Highland, Ind.

Jenna (LaPenta) Teddy, B.M. 2003 (MUSIC), and husband Justin announce the birth of their first child, Margaret Evelyn, on Nov. 8, 2009. They live in Kansas City, Mo.

Obituary:


Elizabeth Orleman Mustard, M.S.W. 1944, of Lake Park, Fla., March 14, 2010.


Sister Augusta Bernier, S.P., who graduated from the Catholic Sisters College in 1947, on Oct. 28, 2009. They live in Canandaigua, N.Y.

Sarah “Sally” (Oram) Santellano, B.A. 2003 (A&S), and husband Louis welcomed their newborn, Rafael Thomas, on April 29, 2009. They live in Highland, Ind.

Jenna (LaPenta) Teddy, B.M. 2003 (MUSIC), and husband Justin announce the birth of their first child, Margaret Evelyn, on Nov. 8, 2009. They live in Kansas City, Mo.

Xuan Huong Thi Pham, Ph.D. 1997, of Hoover, Ala., March 7, 2009.

Former Faculty/Staff


Juanita Hennessey Friday, assistant to the dean of the graduate school for the School of Arts and Sciences from 1948 to 1986, of Silver Spring, Md., June 27, 2009.

Correction
Alexander Giampietro, professor emeritus of art, whose Jan. 6 death was reported in the Spring 2010 issue, taught at CUA from 1949 to 1990.
Thumbs Up
I just wanted to say that I like the content of the magazine. This is one of the magazines that I actually read in bits and pieces. The articles are good and the variation in the length of the articles is also appealing. Keep up the good work.

Jim O’Reilly
B.A. 1965
Amherst, N.H.

Apocalypse Averted
Congratulations on the Spring 2010 edition of the magazine that ventures beyond the “usual” to present how America’s financial apocalypse was averted. For me, who earned a CUA graduate degree in economics, that interview with Edward Liddy was an excellent, understandable explanation of the crisis that nearly collapsed our economy. The questions were insightful and the answers were phrased in an understandable yet technical manner. This was a very good issue.

I can think of only one superior edition, the Spring 2004 magazine that featured “The Geri-Hatricks Win It All” and this not-too-modest guy...

Bill Wellington
M.A. 1951
Silver Spring, Md.

What About the Debt?
Thanks for the article on the economy (“Optimism for an Improving Economy”) in the Spring 2010 edition of CUA Magazine. It is a detailed summary of what has been wrong with the economy and a simplistic review of how the “recovery” is progressing.

The great shortcoming of the article is its failure to acknowledge the role of the public debt and accelerated deficit spending in the creation and solution of our economic problems.

It is the view of this writer that a U.S. constitutional amendment requiring a balanced federal budget is the answer and solution.

Bill D. Burlison
M.A. 1993
Advance, Mo.

Memories of Ed McMahon
I received the Fall 2009 CUA Magazine to find a tribute to Ed McMahon written by my long lost colleague Maureen McElroy. In the photo you ran, I’m just above and to the left of the lady leaning to shake Ed’s hand. Who knew I’d see a photo of a football game held at CU about a month after the Sept. 16, 1968, Capitol Theatre Gala in New York (not Washington, D.C., as the article reads) that began the campaign to build the Hartke Theatre at our alma mater?

In July of that year, and fresh off my tour with [the CUA-sponsored drama troupe named] the National Players, I walked into the Capitol Theatre Campaign office in New York and met Maureen. I said I could volunteer two days a week and was hired. That it became a 24/7 job is an understatement, and I was the lucky dude Maureen tapped to meet the eight Clydesdale horses at 6 a.m. in Hoboken, N.J., sail across the Hudson with them on a ferry, and arrange for five parking lots throughout New York City to “park” them along with their keepers and feed (no lot would take them for more than two hours). At 4 in the afternoon, we left the last lot and went slowly to 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (The “Tonight Show” was taped there at the time beginning at 5:30 p.m.)

All of the stars appearing on the “Tonight Show” were also to be guests at the Capitol Gala. At 7 p.m., Ed, Johnny Carson and all the guest stars piled into the Clydesdale wagon and were brought to the front of the old Capitol Theatre on Broadway and 50th Street. Ed was quite the showman and producer. The evening was a sterling success and I went on to work for Ed for more than three years before moving to Los Angeles in 1971.

Thank you, Maureen, for providing a warm remembrance of a very special time in my life.

Michael Cohen Mace
M.F.A. 1967
New York City
Every high school kid in Maryland must earn community service hours, and my daughter, Catherine, amiably performed hers with me — because she needed a ride. I had suggested the venue, a refurbished school that houses 75 homeless women and children in southwest Baltimore. It would be a jolt to a 15-year-old from a privileged, private-school environment to serve dinner to homeless families.

