

VISTAS

The Magazine of Villa Maria College



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PUBLISHER

Villa Maria College | 240 Pine Ridge Road | Buffalo, NY 14225
716.896.0700 | villa.edu

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When you read these pages of Vistas, we will be well into the spring semester. What an exciting academic year it has been at Villa Maria College. In fall 2016, we offered two new programs, Digital Filmmaking and Digital Media and Communication. New and returning students found many changes as we work to upgrade and renovate classrooms, labs, and social spaces on campus.

Our Recital Hall project is complete. A former conference room was transformed into a 21st Century classroom. New presentation technology was installed in a number of classrooms. The foyer area in the Main Building has been transformed into a welcoming area where students, faculty, staff, and guests can meet and relax.

Some of our most important changes are not as readily visible. Our Student Success Plan is working, with more students successfully completing their first year at Villa Maria and continuing their education here. Now in its second year, the Achieve Program for Students with Learning Differences is helping even more students be successful academically. Our Honors Program has doubled in size. All of this is

happening within the framework of a values-based education that emphasizes service to the community.

None of these changes would be possible without your help. I am grateful to the individuals, foundations, and corporate donors who invest in Villa Maria College and share our vision: to become the premier student centered college in Western New York. I ask for your continuing support as we move forward.

If you haven't been to Villa Maria College recently, spring is a wonderful time to visit as we celebrate our students' success with capstone presentations and student shows. While you will be delighted to see all the new things happening here, one thing remains the same, our warm and caring atmosphere.

I wish you joy and peace this Easter season, and look forward to seeing you on campus soon.

SISTER MARCELLA MARIE GARUS, CSSF

President, Villa Maria College

CAMPUS news

Villa Maria College Celebrated its 52nd Commencement: Guarin, Norton, Barnhard and the Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation Receive Awards

On Sunday, May 22, 2016, Villa Maria College celebrated its 52nd commencement; the ceremony awarded associate and bachelor degrees to 78 students.



Graduates Grace Guarin, '16 (left) and Lucy Norton, '16 (right) with Graphic Design Professor Bob Grizanti.

In addition to their diplomas, two students received the College's highest awards. Lucy Norton '16, a graphic design major, was awarded the Martin Wanamaker Spirit Award and Grace Guarin '16, a graphic design major, was awarded the Blessed Mary Angela Award for Students. The Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation was presented with The Founder's Award and Natalie Barnhard, '02, received The Villa Maria College Distinguished Alumni Award.

Villa Reports Increase in Enrollment, Adds New Faculty

For a second year in a row, Villa Maria College reported a positive growth in its enrollment. The 2016 incoming class grew by 8% from the previous year, increasing the College's total enrollment to nearly 600 students.

This growth is attributed to the successful implementation of the College's Visionary Plan, which led to the launch of new academic programs, student support programs, intercollegiate athletics and more. Growth this year was specifically enhanced by the addition of two new academic programs: Digital Filmmaking and Digital Media and Communication.

The growth of the College has led to the hire of eight new faculty members, all of whom directly support Villa Maria students.

Villa's Occupation Therapy Assistant Program Granted Accreditation

At its December meeting, the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education reviewed the Report of the On-Site Evaluation regarding the Occupational Therapy Assistant Program at Villa Maria College, and voted to grant a Status of Accreditation for a period of 5 years. Many members of the Villa community assisted with the accreditation process, and included OTA Program Director Paula Santacroce-Velarde, Clinical Fieldwork Coordinator

Lynn Marie Witt, and Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, Dr. Ryan Hartnett.

SKALD 2015 Recognized by the Columbia Scholastic Press Association

The Columbia Scholastic Press Association honored select contents from SKALD 2015, Villa Maria College's annual literary and arts magazine, in its Gold Circle Awards. The Villa Maria community offered some well-deserved congratulations to:

Frederick Vicaretti, '16, Photography: Certificate of Merit in Photography Portfolio; Ashley Smith, '19, Creative Writing & Literature: Certificate of Merit for an Essay; De-Jon Brice, '16, Creative Writing & Literature: 2nd Place for Open Form Poetry; Entire Staff: 3rd place in Literary or Literary / Art Cover Design.



Closeup of cover design for the 2015 award-winning publication of SKALD, designed by student Grace Guarin, '16.

CAMPUS news

SKALD 2015 was also awarded a Gold Crown Award by the Columbia Scholastic Press Association. Crown Awards are the highest recognition given by the CSPA to a student print or digital medium for overall excellence. According to the CSPA judges, "SKALD is a literary art achievement. Purposeful prose is matched by clean, intentional design. Typographic choices make spreads appear effortless, which is a true achievement given the enormous effort that clearly goes into producing this visual feast of consistently strong spreads. The variety of work included in this professionally produced publication expertly showcases the school and the students."

