College Graduates First Baccalaureate Class

President Martha K. Shouldis said the 21st Annual Commencement was “a momentous occasion” because it represented the largest graduating class in St. Vincent’s College history and the first time the college conferred baccalaureate degrees.

Fifteen students were presented Bachelors of Science degrees in Nursing and in Radiography, while 123 students earned Associate of Science degrees in Nursing, Radiography and General Studies.

Speaking to 138 graduates and nearly 1,000 people that gathered to honor them at the Arnold Bernhard Arts & Humanities Center of the University of Bridgeport, Dr. Shouldis told the graduates that their degree “will change your life forever and the lives of those you care for, but your days of learning are not over.”

With the first group to earn Bachelors of Science degrees seated before her, Dr. Shouldis also reminded all those in attendance that healthcare workers “are lifetime learners,” who must constantly upgrade their skills and education.

Degrees were presented by Dr. Shouldis and Marianne Laska, RN, Chairperson of the College Board of Trustees.

Laska said that healthcare technology has changed beyond imagination but that the “need for compassionate care and personal touch” remains constant in all times.

Two mother-daughter duos came forward to present degrees to each other at the ceremony. Myriam Alvarado, the College’s academic secretary, earned a degree in General Studies, while her daughter, Shirley A. Alvarado was presented an Associate of Science in Nursing. Nursing graduate Samantha Lynn Smith was presented her degree by her mother, Robin Smith, an instructor in the Radiography program.

Another legacy graduated, Mary Tyer, nursing is the granddaughter of Mary McLoughlin Tyer class of 1956.

During the ceremony, the College also conferred an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters Degree on Chuck Mattes of Redding, a Trumbull native who served as a Connecticut State Trooper before joining the William B. Meyer Company in 1971, where he retired in 2007 as Executive Vice President and co-owner. He told the

Dr. Sharon Makowski, RN to BSN Program Chair, a group of the bachelor degree graduates and Frank Scifo, MD, Medical Director of Physicians Operations.

continued on page 3

Samantha Lynn Smith, associate degree in nursing graduate and mother Robin Smith, Radiography instructor.
A Successful and Rewarding 2013

We just closed out yet another academic and fiscal year at St. Vincent’s College. What a year it has been as we continued to grow and develop the College. We began the year with approval to offer our second bachelor degree completion program, Radiologic Sciences; achieved record enrollments; received grants and pledges totaling $2.8 million toward the renovation of a new facility, the third floor of 2660 Main Street; underwent the site visit for the reaccreditation of the associate degree nursing program and the initial accreditation of the RN-BSN program by a national nursing accrediting body, NLNAC; and completed the year with a record number of 125 graduates. The graduation of our first fifteen Bachelor of Science degree students in Nursing and Radiologic Sciences in May topped off the year and was a true watershed event in the history of the College.

Looking forward, here is just a sneak peak at the highlights of the upcoming academic year. In August St. Vincent’s College will dedicate the Virginia O’Brien Fortin Learning Center at 2660 Main Street which will provide additional student study and gathering space, faculty offices, classroom and laboratory space for the Radiography, Medical Assisting and General Studies programs and the sciences. As the move of some departments to that location is happening, we are aligning the space in the Hunting Street Building to accommodate the growth of new programs and student support services and to meet the needs of students for additional study and gathering spaces. New program development will continue and the site visit for the reaccreditation of the College by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) will occur. We proudly look forward to all that the new academic year brings — new students, expanded facilities and the ongoing development of new baccalaureate and certificate programs.

We look to you, our alumni, to help us continue to grow and thrive and share the joy of the achievements of our students and graduates. One way you can do this is through financial support for student scholarships which will help students reach their dreams; dreams of a career in nursing, radiography, medical assisting, medical coding, pharmacy technology, or other field through an education they will receive from St. Vincent’s. In the past many of you and your families have provided donations in support of student scholarships and the capital campaign. Thank you for “paying it forward” and supporting future generations of healthcare professionals that will be educated here at St. Vincent’s College.

