SALVE REGINA UNIVERSITY

REPORT *from* NEWPORT

Research Soars at Salve

Grants advance opportunities for student-faculty research collaboration

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THE SALVE COMPASS PROGRAM'S FIRST YEAR STUDIO

WINTER 2025

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Ashley Caputo '25 (left) and Grady Provost '25 collect water samples along the shoreline.

Report from Newport

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SALVE REGINA
UNIVERSITY

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Salve Community:

The spring semester always brings a wonderful sense of anticipation. As the days grow longer, we look forward to Salve traditions that emphasize our mercy education in a variety of ways including the annual SRyou Student Exposition, Multicultural Education Week, SALVEthon, Earth Week activities and so much more.

I'm especially proud to share with our readers highlights of the federal grant awards that Salve has received in the past two years. Such recognition is an incredible testament to the efforts of our faculty and staff that bring the University to the next level in innovative programming. These projects will provide our students with extraordinary opportunities for research, collaboration and discovery.

I am also pleased to share that, thanks to the generosity of our donors, ***Our Mission. Our Moment.*** **– the Campaign for Salve Regina University** is having an immediate and tremendous impact across campus. From scholarships and experiential learning to community outreach and civic engagement, you are making a difference and I am deeply grateful for the trust you have placed in us with your support.

Wishing you all the best,

Kelli J. Armstrong
President

OUR MISSION.
OUR MOMENT.
The Campaign for
Salve Regina University

For stories highlighting the impact of Salve's comprehensive campaign, look for ***Our Mission. Our Moment.*** throughout the issue.

A Breakthrough Year for Grant Awards

BY JULIE MILLER

Dr. Susan Meschwitz collaborates with a student in the chemistry lab.

Grants advance opportunities for student-faculty research and other initiatives.

Applying for federal grants is not for the faint of heart. The process can be years-long and highly complex, with significant administrative demands. Given an average success rate of around 25%, the process is also incredibly competitive.

Even in this challenging climate Salve faculty have been highly successful, securing five major federal grants in the past two years – two from the National Science Foundation (NSF), one from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), one from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and one from Supporting Higher Education in Refugee Resettlement (SHERR) – along with 14 other awards totaling more than $4 million for projects that will roll out over the next few years.

DEVELOPING A TEACHER-SCHOLAR MODEL

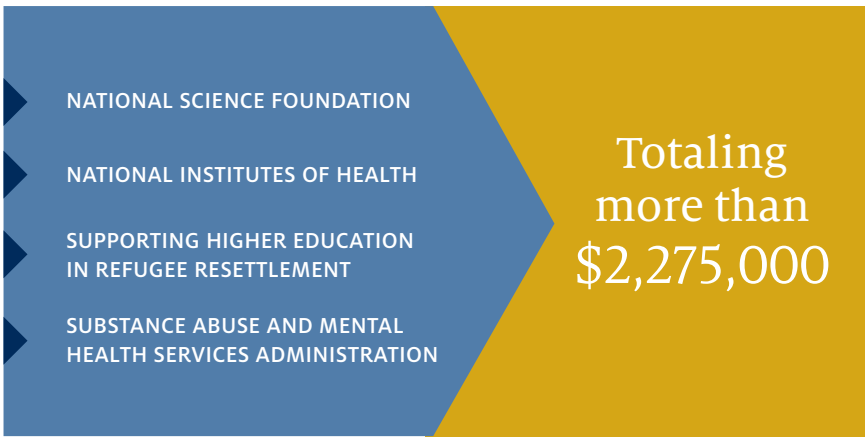
In the federal funding context, Salve is considered a "primarily undergraduate institution" where the focus is more on teaching than research. Carving out space and focus for funding applications at any level – never mind a direct, national award – is a massive undertaking for faculty.

In 2020, with a new strategic mission and the inception of the Salve Compass program, the University set its sights on cultivating a teacher-scholar model that would not only present research opportunities to faculty, but also fully integrate hands-on research into the experience they provide for their students.

"We worked on building a culture of sponsored programs at Salve," said Joyce Botelho, senior research development officer, who came on board that year with the expertise and relentless dedication to increasing grant activity. "Salve had been very successful at securing sub-awards [to carry out part of a federal award received by a larger, research-focused institution] but to break through that barrier to a direct national award, the faculty needed more support."

DRIVING SCIENTIFIC BREAKTHROUGH AND UNDERGRADUATE INVOLVEMENT IN RESEARCH

The first of two grants Salve received from the NSF in fall 2024 was a $1 million award for "Supporting STEM Scholars to Engage in the Blue Economy." Led by Dr. Belinda Barbagallo, associate professor of biology, the project contributes to the national need for a diverse and capable workforce of scientists, mathematicians, engineers and technicians by



increasing STEM degree completion of high-achieving, low-income students.