In addition, SKALD 2015 was also recognized nationally by the Association of Writers and Writing Programs when it was awarded the 2015 National Program Directors' Prize in the Design category.

Villa Students Use StoryCorps for Learning

Founded in 2003, StoryCorps is a non-profit organization that aims to record, preserve, and share the stories of Americans from all backgrounds and beliefs.

StoryCorps was in Buffalo, NY in September 2016 working with WBFO 88.7 and Canalside to document the stories of Buffalonians. Several Villa Maria



Villa Maria students attend a StoryCorps' presentation at WBFO to learn more about story telling.

students were able to attend a StoryCorps' presentation at WBFO to learn more about story telling. Following the presentation, students had the opportunity to document another person's story using StoryCorps. Read the whole story at www.news.wbfo.org.

Villa Maria College Recognized for Offering One of the Nation's Top Bachelors of Art Degree Programs in the Nation

The Community for Accredited Online Schools, a leading resource for online learning and college accreditation information, has released its annual rankings for the 2016-2017 Best Four Year Art Degree Programs in the Nation. Villa Maria College was ranked #5 on the list. The top art schools were determined by using the following methodology: Published Tuition & Fees; Number of Subject Areas Covered by Program Offerings; Student-to-Teacher Ratio; Percent of Students Receiving Institutional Financial Aid; Placement Services Upon Completion.

"We wanted to highlight schools, like Villa Maria College, who have made a point to strive for excellence through their art program curricula and effectiveness of instructors" said Doug Jones, CEO and Founder of Community for Accredited Online Schools.

Villa Maria College offers several four-year art degrees, including Animation, Digital Filmmaking, Fashion Design and Merchandising, Graphic Design, Integrated Arts, Interior Design, and Photography.

Villa Sponsors Queen City Fashion Week

Fashion week returned to the Queen City, and Villa Maria College helped to make it a success.

Rick Warne, the organizer of the event, as well as the former Buffalo Fashion Week director of photography, believes that Villa Maria's sponsorship helped spread the word about the affair, which has been aptly named Queen City Fashion Week. "Having Villa, a school with a permanent fashion design program, on board as a sponsor has added credibility to our event," said Warne. "We're excited about the partnership."



Victoria Candelario, a 2016 graduate of the Fashion Design & Merchandising program, working for Queen City Fashion Week.

As part of the sponsorship, Warne conducted a two-part workshop for Villa Maria's fashion and photography students entitled 'Tips and Tricks for Successful Fashion Photographs' and students volunteered at each of the fashion week events.

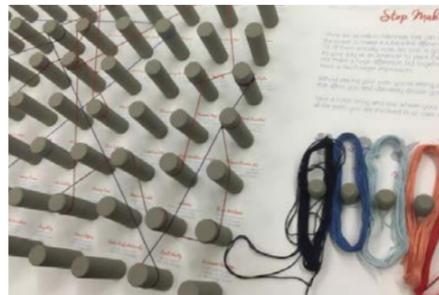
Melanie Bruning '17 Wins First Place in ASID Student Design Competition

Melanie Bruning '17, a junior interior design major at Villa Maria College, was awarded first place in the American Society of Interior Designers' 2016 Student Design Competition.

Bruning '17 designed a concept entitled 'Riverworks', a Bavarian biergarten located on the banks of the Buffalo River.

Villa Graphic Design Students Place First, Second and Third in the Don Nichols Scholarship Competition

Each year, the Advertising Club of Buffalo hosts the Don Nichols Scholarship Competition. The contest provides an opportunity for Western New York's design, writing, communications, illustration, photography and fine arts undergraduate students to submit their work to a jury consisting of individuals who are part of the local creative community.



Close-up of Samantha Lonczak's first place submission in the Don Nichols Scholarship Competition.

For the third year in a row, Villa Maria's students took home top awards. Congratulations to Samantha Lonczak '17 (Graphic Design), Ali Casarsa '16 (Graphic Design), and Lian Thang '17 (Graphic Design), on their respective first, second and third place wins. Several students from Villa Maria also received Honorable Mentions, including Dylan Nowak '17, Rebecca Warthling '16, Nina Puccio '17, and Jeffery Marotta '17.

Villa Staff, Students Support Cheektowaga Community Hub

Two members from Villa Maria College community, Dr. Ryan Hartnett, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, and

Mary Robinson, Vice President for Development, served as members of the Cheektowaga Steering Committee, helping to create the Cheektowaga Community Hub in March 2016. The Hub is a center that connects town residents with the critical services they need to survive.