Another area in which you can provide support is in recruiting of new students to the College. You are among our best recruiters and for that we are grateful. Please share with those who have been inspired by you as a healthcare professional the great education you received at St. Vincent’s and refer them to our website or our admissions office.

Lastly, please help us by staying in touch. Now more than ever it’s important to stay connected with each other whether it’s by email, Facebook, or LinkedIn. It is important that we have your email address as we move our communications into a more digital world.

Have a great summer and contact me at mshouldis@stvincentscollege.edu if you have any questions or ideas to share.

Martha K. Shouldis, Ed.D.
President/CEO
graduates his young life was a lot like theirs.

“I went to school part time while working full time, trying to get everything finished,” said Mattes, who was recognized for his volunteer service as a board member of St. Vincent’s Medical Center Foundation and for his commitment to cancer care.

“My mother went back to nursing school when she was 44 and began working with terminally ill patients at the age of 48,” said Mattes, who proudly noted that one of his daughters is a nurse and the other is an acupuncturist.

In the commencement address specialty food entrepreneur Wiley Mullins told St. Vincent’s College graduates that obesity is one of the major threats facing Americans today, and he urged them to become health educators as well as practitioners.

The founder of Uncle Wiley’s Specialty Foods said that patients listen to healthcare workers and that they should become messengers for a healthier lifestyle. “We’re counting on you. Your work is important work, it’s God’s work, and don’t ever take that for granted.”

Jennifer Rodriguez, radiography major of Stratford was presented the Francis Scifo, MD Award for Excellence as a leader of community service projects at the College; Leanniel Nyren, nursing major of East Haven was presented the Rafael Squitieri, MD Award for Excellence in recognition of her clinical skills while completing her clinical rotation in the Cardiac Care Unit of St. Vincent’s.

Top academic honors went to Jason Howard of Bridgeport, a radiography major; and Elizabeth Smith of Fairfield, a nursing major. Both were members of the All Connecticut Academic Team that was honored by the State Legislature.

Before the recessional, Dr. Shouldis also recognized Sister Marie Burns, D.C., who stepped down as a former Chair and long time member of the College Board of Trustees, and Sister Anne Marie Graham, D.C., who is moving on to a new assignment with the Daughters of Charity after serving as Special Projects Coordinator at the College.
Celebrating 2013 Alumni Day

It was an evening of sharing memories, re-acquainting with old friends and connecting with new ones. This year’s annual Alumni Cocktail Reception was held on Wednesday April 10th in the Hawley Conference Center and kicked off with tours of the College including a walkthrough of the recently renovated Fortin Student Center, student labs and Sister Marie Burns Learning Center.

As in years past this event included great food, drink and plenty of raffle prizes. During the evening the group had an opportunity to introduce themselves and learn a little about each alumni present. Within the room there were alumni spanning 60 years including one member from the class of 1953.

Interested in helping out with alumni events & activities? Consider joining the alumni advisory council.

For more information email alumni@stvincentscollege.edu
Distinguished Alumni Award is Back

A tradition from the past was brought back with great enthusiasm, the Distinguished Alumni Award presentation. The award is presented to an alumnus who demonstrates the underlying attributes of St. Vincent de Paul. These attributes emphasize compassion, generous spirit, fidelity, respect, gentleness in attitude, and advocacy for the poor.

This year’s award was presented to Anita “Nancy” McCain. Nancy was a 1959 graduate of the St. Vincent’s Hospital School of Nursing. She has enjoyed a successful career in Nursing and later became the Academic Dean at St. Vincent’s College. Her dedication, commitment, flexibility and adaptability to change have inspired many. It was her leadership that has helped shape St. Vincent’s College into what it has become today.

Nominations for the 2014 Distinguished Alumni Award will begin in January, please check your email and our website for all the details and nomination form.
Additional Teaching, Learning and Gathering Space Coming This Fall

The College expansion project at 2660 Main Street continues to move forward to meet the schedule for fall classes. In January construction was kicked off with a Wall Smashing ceremony attended by State Senator Andres Ayala, who commented “This is a great opportunity not only for St. Vincent’s but the Bridgeport community. The expansion of St. Vincent’s College will bring an additional 200 to 400 students over the next few years. This is exciting as we know that 48% of the current students are from Bridgeport. I am happy to have played a part of this expansion project which will bring more jobs to the local area.”