"The attrition rate for STEM students is high, particularly for those from non-traditional backgrounds," said Barbagallo. "With this award we're able to go beyond scholarships alone and build a scaffolded plan to help students get through all four years. It allows us to take a holistic approach, building a mentoring network, assisting with internship placement, and helping to create a sense of belonging in the STEM community – best practices that lead to student success.

"Students coming from economically disadvantaged schools don't always have the opportunity to develop the skills they need to succeed in STEM in that first year of college," Barbagallo added. "This program builds those structures to make sure they don't fall through the cracks."

The second NSF award was part of a $3 million grant to five Rhode Island institutions to launch the Rhode Island Research Administration Collaborative. Together with Salve, Roger Williams University, Providence College, Rhode Island College and Rhode Island School of Design will expand their collective capacity to contribute to the state's continued growth and leadership in research driven by its universities and colleges. Led by Botelho, Salve received $555,545 to focus its efforts on developing learning community programs that address the unique challenges faced by grant administrators at emerging research institutions.

President Kelli J. Armstrong called this award a "game changer, not only for Salve Regina and the other partners in this project, but for Rhode Island in general," adding that "it helps us build a stronger research culture and achieve the full STEM research capacity for our faculty and students to contribute to the local economy."

"It's exciting to be part of this program as NSF leads the charge in acknowledging the significance of schools like ours in the research landscape," Armstrong noted.

In September 2024 the NIH awarded Dr. Susan Meschwitz, professor of chemistry, $387,466 to research new treatments for a common infection. The three-year project aims to better understand and treat recurrent urinary tract infections by synthesizing, identifying and characterizing molecules that can lead to the development of new therapeutic agents to treat them.

A key focus for Meschwitz's project will be to train several undergraduate students each year to conduct experiments and analyze data. In her laboratory, they will be involved with all aspects of the project including peptide synthesis and characterization, screening and sequencing mutants, and identifying protein targets.

"Students will be working on new ideas, on things that haven't been done before," said Meschwitz. "They're going to be the ones to help find the answers, or the non-answer. With NIH support they're going to receive hands-on experience in the lab where they will develop their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. This experience will help prepare them for their future, whether they enter the biomedical workforce or continue to graduate school."

> "Students will be working on new ideas; on things that haven't been done before...[and] receive hands-on experience in the lab where they will develop their critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
>
> DR. SUSAN MESCHWITZ

PROGRAMS THAT SUPPORT SALVE'S MERCY MISSION

In March 2024, Erin Fitzgerald, director of the Center for Global Education and Fellowships, and Dr. Mary Montminy-Danna, chair of the Department of Social Work, were awarded a $44,865 Innovation Incentive Grant from SHERR designed to stimulate ideas in refugee resettlement. The project, "Building Case Management Capacity in Rhode Island and Beyond," will result in new curriculum development in the bachelor's programs at Salve and three collaborating mercy institutions.

"We anticipate that the internship programs established in Rhode Island through this grant can be replicated at the other

MERCY MISSION IN ACTION

In November 2024, with funding from the SHERR grant, the University produced a two-day workshop in collaboration with Dorcas International that gathered educators and students from Salve and three other participating mercy institutions. Sessions provided an overview of the global refugee resettlement system, the various immigrations statuses in the U.S., and resources available. Participants also explored areas of refugee resettlement that fall outside of typical social work, including stages of trauma, cultural awareness, student integration and strategies for advocacy.

Sagitta Woodman '12, LICSW, a private practitioner and consultant on mental health services with newly arrived populations, was the main presenter for the event.

The workshop included the critical voices of resettled individuals in a panel discussion where they shared their journeys to the U.S. from Iraq, South Sudan, Afghanistan and Kenya. The eye-opening discussion brought to light the challenges resettled students face, from going to school in camps to the constant and devastating uncertainty they face at each step along the way, to learning new languages and experiencing loneliness in being separated from family, friends and familiar food. They shared the deep impact the support of agencies, new friends and counselors can make in their journey, coping mechanisms that they've found helpful, and the desire of many of them to help other students faced with the challenge of resettling.

participating institutions, so they can build and strengthen relationships with their own local resettlement agencies to build refugee resettlement capacity in their communities and state," Montminy-Danna said. "Together, by focusing on the mercy critical concerns, we're all working toward a world that is more harmonious, just and merciful."

The very first national grant Salve received was in August 2023, a $287,760 award from SAMHSA for a project led by Dr. Tracey Cameron, associate vice president and dean of students. Titled "SPEARS: Suicide Prevention, Education and Recovery at Salve," the project focuses on expanding peer education and mental health support – not just for Salve students, but for high school students in the broader Newport and Rhode Island communities.

FORWARD FOCUS: HUMANITIES AND INTERDISCIPLINARY WORK

Salve is continuing to build its culture of sponsored programs on campus, buoyed by its recent success.