"Villa's mission is based in the community and we are so happy to be involved and able to fulfill our mission right here in our community," said Dr. Hartnett. *"We believe that this is one of the most important things that we've been involved with recently and it's a great reflection on the Town of Cheektowaga and the things that people are able to do when they come together and work hard."*

Two Villa Maria students, Ramona Harkness '18 (Psychology), and Phillip Lee '17 (Creative Writing & Literature), will provide ongoing support to the Hub as interns in fulfillment of the College's Service Learning initiative.

Villa Hosted it's First Ever Undergraduate Research Symposium

In March of 2016, Villa Maria College Hosted it's first-ever Undergraduate Research Symposium.

Nine students presented their research to a panel of faculty members, including Associate Professor Joyce Kessel, Instructor Paul Brinkworth, and Professor Todd Baker. Kayla Alba '16, "Health and Wellness Vacation Center: A Place to Heal Your Mind, Body and Spirit"; Sue Gesicki '13, "The Relationship of Artistic Intention and the Audience"; Kameron Kotecki '19, "Urban Legends: The Loch Ness Monster"; Phillip Lee '17, "Hit the Road HUAC, and Don't Cha Come Back, No More, No More, No More"; Joseph



Molly Sheehan '19, presents her research entitled "The Phantom of Devil's Den" in the M&T Board Room at the Undergraduate Research Symposium.

Principato '18, "Narrative Video Games as Art"; Patti Myers '18, "Villa Maria Main Building: Intimidating or Welcoming?"; Stacey Skurzewski '17, "Empowering Care Community"; Molly Sheehan '19, "The Phantom of Devil's Den".

According to Dr. Ann Rivera, assistant professor and the driving force behind the Symposium, the entire event served as an opportunity to showcase the high quality of academic inquiry and active intellectual community here at Villa Maria. Dr. Matthew Giordano, Villa Maria's Vice President for Academic Affairs, agrees. He said, *"Congratulations to all of the students who presented their work to fellow students, faculty, and staff members. We are all proud of you for the quality and originality of your scholarship and for sharing it in a public setting with the rest of the College. The Symposium proved to be a rich forum for intellectual dialogue."*

Villa Launches Virtual Tour of Campus

Villa Maria College launched a video that showcases its beautiful Buffalo, NY campus and highlights some of what makes Villa Maria the premier student-centered college in Western New York.

Joe Principato '18, a music student at the College, lent his voice to the project by recording the narration, which provides an authentic account of Villa Maria's history, academic programs, student life, student support services and athletics. The video can be seen on the Campus Map page of Villa's website: www.villa.edu/admissions.

Villa Students Win Big at 2016 ADDYs

In March of 2016, Western New York's most esteemed advertising professionals gathered in the Statler Hotel to celebrate their hard work at the ADDY Awards.



Jessica Puskar, '16 and her sales promotion and packaging design No. 2 Pencil Box which won a Gold ADDY and Student Best of Show.

The ADDY Awards are the advertising industry's largest competition and they are awarded in recognition of the creative spirit of excellence in the art of advertising. According to the Advertising Club of Buffalo, a record 500 professional and 40 student entries were received from area advertising agencies, professionals and students. They were scored by judges from New York City, Washington, D.C., and Baltimore. This year, Villa Maria students had a particularly impressive showing, with 4 students winning 7 awards, including Student Best of Show, one of the night's biggest honors. Villa Maria's student winners include:

* Grace Gruarin, '16 and Lucy Norton, '16 – Silver ADDY for SKALD, collateral material/magazine design

* Grace Gruarin, '16 – Gold ADDY for collateral material/stationary package

* Grace Gruarin, '16 – Silver ADDY for Fjallraven's collateral material/annual report or brochure

* Samantha Lonczak, '17 – Silver ADDY for Gravity sales promotion/package

* Samantha Lonczak, '17 – Silver ADDY for digital advertising/website (desktop or mobile)

* Jessica Puskar, '16 – Gold ADDY for No. 2 Pencil Box, sales promotion/package

* Jessica Puskar, '16 – Student Best of Show for No. 2 Pencil Box sales promotion/package

Notably, Grace Gruarin, '16, went on to win a silver ADDY for Fjallraven's collateral material/annual report or brochure at the national advertising awards show.

Men's Basketball Coach Don Silveri Earns 600th Career Win and Elected into NYS Basketball Hall of Fame



Head coach of the men's basketball team, Don Silveri with Villa Maria College President, Sister Marcella Maria Garus.

Men's Basketball Head Coach Don Silveri earned his 600th career win in a final-minute comeback, the #11 Villa Vikings defeated the #3 Williamson Free School of Mechanical Trades 69-66. Silveri, who also serves as the College's athletic director, believes this win is more

important for his team than it is for him. *"It's not about 600, it's about these kids and them believing they could come back and win this game even when things weren't going our way,"* he said. *"This game was so important coming in. Our kids knew it, and they responded. I'm so proud of them. This win can hopefully propel us to bigger things season."*



Head coach of the men's basketball team, Don Silveri, who celebrated his 600th career win, was also the 10th coach in WNY history to be inducted into the Hall of Fame.