Mr. Tom McCarthy, President of the Bridgeport City Council representing Mayor Bill Finch shared Senator Ayala’s enthusiasm. “I know St. Vincent’s and the work that they do. I am honored to be a part of today’s celebration and I congratulate you on the expansion of the College which will allow St. Vincent’s to continue caring for the community.”

With the end in sight the construction team has been focused on the interior finishes and site work. Carpet has been installed, ceramic tile has been set, paint has been applied to the walls and doors, millwork has been set into places and lockers have been installed. Outside the building, crews are working to install a new drainage system, lighting and security systems, and new parking surfaces for the upper and lower lots.

This facility adds important new teaching, learning and gathering spaces for the students and faculty. The College will have the much needed space to meet its ongoing commitment to serve the area healthcare community by preparing the next generation of nurses and allied health professionals and meeting the challenge to educate for the new roles emerging in the changing healthcare delivery environment.

Donate to the College Facility Expansion Fund today! Use the envelope enclosed in this issue!
Help Us Continue to Grow

Imagine the rewards of helping prepare the healthcare professionals we need. With your help, we can help expand our academic programs and our facilities.

You’ve heard the critical warnings — the challenges of the national healthcare cost crisis, the under-delivery of healthcare to large segments of the population, the aging workforce, current and predicted future shortages of healthcare workers.

Our community will forever honor you… and the others who create new opportunities for our future healthcare professionals in our larger campus.

With your help St. Vincent’s College can expand its facilities to accommodate increasing numbers of students and expand its academic programs and degrees in nursing, radiologic sciences, medical assisting, and our new baccalaureate level programs. You can also help offer opportunities for certificate programs, some designed to provide entry level job skills and others that are post degree certificate and continuing education programs designed to prepare health professionals for additional roles.

You can help educate the healthcare workers we need now and in the future in our community.

Your gift matters. We appreciate gifts of any size.

To learn more, contact Lyla Steenbergen at St. Vincent’s Foundation
Phone: (203) 576-5451
Email: Lsteenbergen@stvincents.org

Or send a tax-deductible charitable donation payable to St. Vincent’s College to: St. Vincent’s Foundation, 2800 Main Street, Bridgeport, CT 06606

Thank you for your support!
Alumni Achievements

Congratulations to the 2013 Nightingale Award Recipients

The Nightingale Awards for Excellence in Nursing program was originally developed by the Visiting Nurse Association of South Central CT (VNA/SCC) to be a collaborative effort to celebrate outstanding nurses and elevate the nursing profession. The goals of the program are to encourage retention, inspire future nurses, focus public attention and recognize the breadth and scope of nursing practice at the local level.

Employee of the Year:
Dr. Sharon Makowski

The College nominated Sharon Makowski, Chair of the RN to BSN Program for Employee of the Year. Sharon was recognized for this award for leadership in developing and instituting the RN to BSN Program. She worked very hard to achieve this milestone by writing and receiving accreditations from NEASC, the state of Connecticut and a recommendation for accreditation from the NLNAC which will be meeting in July.

Recent Alumni Awarded All-CT Academic Team Honor

The All-Connecticut Academic Team recognizes the outstanding scholarly achievements and leadership accomplishments of students enrolled in Connecticut’s community and junior colleges. The students chosen for the state team also represented the State of Connecticut in the All-USA Academic Team Competition.

Do you have achievements or stories you would like to share?

Please email to: alumni@stvincentscollege.edu
Staying Connected Digitally

St. Vincent’s College Alumni LinkedIn Group

LinkedIn is a great professional tool for networking, searching for jobs and keeping updated on trends in the healthcare industry (or any industry really). If you have a LinkedIn profile we encourage you to join the Alumni Group to share articles, job postings and ask for support in the next step of your career.

Facebook Fan Following is Growing

The number of fans for our Facebook page grows on a daily basis but we expect a larger number to click Like this Summer as we enhance this page and become more interactive. We want you to share our Facebook page with your friends and answer a few questions on an upcoming poll – you’ll be entered into one of several raffles to win a St. Vincent’s College sweatshirt!