"When an institution brings in a major federal grant it establishes their profile and the sense that 'we can do it' permeates," said Botelho. "To bring in four in a year is a big deal."

After securing its first national grants in the sciences, Botelho says the University will expand its focus to funding opportunities through the National Endowment for the Arts and National Endowment for the Humanities. "We want to generate more activity in all of our departments," she concluded.

A NEARY FAMILY TRADITION

BY CLAIRE CURRY

When AnnMarie Neary Bergwall '93, '94 (M) enrolled at Salve Regina University in 1989, it was the beginning of the Neary family's long and meaningful relationship with Salve — one that now spans more than three decades and two generations, and includes devoted alumni and parents, student-athletes, lifelong friendships and generous philanthropy.

From the many alumni events the family has hosted over the years to bricks embedded in the chapel garden bearing their names, a spirit of dedication and tradition of giving back to the University shines through.

Most recently, a generous gift made by Una Neary, one of the most significant donors to athletics in recent history and fondly known on campus as "Aunt Una," outfitted Rodgers Recreation Center with a brand-new basketball scoreboard and state-of-the-art training equipment, just in time for the Seahawks' first year in the New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference (NEWMAC). The gift was made on behalf of the Neary family in honor of their late parents, Jimmy and Eileen.

IT ALL BEGAN WITH A POSTCARD

When AnnMarie was a senior at the Academy of the Holy Angels in Demarest, New Jersey, she and her parents were contemplating the next step of her academic journey. Then a postcard arrived from Salve and just like that, the decision was made.

"Back then, applying to colleges was so different than it is today," explained AnnMarie, who has been going through the process with her own three children in recent years.

"There were no campus visits. We looked at Barron's [Profiles of American Colleges] for college descriptions and all we'd see were little photos of the campuses. So when I showed my mom the postcard from Salve, she said, 'You know what? Why don't you go here?' and I said 'Fine, I'll go there.' And that was it. That's where it started, with the postcard that came in the mail."

AnnMarie and her mom made the trip from New Jersey for her orientation and it was the first time either of them had been to Newport. To say they were pleasantly surprised would be an understatement.

"On the way, my mom had been saying that college life would be a whole new experience for me," she recalled. "Then we pulled into Newport and she said, 'Oh my, you've got to be kidding me! Only AnnMarie would end up in paradise for college.'"

"Going to Salve was such an amazing experience," said AnnMarie, who majored in criminal justice and made many lifelong friends throughout her college years. "I loved my

President Kelli J. Armstrong and AnnMarie Neary Bergwall '93, '94 (M)

The Neary Family: Briana, Patrick, Patrick, Adriana, Una and Sofia

classes and my teachers, and my advisor was amazing. Dr. Farrington and another one of my professors were retired FBI agents. The classes were small and they were so engaging because they had great stories to share [about the field]. I never wanted to miss a class."

FAITH AND FAMILY

As AnnMarie settled into Salve and Newport, her family did, too. Her parents and siblings visited often and always volunteered to lend a helping hand at events and various festivities. Eventually, AnnMarie's youngest sister, Eileen Neary Bowers '95, '97 (M), enrolled, and both stayed on to pursue their master's degrees.

The family atmosphere at Salve was more than familiar to the Neary siblings: AnnMarie and Eileen, their older brother Patrick — a parent of two current Salve student-athletes — and their sister Una. Their parents immigrated to the states from Ireland and worked hard to provide for their children. It paid off, and Neary's, the Irish pub and restaurant Jimmy Neary opened on 57th Street in New York City in 1967, earned a legendary reputation for its authentic Irish fare and warm, welcoming atmosphere. The siblings considered the restaurant a home away from home, and each of them worked at and eventually oversaw the establishment until its doors closed in July 2024.

"Our father worked seven days a week, and he would say he never worked a day in his life," Una recalled. "He only went to sixth grade and mom only went to high school, so the most important thing when they had children was for all of us to get a college education. They were so in love with this country, 'the land of opportunity.' To be able to send their children to college was everything to them. They would say 'Only in America.'"

"If you met our father for five minutes," added AnnMarie, "one of the first things that would come out of his mouth was how proud he was that his kids went to Catholic grammar

> "We are so grateful to the Neary family for their friendship and enthusiastic support of Salve athletics over the years.
>
> MAELYNN PATTEN
> VICE PRESIDENT FOR UNIVERSITY ADVANCEMENT

AnnMarie Bergwall Neary, Robert Sameth Jr. '93, President Kelli J. Armstrong, MaeLynn Patten and Tanya Sameth after a fabulous dinner at Neary's in New York City.

school, Catholic high school and Catholic college. For him and my mom, that was the ultimate goal, and they achieved it."