This win brings Silveri's coaching full circle, as his first coaching job in 1976 was with Villa Maria. He has coached for more than 38 years and has played an instrumental role in re-building the Viking athletic program, which was relaunched nearly two years ago.

In addition to the milestone number of wins, the Basketball Coaches Association of New York announced the 2017 New York State Basketball Hall of Fame inductees, which included Villa Maria's Head Coach and Athletic Director Don Silveri.

Silveri became the 10th coach in WNY history to be inducted into the Hall of Fame, and the second Villa Maria coach to be inducted, joining the former women's basketball assistant coach Sister Maria Pares, who passed away in January of this year due to a long battle with cancer. The Vikings are the only WNY program to have 2 coaches in the Hall of Fame. Sister Maria was inducted in 2012.

New Hires: January 2016 – Present

Many new faces have joined the Villa Maria College community over the past year. The addition of these dedicated faculty and staff members demonstrates the growth and vibrancy of the College.

Ann Aeschbacher
Receptionist

Lauren Caulfield
Admissions Counselor

Jennifer D'Alessandro
Instructor, Business Administration

Donovan Douglas
Assistant Professor, Animation

Jacqueline Fluent
Educational Technology Specialist

John Fucile
Instructor, Digital Filmmaking

Michelle Kearns
Instructor, Digital Media and Communication

Caroline Kennon
Reference and Information Literacy Librarian

Tim Kronenwetter
Assistant Coach, Men's Soccer and Women's Soccer

Terrence McCullough II
Custodian and General Maintenance

Spencer Morgan
Grants and Special Events Coordinator

Michele Peters
Database and Systems Analyst

Mary Ellen Roche
Financial Aid Counselor

Katheryn Ross-Winnie
Director of Alumni Relations and Annual Giving

Tracy Rozler
Administrative Assistant to the Vice President
for Development

Dave Skolen
Assistant Coach, Women's Basketball

Lee Terwilliger '14,
Instructor, Animation

Tim Williams
Athletic Trainer

Lynn Marie Witt
Clinical Fieldwork Coordinator,
Occupational Therapy Assistant

Julie Zack
Assistant Professor, Graphic Design

Joanna Zadvorney
Administrative Assistant for the Achieve Program

Emily Zaepfel
Accounts Payable



TWO NEW PROGRAMS MERGE TRADITIONAL PRACTICES WITH DIGITAL

In response to the rapid growth and success of the motion picture and television industry, and the predicted demand for skilled talent over the next decade, Villa Maria launched a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree program in Digital Filmmaking in the fall.

New York State ranks second for jobs in the film industry behind California, according to New York labor department statistics. The film industry has had a huge economic impact on Western New York since the Buffalo Niagara Film Office was set up in 2001. In fact, in 2015, economic spending on film production in the region has been close to \$15 million.

Students in the Digital Filmmaking program receive a practical, focused education that blends a hands-on

learning experience with expert instruction and guidance in various aspects of the digital film industry. By creating film projects from start to finish, students in this program learn how to produce Hollywood-style films on state-of-the-art equipment; gain the skills to become innovative storytellers and master the behind-the-scenes skills that will prepare them for such jobs as video and sound editing; video production; camera operating; lighting; visual effects; production management; cinematography; scriptwriting and screenwriting and more.

“There’s never been such a comprehensive, hands-on program offered in Western New York,” says Tim Clark, Film Commissioner, Buffalo Niagara Film Commission. *“Villa Maria is taking an important step in furthering the development of the film industry in our community by offering a cutting edge, well-rounded program that gives students*

who want to learn the industry the exact skills they will need and are looking for.”

The College was fortunate to bring on John Fucile as a faculty member in this area. John brings both experience making films and digital videos, as well as enthusiasm in the classroom.

In addition, the College has responded to the ever-increasing role that emerging technology has taken in traditional communication fields by starting a new Bachelor of Science degree program in Digital Media and Communication this past fall.

Students in Villa Maria’s four-year Digital Media and Communication program use a variety of computer-based programs, interfaces and technologies to create multimedia content for the internet, mobile devices, broadcasting and other platforms. They also study traditional

communications and journalism theory courses, but will learn how to apply them effectively and appropriately to emerging media and communications technologies.

Michelle Kerns, an industry professional who most recently worked as a journalist at the Buffalo News, was hired as the faculty lead for the program.