Starting in July each Wednesday we will be highlighting alumni and milestone moments at St. Vincent’s College. It’s nice to take a few minutes to remember where we started and where we’ve been as we look to the future.

Web Donations Made Easier

This Summer there will be some new features added to the alumni section of our website including a Donate Now button. This will make online donations as easy as one click of a button.

Do you have achievements or stories you would like to share? Please email to: alumni@stvincentscollege.edu
Timeline of Programs and Accomplishments

1991
- Associate Degree Nursing Program licensed
- St. Vincent’s College of Nursing incorporated

1993
- First Associate Degrees in Nursing awarded

1994
- Initial Accreditation by NEASC

1995
- Associate Degree Program in Radiography licensed
- Name Change to St. Vincent’s College
- Multi-skilled Assistant Certificate Program implemented

1996
- Healthcare Management Certificate Program implemented

1997
- First Associate Degrees in Radiography awarded
- Associate Degree Program in Medical Assisting Program licensed

1998
- Office of Continuing Education established

1999
- Implemented Diagnostic Medical Sonography and Healthcare Reimbursement Specialist Certificate Programs

2000
- Medical Office Assistant Certificate Program implemented
- First Associate Degrees in Medical Assisting awarded
- Dedication of the Fortin Student Center

2002
- Implemented:
  - Hospital Coding Certificate Program
  - Central Sterile Processing Technician Program
2005
- Implemented RN Refresher course and Medical Assistant Certificate Program
- Licensure of Associate Degree Program in General Studies

2009
- Summer Outreach Camp Initiated
- CT Scan Certificate Program implemented
- Dedication of Sr. Marie Burns Learning Resource Center

2010
- Dedication of Nancy Clancy Nursing & Life Sciences Lab

2011
- Online RN to BSN Completion Program implemented

2012
- Online Bachelor of Science in Radiologic Sciences Program implemented

SPRING 2013
- Cancer Survivorship 2 Credit Course added
- First Bachelor Degrees awarded to both Nursing and Radiologic Sciences programs

FALL 2013
- Opening of second campus building at 2660 Main Street
- Patient Navigator Certificate Program begins
- Health Information Technology Certificate program begins
- Clinical Genetics (Nur 305) 3 credit course added
A Year of Giving

This academic year was marked with the true spirit of generosity and giving by our St. Vincent’s College community. We continuously seek to find ways to demonstrate how we live our mission in service to others. The fall semester was no exception when a group of students from the Radiography program collected over 77 hats, gloves and scarves to benefit clients of the St. Vincent’s Family Health Center. Another drive was organized by yet another group of Radiography students who collected items for our furry friends in the community. Pet toys, blankets, food, leashes and collars were collected for the Hand for a Paw in Bridgeport. Nursing 101 students also got into the spirit by collecting socks and underwear for the Americares Free Clinic of Bridgeport, which provides primary care to the medically underserved.

As we approached the Christmas season the generosity began to expand even further with the Giving Tree that helped us collect a long list of items for the Mercy Learning Center including jackets, children’s pajamas, snowsuits, socks, sweatshirts, gloves, hats, children’s books, packs of educational flash cards and a big collection of arts & crafts supplies. The Giving Tree effort also allowed us to collect over $600 in gift cards to Stop & Shop, Walgreens, CVS and Target for the Center for Women and Families. Of course there were toys! Over 32 toys were collected for Toys for Tots through another service project that was driven by students. At the end of the semester, our Nursing 101 students participated in a soap and sock drive for the Bridgeport Rescue Mission.

Part of this holiday season was marked with sadness from the tragic event of December 14th at Sandy Hook Elementary School. In an effort to show our support, Newtown Support Ribbons were created by Myriam Alvarado, Academic Secretary and Shirley Alvarado, Nursing Student. All donations for these ribbons were given directly to the Sandy Hook Elementary School Support Fund. A package of paper snowflakes was sent to the new Sandy Hook Elementary School in Monroe along with the hundreds of others sent from all around the world to help welcome the students to their new school. We continue to keep everyone in the Newtown community in our thoughts and prayers.