THE NEXT GENERATION

Over the past 30 years, the Neary family has become deeply woven into the fabric of the University. The family has hosted many alumni celebrations and other events at Neary's and at the Morris County Country Club and, along with Patrick and his wife Adriana, visit often to cheer for Briana '24, '25 (M) and Sofia '26, who play for the women's basketball team.

Briana earned a bachelor's degree in biology and is now pursuing her master's in healthcare administration. She is the captain of the basketball team and a member of Salve's "1,000-point club." Her sister and teammate Sofia is an undergraduate biology major with a minor in chemistry who also looks forward to a career in healthcare.

Now a devoted friend and supporter, Una is as much a part of the Salve family as her sisters and nieces.

Dedicating the Rodgers Recreation Center scoreboard to their grandparents was an idea inspired by Briana and Sofia and made possible by Una, who has generously supported Salve athletics.

"It was my poppa's dream to see us play together at Salve," said Briana, adding that although that didn't happen, there's no doubt he's watching from above. "Both my poppa and nana loved Salve."

"They loved the school so much," echoed Una. "There's a beautiful plaque outside the gymnasium in honor of mom and dad, so they will forever have their names tied to Salve."

"We are so grateful to the Neary family for their friendship and enthusiastic support of Salve athletics over the years," said MaeLynn Patten, vice president for university advancement. "The new scoreboard is a physical manifestation of their enduring commitment and a testament to their philanthropic spirit as a family."

> "It was my poppa's dream to see us play together at Salve.
>
> BRIANA NEARY '24, '25 (M)

Seahawks women's basketball student-athletes Briana and Sofia Neary

Una Neary and Tom Riggs stand beside the plaque and photo dedicated to her parents, Jimmy and Eileen Neary, following the scoreboard dedication in Rodgers Recreation Center.

The Shaker Brothers

Paving the Way for Students to Join the Salve Family

BY CLAIRE CURRY

Joe and Steven Shaker

Entrepreneurship, business acumen, and a strong work ethic are traits that have passed down through generations in the Shaker family. That spirit is reflected today in Steven Shaker '91, P'28, and his brother Edward Shaker '92, who, along with their older brother and cousin, are partners in the Shaker Automotive Group. The business began as a small auto repair shop that their grandfather opened more than 80 years ago. Since then, it has grown into a thriving organization with seven locations throughout Connecticut and Massachusetts.

Steve and Ed point to the foundations and values set by their elders, their strong family ties and the education they received at Salve Regina University for their personal and professional success.

"I was a political science major and minored in history, and that degree taught me a lot of things, like understanding that there are two sides to every story and how to be a critical thinker," Steve said. "Salve had a big impact on my life. It's a small school, but the environment opened my eyes to a bigger world and the opportunities I had ahead of me."

In honor of his alma mater's 75th anniversary, Steve made a generous gift on behalf of his family to establish The Shaker Family Endowed Scholarship. His mission is to help make a Salve education possible for new generations of students. Steve and Ed have supported the University in many ways over the years by hosting various events, including a regional 75th anniversary celebration in West Palm Beach, Florida.

"I always felt attached to Salve Regina," Steve noted. "A lot of people go to college, get a degree and leave. That wasn't what it was about for me. If we could help one student who really deserves to go to a place like Salve and give them the same experience we had, that means a lot to us."

He added that Salve's leadership, and especially, President Kelli J. Armstrong, understands and carries forward the tradition of the Sisters of Mercy and the core mission. "That's what makes it a great, great school," said Steve.

BUILDING A FAMILY BUSINESS

The origin of the Shaker Automotive Group dates back to the 1940s when the brothers' grandfather immigrated to the United States from Lebanon. He earned a living pushing a produce cart, but made more money fixing farmers' trucks when they broke down, so he eventually opened a repair shop in Waterbury, Connecticut, and started selling used cars.

"My dad went to [college] and later ran the used car garage with my aunt and uncle and we all worked there as a family," explained Steve. In the 1980s, the company expanded to other locations and ultimately, the brothers and their cousin bought the company. The partners work together as a team, each bringing different skill sets to the business, from general management and sales to training and operations.

"We're all pushing the rock in the same direction and we count on each other to help," Steve said about working so closely with his family over the decades. "When you all have the same exact goal, it's not hard. We try to make every day better than yesterday, not just for us as a family, but for our employees and the community, too."

To that end, for many years, Steve has been actively involved with the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Waterbury as a member of the board and past chair. He is still involved today, pitching in on various committees, including the golf tournament committee.

Steve and his brother Ed live next door to one another in Connecticut, where they've raised their families. Ed and his wife, Marissa, a physician's assistant in the neonatal unit of Connecticut Children's Medical Center, have three children. Steve's wife Holly is a national sales director at the French company, Sanofi, and they have two sons. Their youngest, Joe, is a member of Salve's Class of 2028 and a first-year student in the nursing program.