Villa’s multi-faceted Digital Media and Communication program teaches audio and video production, journalism, public relations, digital photography, multimedia editing, programming, web development and more, to prepare students for a variety of types of jobs in the communication field. You can see examples of student work on the web at: <https://www.villa.edu/academics/academic-programs/digital-media-communication/>



JOHN FUCILE
Instructor, Digital Filmmaking



MICHELLE KEARNS
Instructor, Digital Media and Communication



SUCCESS CENTER

living up to its name

Recent grants are helping center expand programs, staff

By David. J. Hill

The numbers tell a compelling story. But if you want an even better perspective on the impact Villa's Student Success Center (SSC) has had since it was created three years ago, just listen to what students have to say about it:

"I never feel alone. They are always there for me and do their best to help me with whatever it is I am having trouble with."

"The best part about being advised by the Student Success Center was that they have faith in me and encouraged me to have faith in myself."

"I am becoming a better writer with the help of the Student Success Center."

In a short period of time, Villa's Student Success Center has proven to be, well, a complete success.

The center, an outgrowth of one of the four pillars of the college's Visionary Plan, began operating in summer 2014. With a staff of three – Director Dr. Agnieszka Zak-Moskal and two academic coaches – the SSC started by offering tutoring services in writing and math, academic advising and mentoring for first-year students.

A series of grants received by the College in the 2015-2016 academic year have assisted the center in expanding its programming as well as its staff. *"We have been able to do so much more because of these grants. They've created more opportunities to help us better serve our students,"* said Zak-Moskal.

"We are achieving success with more students by building relationships with them and helping them become intrinsically motivated."

Dr. Agnieszka Zak-Moskal, Director of Student Success Center



Grant funds sent two academic coaches and several faculty members to a National Academic Advising Association Summer Institute to receive training to enhance academic advising procedures for all Villa students.

In summer 2017, the SSC will offer the second year of the Villa Success Roundtable Series, a summer bridge program designed to make the transition to college easier for incoming Villa students, many of whom are the first in their family to attend college. *"This program helps us prepare students for their first year of college and what they can expect,"* said Zak-Moskal.

The services offered by the Student Success Center also have helped Villa retain more students than in past years. From fall 2013 there has been a 7.7% increase in student retention among first-year students.

Moreover, there has been a 17% increase in the number of first-year students in good academic standing since 2013.

"We are achieving success with more students by building relationships with them and helping them become intrinsically motivated," said Zak-Moskal.

Villa's small size, she says, has helped the center implement its new offerings much quicker. *"The communication here happens fast, which helps us accomplish so much in a short period of time,"* said Zak-Moskal.

"Everybody here, including senior administration and faculty, is open to collaboration," she added. *"Everyone is focused on accomplishing the Visionary Plan and making Villa Maria the premier student-centered college in Western New York. We all care about students, and we want them to be successful and obtain a college degree."*

The Student Success Center is located on the ground floor of Villa's Library Building, where the college's other student support offices are located. For more information, visit <http://www.villa.edu/campus-life/student-success-center/> or call 961-1809.



The largest of these awards was a U.S. Department of Education Title III grant for \$1.8 million over five years. In addition, the center benefited from grants of \$95,000 from the Oishei Foundation and a \$100,000 gift from an anonymous donor.

All of this has enabled the center to add a full-time student success coordinator and a social worker who can assist with problems students might have outside the classroom, as well as a full-time administrative assistant.

The SSC now offers Assistive Learning Lab sessions for English and math, which have replaced the need for remedial courses in these areas. *"We developed our own model based on supplemental instruction and tailored it to meet the needs of our students,"* said Zak-Moskal.

A new program that places embedded tutors in certain courses, and provides updated technology for students to use is coordinated through the SSC.

AN EYE FOR DESIGNING a SUCCESSFUL INTERIOR DESIGN PROGRAM

By Nancy Cardillo

Irene Adamski was a recent widow with teenage sons when she entered the business world.

Her attorney husband of 20+ years, Anthony, passed away suddenly in 1960 and she needed to support her family. Irene had received an Associate's degree in teaching from Villa Maria College and a Bachelor's degree in art history from Canisius College – but her true love was interior decorating. So she put her knowledge and skills to good use by speaking to local women's groups and other organizations.

“Back then, few women worked. They kept house, and wanted their homes to be beautiful, so I gave them design ideas and tips they could do on a budget,” says Irene. The talented decorator with an eye for detail and a great sense of creativity and color was soon decorating hotels, hospitals, offices and homes throughout Western New York through her business, Adamski Interior Design.

“I was the first interior decorator to use wallpaper in a hospital,” says Irene, who turned 100 this past Christmas Eve. *“Saint Mary's Hospital in Niagara Falls was just being built, so we decided to try it. It was a good decision – it really cheered the place up.”*

In 1963, she initiated the Scholarship Associates at Canisius College, which helped raise more than \$1 million in scholarship support. The program was so successful she approached Villa Maria about instituting a similar program, and soon found herself lecturing on campus.