These acts of kindness continued to inspire us through the Spring semester when student’s from the Radiography class participated in the Chemo Love Notes program right
around Valentine’s Day. Students wrote notes of encouragement and delivered them along with baskets full of baked goodies, magazines, knitted caps and hard candy to patients undergoing chemotherapy treatment. This was followed by a food drive organized by Nursing 101 to help support the CT Food Bank at a time when food supplies were running very low. Phi Theta Kappa students once again organized Project Graduation which was involved collecting food, toiletries and non-perishable items for the Center for Women and Families and Homes for the Brave, an organization with a mission focused on Veterans, to provide housing and services necessary to help homeless individuals return to a productive and meaningful life.

Nursing students created a patient and family education poster as a community service to 10 North. The students learned about the hazards of immobility during NUR 101 this spring and had to put what they know into action while working with patients on the orthopedic surgery unit at St. Vincent’s Medical Center. Recognizing a need for education of patients and families, they created a powerpoint with some basic information. The slides were printed out, mounted and framed for display. The nurse manager eagerly welcomed the idea.

Is there an alumni you know who could benefit from the Alumni Hardship Fund?
Call Janice Faye: 203-576-6355
Remembering Anne Avallone

When Dr. Anne T. Avallone passed away suddenly on May 5, 2013 at her home in Stratford, Connecticut, St. Vincent’s College lost a true friend, a unique voice, and a strong advocate for educational excellence and the healing role of the healthcare professional.

Those who worked with President Avallone in her 27 years of service to St. Vincent’s remember her for her spirited persistence, bright sense of humor, and her total focus on the success of the students during a time of challenge and change.

In 1991, she led the historic transition from Nursing School to St. Vincent’s College, and became its first president, after a decade of planning and change process that revitalized the institution and created expanded learning and career opportunities for a new generation of students.

“It was with great sadness that we learned of Anne Avallone’s passing,” said Dr. Martha K. Shouldis, President/CEO of St. Vincent’s College. “She was heart and soul St. Vincent’s, from her leadership of the College, which she helped to form, to her embrace of Vincentian values. We all owe her a debt of gratitude.”

Under Dr. Avallone’s leadership, St. Vincent’s entered a new era as an accredited two-year Health Science college; completed a major building renovation project, saw the endowment grow from $1 million to $5 million, and an 82 percent increase in the level of financial aid for students. Likewise, the curriculum expanded to four majors and a growing range of certificate programs and other continuing education offerings.

Martin Sbriglio, CEO of Ryders Health Management in Stratford, is a graduate of the College who later became a board member and patron. He’s astounded by the growth and vitality that began with many of the measures undertaken by Anne Avallone.

“It’s wonderful and amazing to see the College grow the way it has and to know that Anne Avallone planted the seed that made things happen. In retrospect, her timing was perfect and she positioned the College for the growth that it is now enjoying.”

Anne T. Avallone received her BA from Mercy College, NY, a MA from St. John’s University, and her EdD from Nova Southeastern University. She was an active member of the Board of Trustees of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) and the Board of Directors of the New England College Council (NECC). She came to St. Vincent’s in 1977, when she was appointed Director of the St. Vincent’s Medical Center School of Nursing.

Contributions in Anne Avallone’s name may be made to: St. Vincent’s College, Dr. Anne T. Avallone Scholarship Fund, 2800 Main Street, Bridgeport, CT 06606

President Anne T. Avallone and Governor Lowell Weicker, 1993
A World of Opportunity Close to Home

Rededication of the Student’s Favorite Place

The Fortin Student Center, a place where students can build a sense of community with fellow classmates, has celebrated getting a major facelift including new tables, chairs, lighting and carpeting. The gift from Virginia and Denis Fortin has become an important part of St. Vincent’s College, as students need more than just an academic environment; they also need a place where they can study, socialize, and stop for a quick snack or meal.

On April 29th, a ceremony was held to rededicate the space, have it blessed once again, and thank Mrs. Fortin for her support to our students. Mrs. Fortin worked with the College on this project and was involved in the selection of the artwork which added the finishing touches to the remodeled Student Center.