"I'm happy he's there," said Ed about his nephew. "It did so much for us and I know it will do great things for him. The atmosphere is so good for your development, and finding yourself and growing yourself. It's a great community and my nephew is going to thrive in that environment."

The brothers share a different philosophy than their elders and don't expect their children to work in the family business if they are interested in other pursuits.

"If they want to be in our business, we encourage them, but we tell them that they have to go work for someone else first," Steve said. "If they still want to work with us, then we'll be here."

SALVE COMPASS SPOTLIGHT

First Year Studio

BY JULIE MILLER

OUR MISSION.
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Salve is now three years into its groundbreaking **SALVE COMPASS**, a program that is a key component of the University's comprehensive campaign. Thanks to generous support from visionary donors, Salve Compass has successfully implemented innovative programming that empowers students to chart their educational journey with purpose: *cultivating meaning, fostering community* and *building impact* through a series of studio courses and common class experiences that prepare them for meaningful careers and a life well-lived.

The journey begins with First Year Studio (FYS), a one-credit course that introduces design thinking, and professional discernment guiding students in planning for purposeful lives. All first-year and new transfer students are enrolled, placed in cohorts by areas of study and paired with a Compass advisor and peer mentor.

DEVELOPING A DESIGN THINKING MINDSET

Through a meaningful exploration of their personal values, academic goals, life experiences and Salve's mercy tradition, students participate in assignments, service and discussions that help them prototype possibilities for their future at Salve and the careers they plan to pursue. The core learning outcome of the course is for students to master the skill of "relating meaningfully."

"Students are entering a world of work where what their job and industry look like now is guaranteed to evolve," said Hilary Flanagan, director of the Center for Advising, Career and Life Design. "First Year Studio introduces a useful framework of skills that help them further develop resilience and empower them to create evolving paths to success. It is a perfect launch for the next curricular step in the Salve Compass experience, where they engage in fundamentals of career development."

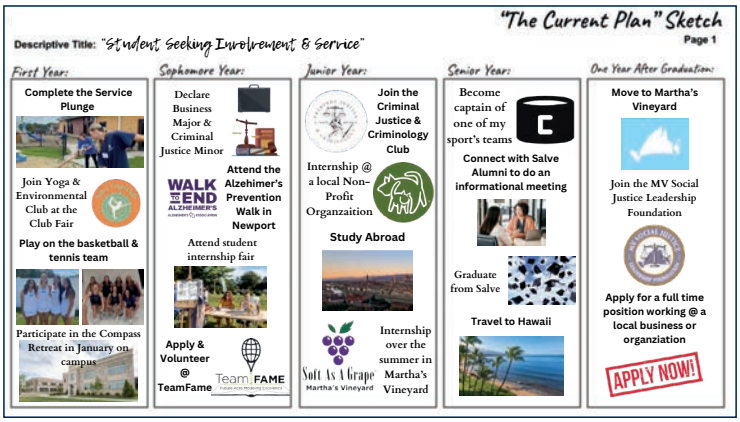
The course culminates in a project called "My Three Salves" in which students intentionally map out their desired college experience at Salve, then explore alternatives that would take them down different paths that they might also find fulfilling.

Maya Parady '25, a lead peer mentor in the Salve Compass program, said, "Sitting down to plan out my next steps was a new kind of thinking for me. Seeing it on paper, I was really surprised by all the ideas I came up with. There are

Salve Compass Program Design

FIRST YEAR	SOPHOMORE YEAR	JUNIOR YEAR	SENIOR YEAR
FIRST YEAR STUDIO (Design Thinking)	SOPHOMORE STUDIO (Career Development)	JUNIOR STUDIO (Life Design)	
COMPASS NORTH (Retreat)	COMPASS SUMMER (Project-Based Learning)	COMPASS VITAE (Experiential Learning)	COMPASS SUMMIT (Celebration)

MY THREE SALVES provides students with the opportunity to map out their college and career experiences.



so many good choices! Having the opportunity to visualize different paths was really empowering for me, and as a peer mentor I've seen how helpful it is for the students I work with."

INTENTIONAL SPACE FOR REFLECTION

An important part of FYS is cultivating the habit of carving out time for reflection. Because Salve Compass focuses on values as well as a student's interest and ability, the course includes exercises that help each student integrate Salve's mercy mission into their journey.

"It's easy to get caught up in the day-to-day and not make the space to think about things like your values," Parady explained. "Salve Compass builds in that time to ponder, to think, to consider and question. Doing that in a controlled environment, with professionals and peer mentors guiding you, makes all the difference. They've been where you are and they're telling you that you're fine, that it's OK. You learn together."

A foundational element for the Salve Compass, First Year Studio is an integral component of the program that sets each student on a path of discovery and prepares them with the skills required to succeed in their personal and professional lives.