“Villa was a relatively new school, so they were looking at ways to bring in more students to achieve state accreditation,” says Irene. *“I started a six-week course called ‘The Simplicity of Interior Design.’ We had 25 housewives for the first course, and I taught them how to decorate their homes. They loved it!”*

Irene's success caught the attention of Villa Maria President Sister Mary Pachomia, who approached Irene about starting a two-year Interior Decorating degree program. Irene agreed, and with the help of Villa Maria Graphic Arts teacher, Kitty Verney, selected the courses that would make up the program. The school had 21 drawing tables, so could only accept 21 students for the first session, which filled up almost immediately

“Most of the students were young women – some were in college, some were newly married – all wanted to learn more about improving their homes,” says Irene. *“We ended up having to replace the drawing tables with benches and desks to accommodate the demand for enrollment.”*

New courses were continually added, teaching the students about color, patterns, wallpaper, paint, design and focusing on specific rooms, such as dining or living rooms, the “focal points of any home.”

“The students who graduated from our program were often more knowledgeable than interior decorators who were already in practice,” says Irene, who taught at Villa for 14 years. *“We made sure the program was comprehensive. I have always believed you should never hold people back, you should give them something extra, and that's*



Irene Adamski, Age 100

“We made sure the program was comprehensive. I have always believed you should never hold people back, you should give them something extra, and that's what I always tried to do with my students.”

-Irene Adamski



what I always tried to do with my students.”

A highlight of Irene's career at Villa Maria was taking 29 students on a two-week tour of Europe in 1970, where they were able to see how furniture and fabrics were made, how carpets were woven, visit historic architectural buildings and learn as much as they could about art, history and design.

“It was an amazing experience for the students and for me,” says Irene. *“What they learned on that trip, they will remember forever. Over the years as I've stayed in touch with many of those students, they would always mention that trip.”*

Irene says she's seen how interior decorating – now referred to as interior design – has changed over the years and is proud of the way Villa Maria's program has grown and adapted to the changes over the last 50 years, yet still remains true to its roots and to its students. No longer a practicing interior decorator due to her failing eyesight, Irene lives a quiet life in her apartment in Amherst.

The Interior Design program at Villa Maria has expanded beyond ‘decorating’ – and teaches students how to design for the health, welfare and safety of people. Students learn to design creative and functional interior environments that are accessible, sustainable, and aesthetically appealing. Students can choose from three Interior Design programs: the BFA program, the AAS program and the Historical Preservation Certificate program.

“The demand for qualified interior designers is growing and the scope of their work goes far beyond the days of our decorating program” says Sandra Reicis, Villa Interior Design Professor. *“Designers who are graduating from accredited schools like Villa Maria can begin their quest for interior design certification immediately, and additional knowledge in areas of sustainable design and universal design expands their employment opportunities. When they leave Villa Maria, they are job-ready.”*

For more information on Villa Maria's Interior Design program, visit villa.edu

from the
ALUMNI
OFFICE



The past year has been busy and exciting for the Villa Maria College Alumni Association. We have worked to expand our offerings and connections to alumni. Here are some of the highlights:

- Alumni can now enroll as members of the campus fitness center. A year-long membership costs just \$60, and entitles you to access the fitness center at any time it is open. Please contact Katheryn Ross-Winnie for details or to sign up.
- The Alumni Association hosted the Mass of Remembrance in March for all members of the campus community. The 2016 mass was the largest to date, and alumni served as volunteers to do readings, carry gifts and greet families. Join us on April 2, 2017 for this year's mass.
- In September, the Alumni Association hosted its first on-campus Paint Night, attended by alumni, friends and faculty. The evening was great fun, and there will be more creative get-togethers coming soon.
- The Office of Alumni Relations teamed with the Office of Student Life and Career Services to provide the first annual "Road to Graduation." This career preparedness workshop series provided graduating students with the chance to learn about applying for jobs, networking, and to how to utilize campus services.
- The Alumni Association hosted the first "Alumni Night" at a Vikings basketball game. Close to seventy alumni, families, faculty and staff came together to eat, play games and cheer on the Vikings.



Introducing our new Director of Alumni Relations



Katheryn Ross-Winnie, Director of Alumni Relations and Annual Giving, joined the Villa Maria College family in April 2016.

Katheryn has 15 years of fundraising and volunteer management experience. She previously worked for the Association of Fundraising Professionals, Buffalo State

College and WNED. Katheryn holds a B.A. from Bard College, and a M.S. in Higher Education Administration from Buffalo State College.

Katheryn can be reached at (716) 961-1852 or krosswinnie@villa.edu, and is available to discuss your involvement with Villa Maria, upcoming events, or to arrange a campus visit!

Want to make sure you're invited to upcoming alumni and campus events?

An e-newsletter, **Villa Maria Alumni Voices**, is now available. If you do not already receive it, please email alumnirelations@villa.edu to sign up.