During the rededication, Martha Shouldis, President and CEO of the College welcomed the crowd of students, guests, and members of the faculty and staff. Deacon Tim Bolton gave the blessing over the Fortin Student Center, and Dr. Stuart Marcus, President of St. Vincent’s Medical Center, gave remarks. Students Vivian Lounsbury and Christina Raucci gave touching speeches about the use and importance of having a space where they can turn to and build relationships with classmates for years to come. The ceremony concluded with a ribbon cutting and remarks made by the honored guest of the ceremony, Mrs. Fortin.

A Fond Farewell

After 33 years of service to the St. Vincent’s System, we celebrate the contributions of Dr. Joanne Wolfertz, Vice President/Dean at the College, who retired in June. Joanne has served in a variety of roles during her tenure. She worked as a staff nurse in the behavioral health unit at St. Vincent’s Medical Center for several years before transferring to the School of Nursing as a faculty member in 1984. With the transition of the School of Nursing to St. Vincent’s College, Joanne was appointed as Chairperson of the Associate Degree Nursing program and served in that capacity until 2002. She was responsible for the implementation of the nursing program and worked with faculty and college leadership to assure that this new program would meet or exceed state regional and professional accreditation standards. The program received initial accreditation by all accreditation bodies which continues in effect to this day. As Vice President/Dean Joanne has served the institution well as its chief operating officer and chief human resource officer. Her leadership of the enrollment management service division and involvement in strategic planning efforts are evident in the expansion of programs and enrollment growth the college has experienced in the last ten years.
New Board Members

**Reverend Dr. Bernard R. Wilson** is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ and an experienced religious and spiritual leader serving in multi-religious, multi-denominational and multi-cultural settings. He is currently the Senior Minister at Norfield Congregational Church in Weston. He has over 30 years of experience in the military decorated with various medals and ribbons such as the National Defense Service Medal and the Military Humanitarian Award.

**Virginia O’ Brien Fortin** is extremely dedicated to helping the students of St. Vincent’s College follow their dreams with the help of scholarships. In the summer of 2012, she was presented with the Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters. Mrs. Fortin is a current member of the St. Vincent’s Health Services Foundation Board of Directors and has been a volunteer at St. Vincent’s Medical Center for many years with over 1000 hours of service.

**Dr. Stuart Marcus** is the president of St. Vincent’s Medical Center. In recent years, he led the development of the Elizabeth M. Pfriem SWIM Center for Cancer and Care at St. Vincent’s which opened in 2010. He is a member of the Phi Beta Kappa Society and Alpha Omega Medical Honor Society. Dr. Marcus belongs to many professional organizations including the American College of Surgeons, American Association of Cancer Research and the American Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary Association among many others.

**Michael Maccarone** is currently an adjunct professor at Fairfield University, teaching accounting and finance courses. He is the former Associate Vice President for the Finance Department at Fairfield University.

**Shiela R. O’Brien** is a registered nurse and certified Case Manager working with the geriatric and psychiatric population. She is also a regional manager who oversees the staff of care coaches and personal care attendants. Shiela has worked at some of the best facilities in the Northeast including Beth Israel Hospital in Massachusetts and our very own St. Vincent’s Medical Center in Bridgeport.

**Lily Lopez** is the Vice President for Connecticut and Community Development Officer for Citi Community Development in Westchester, NY. She is a member of the Bridgeport Public Education Fund and the CT Association for Human Services. She works closely with non-profit partners and Citi’s businesses to meet community needs.

**Claire Dwyer (BS, Teikyo Post University)** is the newly appointed Director of Financial Aid. She has spent many years working in this field as a Director of Financial Aid in other academic institutions. Claire was recently employed as a Senior Associate Director of Financial Aid at the University of New Haven. She is already heavily involved with the students here at St. Vincent’s College, ensuring that they have the necessary resources to finance their education.

New Staff

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New staff continued

**Sandra Sharp** *(MPH, Walden University)* has been appointed as an Institutional Researcher. She has an impressive academic background and passion for research. Sandra graduated summa cum laude from Walden University. In addition to her extensive research skills, she is also a team leader. As a former medical reserve corps coordinator, she organized a group of public health volunteers into a team that significantly contributed to Stratford’s H1N1 flu clinics during the 2009 pandemic.