> "Salve Compass builds in that time to ponder, to think, to consider and question.
>
> MAYA PARADY '25

The Great Elephant Migration

The Great Elephant Migration, a traveling public art exhibition and global fundraising initiative, brought thousands of visitors to Salve's campus throughout summer 2024. As part of an international collaboration between Indigenous artisans, contemporary artists and cultural institutions, 100 life-sized sculptures arrived in Newport to begin their North American journey in early July 2024. Of those, 52 were situated along Cliff Walk behind McAuley Hall, where locals and tourists alike were able to easily access the free public exhibit. Other area locations included The Breakers, Rough Point and the Great Friends Meeting House.

A pride of alumni enjoy An Evening with the Elephants on Aug. 10, 2024. Guests enjoyed a picture-perfect summer evening by the ocean in the company of the majestic sculptures. (From left) Nancy B. Mulvey '72; Nancy Judge Whalen '72; Marilynn L. Reycroft '72; Patricia Doran Wong '72; Evelyn M. Cofone '72; Barbara S. Schiaroli '72; Linda S. Cahill '72; Patricia C. Busse '72; Elaine D. Hart '72; Mary Ellen Halloran '72; Mary C. McGuinn'72; Jacqueline Slevin Janicki '72

Sarah Ferguson, Duchess of York

A highlight of the summer exhibit was a visit by Sarah Ferguson, the Duchess of York, on July 25. In Rhode Island to promote her latest novel, "A Most Intriguing Lady," she toured the exhibit as an advocate for climate activism and visited "Mayflower," one of the elephants who, thanks to her distinctive red color, is Ferguson's "twin."

After welcoming students from the Class of 2028 and their families at new student orientation, the herd began the next leg of its journey to New York City. The elephants' visit to Salve was documented in segments on CBS This Morning and in Forbes magazine, as well as in local and regional news, travel and arts-related publications.

-Susan Azizi '24 and Julie Miller

2024 FORUM AT NEWPORT: CLIMATE CHANGE AND NATIONAL SECURITY

Salve Regina University and the Naval War College convened the second annual Forum at Newport on climate change and national security on Sept. 5, 2024. Rhode Island's U.S. senators, Jack Reed and Sheldon Whitehouse, were there to lend their perspectives, as were a variety of renowned speakers, including Secretary of the Navy, Carlos Del Toro; former Secretary of State, John Kerry; Dr. Thomas Barnett, author of "America's New Map: Restoring Our Global Leadership in an Era of Climate Change and Demographic Collapse;" and Sherri Goodman, author of "Threat Multiplier: Climate, Military Leadership, and the Fight for Global Security."

Kerry, who served as the first Envoy for the Climate during the Biden-Harris administration, described efforts that were undertaken to reduce the output of greenhouse gases and steer the economy in a more sustainable direction. He called the Inflation Reduction Act the largest environmental bill in history.

Kerry was asked what makes him the most optimistic, despite all the missed opportunities over time. He pointed out that there have been amazing advances in technology in recent years and observed that the American people have always risen to the challenge when faced with a threat to our national security, which climate change is undeniably causing.

Each of the presentations emphasized the innate interconnection between America's national security and the quickly changing climate, which is driving so many of the planet's current challenges, including mass outmigration from areas that are becoming arid and uninhabitable. With the opening of new lanes through the melting Arctic ice to the heavy migration pressures in Europe, North America and Indo-Asia, climate change, the speakers argued, is clearly playing a steadily increasing role.

Former Secretary of State John Kerry joins Dr. Jim Ludes for the second annual Forum at Newport.

> Climate change challenges the environmental equilibrium of the planet on which so much of human existence depends, the ability of millions to have enough to eat and enough to drink, and the stability of entire regions.
>
> DR. JIM LUDES, VICE PRESIDENT FOR STRATEGIC INITIATIVES AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE PELL CENTER

"Climate change challenges the environmental equilibrium of the planet on which so much of human existence depends, the ability of millions to have enough to eat and enough to drink, and the stability of entire regions," said Dr. Jim Ludes, vice president for strategic initiatives and executive director of the Pell Center. "Climate-induced resource competition will make conflict more likely within and between states, it will alter the geography of energy and conflict, and it will threaten lives, property, economies and even ways of life around the planet. At their heart, these are questions of national security."

Editor's note: A portion of this story was excerpted from Newport This Week's Sept. 12, 2024 story, "John Kerry Brings Global Warming Insight to Salve Summit," by Ross Cann.

Pell Center initiatives are made possible through the generosity of donors who believe in the importance of civic engagement as part of the democratic process.

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CLAIBORNE PELL FELLOWSHIPS ADVANCE FACULTY-STUDENT RESEARCH

Conducting research with a professor is an intellectually and professionally transformative experience for undergraduate students. Here at Salve, this experience has been supported and advanced through the Claiborne Pell Research Fellowship, where the focus is on giving undergraduates invaluable research opportunities typically reserved for graduate students.