To my amazement, we hadn’t even left the shelter when Catherine informed me that she wanted to return. Immediately I regretted it; I, too, would have to put in 50 hours — twice that if you count driving time. That first day, though, we both had been moved by the teenage girl with long brown curls, whose sweet smile and gentle disposition seemed to calm the ruckus around her. She was dressed like Catherine, in jeans, a smart pullover and fuzzy boots. The next time we visited, she was gone, but her impact remained: Here had lived a girl who could be Catherine’s schoolmate.

We’re supposed to head to the kitchen when we arrive, but we stop on the way to greet the few women standing outside chatting, smoking and watching their kids. Once inside, as we pass the dorm, Catherine is able to glimpse rows of cots made up with pillows and blankets and surrounded by plastic bags and cardboard boxes serving as suitcases and dressers. This is a high-end shelter, a place where moms can live safely with kids, clothes and boxes of ramen noodles for months, until they land apartments or jobs.

For Catherine, it’s all about the kids. Last summer, a little girl I’ll call Alice invited Catherine into the dorm to show off the princess dress the child had worn to kindergarten graduation. Alice was charming; with uncommon questions, wise insights and smiling eyes, she lit up the room. Catherine waited while the little girl rummaged around and returned empty-handed; the dress was gone. Then, one day, she was gone; her mother, fighting once too often, was asked to leave. Catherine pined for Alice, wondering what befell her. A few weeks later, we stepped from our car in the shelter’s parking lot, and Catherine turned, startled. “Look!” she cried. There were Alice and her mom approaching, apparently to visit. “See,” said the tiny girl triumphantly, “I told you I’d come back.” Catherine works behind the counter, putting food on plates. I prefer to serve it. I waited tables at the Round Table on Wisconsin Avenue until 2 a.m. to pay rent my senior year at CUA. It was a revelation, every day an adventure with humanity, its highs and its lows. Here, too, you learn things. The other day I was bringing a drink to the hat lady and saw her bending to her daughter’s ear, whispering. “Thank you, God…”

The hat lady has been here from the beginning. I adore hats, and she looks good in them, and I always comment on them, and she always says thank you. That’s it, the entire relationship, except that she says the loudest “thank you,” turning to look at us, as she heads out the door. As polite as everyone is, they make it clear when they do not want to get to know you, and I did not push that boundary with the hat lady. Once, though, on the drive home, I saw her standing at the bus stop with friends and I waved. To my surprise, she waved back.

From their uniforms, we know some of the women work. Some of the teenage boys play football — we save them plates of dinner.
Everybody has a cell phone. For Catherine, that is the biggest surprise; if she couldn’t afford a place to live, she says, she wouldn’t spend $50 every month on a cell phone. I’m happy she’s thinking about priorities. But how else could the hat lady speak to her husband (I’ve noticed that she wears a wedding ring), not to mention potential employers?

There was a time when I wanted to know all the stories, find out all about people, tell the world! But here, it is better to let people be. To smile internally when somebody getting dinner sings to the room, “I’m moving out tomorrow!”, to ogle a tiny baby or to commiserate, mom to mom.

As far as I know, we are the only mother-daughter team, which Catherine says is “kinda cool,” and which, early on, made us an item of curiosity. “Is she your daughter?” asked a lady emptying the clothes dryer in the kitchen one night. We introduced ourselves, and she pointed out her own daughter, tall for 12.

It was late in August when Catherine and I first met Rebecca, a woman with large glasses, firm manner and cheery disposition. She was nine months pregnant and working on a laptop in the hallway. For a few weeks, before her three children returned from visiting relatives, she would have peace. That night she was keeping her distance from the increasingly heated buzz in the kitchen, too. In the middle of dinner, nearly all the women jumped up from their seats and ran out, hoping to see a fight.

Rebecca was finishing an associate’s degree and intended to enroll in Goucher College, on scholarship I assumed. Her oldest daughter, a sophomore like Catherine, was enrolled in one of the city’s premier public high schools. Rebecca wanted her younger daughter in the private school Catherine attends. She asked us about it.

After that, she regularly updated us on the children’s return to school, the new baby’s health, her search for housing. At dinner, the family had its own table, with Rebecca presiding, infant in arms, the oldest in basketball sweats, the middle son in school uniform, the second-grader darting out to give us hugs. On the drive home, Catherine pondered the question of a scholarship for Rebecca’s daughter: Could Catherine’s school help this family?

One night the three oldest children dined alone. I set aside my “listening only” rule to learn that Mom had gone to Target in a taxi. When Rebecca finally arrived and I put a plate of food in front of her, she revealed that she’d gone shopping to calm herself. She was still steaming, though, as she told me that the inspection on the family’s new house had been inexplicably postponed. I listened as she detailed the effort she’d taken to find someone in City Hall to get things moving. It might not have mattered, she said, except that her daughter’s school ring dance was approaching. She had expected to be in the new house by that special night. Now it was not going to happen.