**Melissa Valerio** *(MA, Sacred Heart University)* serves as the new Administrative Assistant and Human Resources Coordinator. She has experience working in public relations and was recently employed as a credential assistant for the Department of Veteran Affairs at the Veterans Hospital in West Haven. Melissa is also fluent in Spanish and can read and write in German.

**Lisa Matarazzo** *(AS, Post University)* has recently joined the SVC staff as our new Assistant Director of Financial Aid. She is a member of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and the CT Association of Professional Financial Aid Administrators (CAPFAA). With many years working in a fast paced college environment and her most recent position at Post University as a Quality Control and Compliance Lead, she is a great asset to the College. She is currently pursuing a Bachelor’s of Science.

**Raquel Almestica** *(BA, Saint Francis College)* was hired as an admission counselor. She recently held a position as an Admissions Officer at Stone Academy. She has over 13 years of experience with administrative and admissions services. She has participated in student orientation and development activities designed to promote student awareness, retention and success. She also has experience in the recruitment and selection of prospective students.

Saying Goodbye to three “Daughters”

Three members of the Daughters of Charity have received new assignments and will be leaving St. Vincent’s during the summer of 2013. The College has been blessed with two daughters who have served with us since we became a college of nursing and allied health in 1991.

**Sister Marie Burns** is a founding member of the College’s Board of Trustees who has also served as Board Chairperson. **Sister Anne Marie Graham**, our Special Projects Coordinator, has assisted us in securing grants for projects and scholarships to benefit our students, and also working one-on-one with students in our tutoring program. **Sister Mary Jean Tague** has served as the coordinator of the St. Vincent’s Parish Nurse program, and in that capacity has worked with many of the College’s graduates who serve as volunteers in the program.

“We owe a debt of gratitude to these women for their leadership, vision and stewardship of the Mission. They have kept us mindful of our Catholic identity and the historic commitment of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent DePaul to care for the sick poor and to educate others for the healthcare ministry,” said Dr. Martha Shouldis, President/CEO.

Sister Marie Burns and Sister Anne Marie Graham were both recognized at the recent 21st Annual Commencement Ceremony, where Sister Marie led the traditional “Blessing of the Hands” over graduates and Sister Anne Marie led the Invocation and the Benediction.

The Daughters of Charity brought the healthcare mission of St. Vincent DePaul and Mother Elizabeth Seton to Bridgeport in 1903, when they established St. Vincent’s Hospital in 1903 and opened the St. Vincent’s Hospital Training School for Nurses in 1905. They remain the guiding spirit behind St. Vincent’s Health Services and St. Vincent’s College. Today, the Daughters of Charity currently number 27,223 members in five continents with 81 provinces.
Learning is a Lifelong Journey

When Sue Goncalves, DNP, RN, Nurse Manager, 7 South and East at St. Vincent’s Medical Center was presented the “Dean’s Leadership Award” at the recent Sacred Heart University graduation, it was a special moment for her.

Not only had she earned a doctorate in nursing practice, but she had taken a major step forward in the only career she ever wanted.

“I just never thought of any other career. My mother was a nurse and I watched her. I knew I could help people and care for people, and I wanted to make a difference.”

Goncalves, who is a member of the Class of 1985, says she went right from Marian Heights Academy for girls to the St. Vincent’s School of Nursing.

“After 29 years as a nurse, I still feel the same way. I don’t think any other profession offers what nursing does; we see people at their most vulnerable moments. Being able to connect with them and help them recover is an honor,” she says.

The Derby resident and mother of two sons says that learning has been a lifelong journey and she got a good start at St. Vincent’s.

“The foundation I got at St. Vincent’s was excellent and I wouldn’t change it for the world,” she says of the three-year program.

She then went on to earn her bachelors at Sacred Heart University and a masters at the University of New Haven before returning to Sacred Heart to participate in the first cohort class of the new doctoral program.

Much has changed in the role of nursing since Sue graduated from St. Vincent’s in 1985, and she is proud of the developments.