Funded by Salve trustee Bernard F. McKay and Mary McKay, and administered by the Pell Honors Program, this fellowship has provided funding for faculty to team up with students on research that will result in a peer-reviewed work of scholarship.

In the second year of the program, Dr. Stephanie Jones, assistant professor in the Department of Psychology, undertook a research project with Sofia Abuin '24, psychology major and a Class of 2024 valedictorian. Together, they explored the ethical implications of punishment-based interventions in the behavior analysis field.

PRESENTING TO PROFESSIONAL COLLEAGUES AS AN UNDERGRAD

Under Jones' guidance, Abuin completed a systematic literature review, developed a manuscript of findings and submitted it to peer-reviewed publications. With the funding provided by the fellowship she was also able to attend and present at several academic conferences.

"The understanding of the literature Sofia was able to achieve through this fellowship has far exceeded what I have seen from many graduate students," said Jones. "Her findings were that we can do better, and whenever you talk about human rights, a lot of what you say may end up being controversial. Presenting that experience at conferences significantly built up her competence in informal debates."

"At the conferences we got an incredible amount of feedback that helped inform our manuscript and shaped how we presented the ideas that were heavily related to ethical concerns and progress," Abuin said.

Sofia Abuin '24

> "At the conferences we got an incredible amount of feedback that helped inform our manuscript and shaped how we presented the ideas that were heavily related to ethical concerns and progress.
>
> SOFIA ABUIN '24

Beyond advancing the research, the fellowship gave Abuin opportunities few undergraduates get to experience. "When you're in an undergrad program you're still trying to figure out what's important and what you want to pursue, especially when you're in a field that requires research. Being able to take part in research already underway in your field is crucial. It helped me take those next steps in my graduate career," Abuin shared.

2024-25 FELLOWSHIPS FOCUS ON NEWPORT COMMUNITIES AND HISTORY

During the fall 2024 semester, two new teams launched into their fellowship projects. Dr. Tara Brooke Watkins, assistant professor in the Department of Music, Theatre and Dance, and Anna Annese '26, theatre arts major, explored "The Stories Behind Newport Neighborhoods," where they are engaging with community members to learn and understand their experiences of living in Newport, and will produce a piece for Salve's theatre arts 2025-26 season.

Dr. Emily Colbert Cairns, associate professor and chair of the Department of Modern Languages, and Leila Martinez '26, a biology major with a minor in Spanish, are researching the papers of Aaron Lopez, a Sephardic Jew from Portugal who escaped the Inquisition and made his home in Newport. The project is designed to shed light on colonial New England culture and result in an edited volume of the complete "Lucerna" letters and digitization of the Aaron Lopez letters.

-Julie Miller

CELEBRATING THE INAUGURAL CLASS OF WELCOME CORPS ON CAMPUS

Salve is among the 17 higher education institutions that welcomed the inaugural cohort of refugee students arriving through Welcome Corps on Campus. Through this first-of-its-kind program, campuses nationwide can welcome and privately sponsor academically qualified refugee students through the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program. The University welcomed two incoming first-year students in fall 2024 through the program.

"The Welcome Corps on Campus has set in motion a transformative shift in how higher education institutions can build community on campus while also addressing the global refugee crisis," said Nele Feldmann, associate director of Welcome Corps on Campus. "Students, faculty, staff and institutional leaders across the country are embodying America's longstanding tradition of providing refuge by offering these students this life-changing opportunity."

Erin FitzGerald, director of the Center for Global Education and Fellowships, together with the Department of Social Work, initiated Salve's participation in this important program. To become a host institution, the University had to establish a team of 10 members who all received Welcome Corps training, went through background checks and meets regularly to organize support for the participating students – everything from helping them secure and prepare housing to enrolling in classes, accessing social services and integrating as new members of the campus community.

In addition to FitzGerald, the Welcome Corps on Campus team includes student sponsor Hailey Daviau '25; Casey Donahue, assistant director, international student services and exchange partner program; Elizabeth Galvin, director of health services; Dr. Mary Montminy-Danna, professor and chair of the Department of Social Work; James Mournighan, director of residence life; Lauren Neary, medical administrative assistant for health services; Kelly O'Malley, social work lecturer; Dr. Heather Pizzanello, assistant professor for social work; and from the Center for Community Engagement and Service, Kelly Powers, director, and Kathleen Rendos, assistant director.

From left: Erin FitzGerald, Kelly O'Malley, Hailey Daviau '25 and JoanMarie Davis

Daviau, a social work major, said that being a sponsor in the program is "a profoundly meaningful experience. It has allowed me to make human connections that will last a lifetime, connect my classroom experience as a social work student to a larger mission and has allowed me to create a welcoming environment to these students. All of which I will take with me in my future career and continuing learning of various populations I may work with."