Endowed Giving

A gift that yields ongoing support

Endowed support is a cornerstone of private giving in higher education. The basic plan underlying an endowed fund is simple—the principal of the fund is never spent. The principal is invested, and only the earnings above the principal can be expended. Endowed support ensures both longevity and stability for the college, and provides crucial support for student scholarships and key programs.

The minimum gift to establish an endowment is \$10,000, which can be paid over a period of years. Donors may use either outright or deferred gifts to establish endowed funds. Endowments can be established in the donor's name, the name of their business, or in honor of someone important to the donor.

For more information or to make an endowed gift, contact Mary Robinson, Vice President for Development, at (716) 961-1823 or rosbinsonm@villa.edu.

Newly Endowed Fund

In 2016, the Kathryn Piatek Memorial Scholarship Fund was established with a generous gift from the Villa Maria College Alumni Association.

Kathryn Piatek graduated from Villa Maria with a degree in Business Administration, and she later became a professional business analyst. Kathryn was the first president of the Alumni Association at Villa Maria, serving from 2012 to 2014. She was also an active volunteer for several organizations in her community.

Kathryn's legacy will live on with this new Memorial Scholarship, which will provide funds for relatives of alumni to attend Villa Maria College.

Share your news or submit your work to Vistas!

There's always space for news and work from students, faculty, staff and alumni to highlight and share with the Villa Maria community. We want your news (examples include: wedding announcements, birth announcements, job announcements, other good news), short written (250-300 words or less), and visual works to be featured in Vistas.

Visit VILLA.EDU/VISTAS to share your news.



ALUMNI BOARD *Members*

The Villa Alumni Association is pleased to announce that the following alumni serve as Alumni Board members:

Heather Bellini, '00
Photography

Liz Bukowski, '14
Photography

LaShawn Chinn, '03
Business Administration

Diego Diaz, '16
Animation

Mary Lucy Drabczyk, '03
Music

Rachel Ecklund, '12
Music Industry

Grace Gruarin, '16
Graphic Design

Carl Hunley, '15
Graphic Design

Valerie Kasinski, '14
Photography

Marc Muroff, '14
Physical Therapist Assistant

Lucy Norton, '16
Graphic Design

Sabrina Pisano, '08
Physical Therapist Assistant

Joseph Tronolone, '15
Music Industry



I firmly believe in the College's mission, the importance of an education, and that education is the key to breaking the cycle of poverty, hopelessness, and despair experienced by so many in our community."

-Catherine Grantier Cooley



Donor Profile

Catherine Grantier Cooley has a goal to ride her bike in all fifty states. She's tackled twenty so far, and has an ambitious plan that will keep her on the move to cross off the rest.

That drive to always do more is how Cooley ended up as chair of the Villa Maria Board of Trustees. When her son enrolled in the animation program she never expected to become a dedicated donor and volunteer.

Cooley noticed that her son changed during his time at Villa Maria. The community on campus and the attention he received pushed him to become a better student and grow into

an ambitious adult. Cooley can see that Villa Maria is also transforming – from a “hidden gem” to a shining jewel. As she says, *“I firmly believe in the College's mission, the importance of an education, and that education is the key to breaking the cycle of poverty, hopelessness, and despair experienced by so many in our community. It is truly my pleasure and an honor to be a part of the Villa Maria community.”*

Along with her volunteer work for the College, Catherine is also a generous donor to the Annual Giving Campaign, a participant in the annual Golf Outing, attends the Spring Gala and countless other events, and has pledged support of upcoming capital projects.

Student Profile

An unexpected collaboration between an Interior Design professor and an Animation student resulted in the creation of 'Circuit Sizzle,' an animated film Villa alum Marc Noworyta, '16, created for his senior project.

Although only 2 minutes and 52 seconds long, ‘Circuit Sizzle’ took months to create. The project started like any other: Noworyta planned his story line, transitioned into character development and laid out his work in a storyboard.

Then, he got an offer that took ‘Circuit Sizzle’ from good to great.

“Interior Design professor Jesse Walp contacted me,” said Marc. *“The College had just purchased a 3-D printer and he asked if I wanted to use it.”*

“I took the character sketches I designed in my notebook, and started creating 3-D models in Autodesk Maya, which is a computer animation and modeling software program. I used this program to create rods and ball joints for the skeleton of my puppets, and I used it to print the body parts out.”

While the 3-D characters were enough to make ‘Circuit Sizzle’ a smash, Noworyta didn't stop there. *“I 3-D printed boots for my characters,”* he said. *“When it came time to assemble all the pieces, I realized I couldn't create the movement I wanted with stiff parts. I went back to Professor Walp, and we made a silicone mold for the boots.”* In the end, the boots were made from a rubbery material, which allowed

Marc to realistically animate the film's walking sequences.