I nodded, listening a long time; she’d been sick, the baby was sick and, that day, Rebecca had waited hours in a clinic for a doctor to examine her second-grader. I’d waited in that very clinic myself once, but only once. My daughter, too, was anticipating her ring dance. The only thing I worried about was whether she found the right dress. “It doesn’t matter,” Catherine told me after one frus-
trating shopping trip. “Yes,” I insisted, “it does.”

It takes extraordinary patience and resourcefulness to sustain a normal existence in poverty. What does a mother do when her daughter faces the prospect of telling her date to the all-important dance to pick her up at a homeless shelter? Rebecca announced her solution to save her daughter’s ring dance a few days later: “I’m going to rent a hotel room for the weekend,” she told me. Her determination to make things right reminded me of my own working, widowed mother of four. How had she ever eked out that $10 she sent me every few weeks in college?

One night on the drive through the shelter’s low-income neighborhood, I pointed out a branch of the Pratt Library. Wow. Catherine didn’t expect to find a library here. We talked about people who escaped poverty through books — Abraham Lincoln, for one. The very next visit to the shelter, I looked up from the food plates to see a resident holding a fork in one hand and an open paperback in the other. Catherine saw her, too, and laughed at herself; of course, poor people need libraries!

From the car window, Catherine now spied a world she had known only from books: mothers and children waiting at unsheltered bus stops, gated storefronts, the flashing blue lights of the cameras police install in drug crime areas. The tour guide in me noted the flashy car with darkened windows and other icons of neighborhoods plagued by drug dealing: cell phone store, liquor store, bail bond agencies (“You Ring, We Spring”), flanked by churches and funeral homes.

There are alternative ways to interpret the neighborhood. I take comfort in the planted patios behind some row houses. There’s the volunteer who returns to the neighborhood to visit her dad and work a dinner shift. And the elderly men under umbrellas laughing and playing cards on the lawn of a Caribbean-blue house — a wholly different image from that rendered by CUA alumnus Elliot Liebow in his 1967 path-breaking classic, Tally’s Corner, a book about men hanging out on Washington, D.C., street corners. His narrative investigation inspired me as an undergrad in the 1970s to work in then-gritty Adams Morgan, and later influenced my approach as a journalist.

Poverty has changed since the 1970s; many of the shelter’s volunteers are African-American and some shelter families are white. Adult chronic health problems seem to be influenced more by culture or habit or human failing than by the lack of nutritious food in childhood, as faced by the men on Tally’s Corner; it chills me to watch a 7-year-old child dump two tablespoons of sugar on his spaghetti. And, oh, the salt!

Humbling. That is how Catherine describes her time at the shelter. She appreciates the food on her own table more, she says, and she’s taken aback when shelter moms turn up their noses at what’s offered. We discuss the difference between being snobby and having preferences. Working together has given us an opportunity to talk about adult stuff, in an adult way.

Many Wednesdays, in the heat of summer, or braving drifts of snow, with homework and endless tasks undone and exhaustion setting in, one or the other of us announces we wish we didn’t have to go that night. Oddly, though, on the evenings we struggle to get to the shelter, we come away most energized. Catherine, back at her school auditorium, took the podium to launch a drive that netted two carloads full of toys and gifts. Just before Christmas, we delivered them.

Her 50 hours are nearly done, and we are ready to move on; she wants more meaningful time with kids and another project to organize. I’m happy to remain support staff. On the way home we talk through ideas: What about a vegetable garden families could work together? Why not teach moms to paint? Tutor kids? I allow myself to see us, years from now, still working together.

Patricia Meisol, a reporter from 1980 to 2005, has written for The Baltimore Sun, The Washington Post and the St. Petersburg (Fla.) Times. A politics major at CUA, she has returned to academe as a candidate for a master’s degree in public policy/international development at the University of Maryland.
**An Architect Finds His Métier**

In 1968, Don O’Neill began to take lessons in watercolor painting to improve his skill at producing architectural renderings, which until the computer age were often done in the medium of watercolor. He fell in love with watercolor painting during those lessons and in the 1980s quit his architecture practice to make his living as a painter. He did so until his death in 2007. He became a signature member of the American Watercolor Society, from which he twice received the Elizabeth Callan Award.

O’Neill earned his CUA architecture degree in 1953; as a watercolorist he specialized in paintings of buildings. This page displays his painting of the Mission Inn, a many-towered grand hotel in Riverside, Calif.
The One Hundred and Twenty-First Annual Commencement