“To see the leadership role nurses play at bedside is amazing. We can teach, we can lead, we can change policies. It’s exciting to have a voice on the patient care team,” she says.

While computers and new technology have changed the practice of healthcare, she says nurses are more important than ever.

“We need nurses to represent the patient, to oversee patient safety, to work on a unified medical record and to create a less fragmented system,” she says. “That also means getting back to basics. All the advances don’t move you away from the patient’s bedside. That’s where it all happens.”

After a recent information session, she was amazed to learn about the growth of St. Vincent’s College with the many degrees and health certificate programs it now offers. Her advice to students currently enrolled at St. Vincent’s college.

“Hang in there. Don’t be intimidated by the academics. I went back to school after 15 years. There’s always something new to. If you want it you can do it. Find a mentor and the sky is the limit!”

“To see the leadership roles nurses play at bedside is amazing. We can teach, we can lead, we can change policies. It’s exciting to have a voice on the patient care team”

Have you moved recently?
Send your updated contact information to:
Alumni@stvincentscollege.edu
St. Vincent’s College Continues Partnership with The Connecticut Challenge

St. Vincent’s College entered into a partnership with The Connecticut (CT) Challenge in 2011 to support efforts to educate healthcare professionals, students and the community at large about the concept of cancer survivorship. Through a five-year grant from the CT Challenge, St. Vincent’s College has collaborated with the CT Challenge and other experts in the field to develop and deliver a targeted survivorship curriculum and educational activities. A shared vision has been shaped to promote and educate the health care community and others of the importance of understanding the needs of cancer survivors and their families.

While much of the healthcare system has focused on the diagnosis and treatment of cancer patients, a comprehensive support network for survivors was conspicuously absent. Typically services to survivors stopped when treatment was completed. The CT Challenge and St. Vincent’s College are excited to have the opportunity to further educate nurses and other allied health professionals about the needs of survivors to assist cancer survivors to lead healthier and more satisfying lives after the diagnosis of cancer.

This initiative began with course mapping and the introduction of cancer content and survivorship into the present curricula for all degree programs at St. Vincent’s College.

The College formed an advisory committee which includes members of the CT Challenge team, St. Vincent’s Medical Center and experts from the field of survivorship. The CT Challenge was founded by Jeffrey Keith, himself a cancer survivor.

Dr. Susan Capasso, Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean of Faculty and a certified genetics counselor began working with the CT Challenge and other members of the St. Vincent’s College community to promote awareness of survivorship programming and to develop an online cancer survivorship course. This two credit cancer survivorship course was first offered in spring 2013. The course (Health Promotions 325) can be taken by anyone and is actually part of the Women’s Imaging Modality in the BS in Radiologic Sciences degree program at the College. This course has been very well received and will be offered again in the fall 2013 semester.

A series of Lunch & Learn programs have been delivered to students, faculty and the community by experts in the field and included:

- Cancer Genetics
- Taking a Family History and Utilizing a Pedigree
- Epigenetics: Nutrition to Prevent Cancer
- Psychosocial Issues of Survivorship
- Preventive Measures
- Nutrition & Exercise and other new topics
- Sexuality

Want to learn more about this 2 Credit Cancer Survivorship Course?

Call: 203-576-5264
St. Vincent’s College will be hosting the 3rd Annual Golf Tournament sponsored by the Lord Chamberlain Nursing & Rehabilitation Center on September 9, 2013. The proceeds from the Golf Tournament will support the St. Vincent’s College Facility Expansion & Renovation Fund.

This tournament has been held for the past three years at the popular Oronoque Country Club in Stratford. Golfers and sponsors of the tournament represent numerous local companies and organizations including Lighthouse Homecare, All American Waste, Pella Windows, Bismark Construction, Partners Pharmacy, Ryders Health Management, Ad-Merica, Twin Med and Marcum LLP.

It’s a full day event including barbeque lunch, prizes for closest to the pin and longest drive, raffles, cocktail hour and dinner. Individual golfers, foursomes and sponsorships welcome. For more information email alumni@stvincentscollege.edu or call 203-576-6262.