After the 3-D printing process, Marc finished his project using stop motion, a cinematographic technique in which the camera is repeatedly stopped and started to give animated figures the impression of movement.

While many animators find stop motion to be a grueling process, Marc finds it enjoyable. *“It's basically creating movement by taking a picture every time an object moves in a scene,”* he said. *“It's challenging but fun.”*

While Noworyta was proud of the end result, he hadn't considered entering it into the Buffalo International Film Festival until his animation professor Sarah Hanson pushed him to do so. *“Professor Hanson pushes students to get their work out there,”* Marc said. *“She knows this helps you get a job. Submitting was a huge confidence booster, even though I didn't expect to win. I felt self-consciousness, but I knew this was my chance.”*

Marc's willingness to put his work out there paid off.

Not only did ‘Circuit Sizzle’ win a Gold Bison Supersnipe Award at the 2016

Buffalo International Film Festival, it won the Best Western New York Micro-Short Film Award at 2016 Buffalo Dreams Fantastic Film Festival, and was screened at Squeaky Wheel's 2016 Animation Festival.

“When it gets overwhelming, slow down and tackle things at your own pace.”

-Marc Noworyta, '16

As Marc intensifies his search for his dream job as a post-production compositor or character animator in WNY, he offers one piece of advice to anyone interested in Animation.

“Search for the spark that keeps you interested in your work and figure out what it takes to keep you working on it,” he said. *“It can be hard to stay motivated, even if you're really talented. Commit to the work, but always search for things that are new and fun. When it gets overwhelming, slow down and tackle things at your own pace. Don't think about everything at once; just get going. Once you find your spark, there was no more work, anyway. It's all fun.”*



2015-2016

HONOR ROLL *of Donors*

The Honor Roll of Donors is just one of our ways of saying "thank you" to the generous alumni, parents and friends who partner with us to make a Villa Maria College education available to today's and tomorrow's students.

Who the Honor Roll Includes:

This Honor Roll lists gifts made in Villa Maria College's 2015-16 fiscal year, which began on July 1, 2015, and ended on June 31, 2016. It includes contributions to the Villa Maria College Annual Fund as well as gifts for special purposes such as scholarships, endowment, capital projects and more.

Your Feedback:

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the names in this Honor Roll. If you notice an error or omission, please accept our sincere apologies and report the correction to Katheryn Ross-Winnie at krosswinnie@villa.edu or (716) 961-1852.

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Upcoming Events

February 24 – March 10

Graphic Design Program Student Exhibit
Paul William Beltz Family Art Gallery

March 2

ResAUnance Concert
Recital Hall | 10:00 AM

March 12-19

Spring Break | College Closed

March 16

Music Faculty Recital
Recital Hall | 11:00 AM

March 21

M&T Lunchtime Concert Series:
Hot Club of Buffalo
Recital Hall | 11:00 AM

March 23

Comedian Adam Grabowski
Auditorium | 11:00 AM

March 24 – April 7

Interior Design Program Student Exhibit
Paul William Beltz Family Art Gallery

April 2

Alumni Mass of Remembrance
Recital Hall | 11:00 AM

April 4

Magician Michael Kent
Auditorium | 11:00 AM

April 13-17

Easter Break | College Closed

April 18

M&T Lunchtime Concert Series:
Walter Kemp 3oh
Recital Hall | 11:00 AM

April 20

Undergraduate Research Symposium
Main Building | 10:30 AM

April 20

Music Faculty Recital
Recital Hall | 11:00 AM

April 21-May 5

Fine Arts Program Student Exhibit
Paul William Beltz Family Art Gallery

April 25

Music Student Recital
Recital Hall | 11:00 AM

April 27

Music Student Recital
Recital Hall | 11:00 AM

April 27

Honors Convocation
Recital Hall | 7:00 PM

April 29

Affinity: Fashion Design and Merchandising
Annual Fashion Show
Villa Bistro, Main Building | 4:00 PM

April 30

Alumni Association Handbag Bingo
Social Hall, Athletic Center | 1:00 PM

May 2

Music Student Recitals
Recital Hall | 11:00 AM

May 4

Music Student Recitals
Recital Hall | 11:00 AM

May 12

Freshman/Sophomore Animation Celebration
Auditorium | 4:00 PM

April 21

Graphic Design Senior Show
Buffalo Arts Studio, Tri-Main Center | 5:00 PM

May 12-May 26

Annual High School Photo Exhibit
Paul William Beltz Family Art Gallery

May 21

53rd Commencement
Villa Maria College

June 12

29th Annual Villa Maria College
Scholarship Golf Outing
Tan Tara Golf Club, Tonawanda, NY | All Day

*For more information on upcoming events at Villa,
visit **VILLA.EDU/CALENDAR***