"Salve is committed to living out our mercy mission in tangible ways, and our participation in the Welcome Corps on Campus enables us to further the work we have been doing to support displaced and refugee students since 2012," said President Kelli J. Armstrong. "As part of this national network, we will be able to offer students even more support in their educational journeys. We're inspired by the courage and perseverance of these students and our community will be made better by their presence."

-Julie Miller

Gilded Age Fashion on Display

Visitors to the Dorrance H. Hamilton Gallery were transported back to the extravagant Gilded Age through "Fashion and Longing: Gilded Age Dress in New England," an exhibit that ran through November 2024.

Showcasing historic garments from the University of Rhode Island's (URI) Historic Textile and Costume Collection, the exhibition was curated through a partnership between Rebecca Kelly, textile conservator and dress historian at URI, alongside Department of Art and Art History faculty Dr. Anthony Mangieri, professor, and Ernest Jolicoeur, associate professor. From refined mourning dresses and finely detailed afternoon wear to bathing suits and men's needlepoint slippers, each garment provided a glimpse into an era when self-expression through clothing reflected one's place in society.

The exhibition, unlike many others, invited viewers to see Gilded Age clothing as a window into the lives of the growing middle class of the late 19th century. Rather than centering on the wealth and luxury that often define this period, the focus shifted to highlight the experiences of working-class New Englanders.

"Lots of people visit Newport to behold its architectural grandeur. But the tours along Bellevue Avenue tend to paint a rather biased or exclusionary story of life in New England during the Gilded Age," said Jolicoeur, who also serves as the Hamilton Gallery director. "We hope this exhibition widened the scope of that narrative to include the experiences of others in the community."

In addition to bringing Newport's Gilded Age history to life for the public, the exhibit provided a once-in-a-lifetime learning experience for students enrolled in the advanced course ART405: Curatorial Practice and the Gallery Experience. The students gained hands-on experience working alongside Jolicoeur and Mangieri as assistant curators, developing skills in exhibit design, artifact handling and historical research. In particular, students helped plan the layout of each piece within the gallery, considering where and how each garment's unique story could best be told.

"Exploring the Gilded Age through clothing almost seems unreal," shared Abigail Gibson '26, a studio arts major with a concentration in graphic design and a minor in marketing. "It is quite interesting to learn about life that came before us on these very same grounds."

-Catherine Dolan '23

Did You Know?

The University hosted some special guests on campus with the filming of HBO's "The Gilded Age" series in October 2024. The campus community had a glimpse of what happens behind the scenes, and some of our students and faculty were involved as extras.

Although the air date for Season 3 has not yet been announced, Olivia Mahler '25 and Sydney Rooney '25 were hired to work as talent and will be featured in upcoming episodes. Both students were also in rehearsals and performances for "Meet Me in St. Louis," balancing two very different schedules while working in two different areas of professional acting – theater and film.

EXCELLING IN THE SCIENCE OF BEHAVIOR

Behavior analysis doctoral students' research receives awards at prestigious regional conference.

Like many first-year students, when Megan Ellsworth '23, '24 (M) entered Salve Regina University as a first-year psychology major in 2019, she was ambivalent about her career goals. She knew that psychology was right for her, but its broad base overwhelmed her. However, a class with Dr. Emma Grauerholz-Fisher, assistant professor of psychology, illuminated Ellsworth's path and she found her niche: behavior analysis.

Fast forward to fall 2024, and Ellsworth has not only earned her bachelor's degree in psychology, but she continued on to secure a master's degree in behavior analysis and is currently on track for her doctorate. In October 2024 at the esteemed BABAT conference (an annual symposium of New England's regional association for behavior analysis), Ellsworth's research received awards, alongside that of Jesse Perrin '17 (M) and several other Salve graduate students, all of whom work under the guidance of Dr. Cody Morris, graduate program director and assistant professor of behavior analysis.

"My niche is data collection integrity," Ellsworth explained, "but it's so much more than numbers."

Ellsworth's symposium and poster, which she presented at BABAT, demonstrate the applicability of her data-based work. She conducted her clinical research at Pathways Strategic Teaching Center at J. Arthur Trudeau Memorial Center in Coventry, Rhode Island. There she used her scientifically driven research to help children and teens with autism and related disabilities to help them become more independent and higher functioning in school, at home and in the community.

Behavior analysis students and faculty gather at annual symposium.

"I worked one-on-one with a 13-year-old client who took a long time to transition from one room to another at Pathways," said Ellsworth. "So, we asked, what stimuli can we put in the client's environment to speed up the transition?"

This applicability is also part of what attracted Perrin to the field of behavior analysis, although his career route followed a different direction. Arriving at Salve from UMass Dartmouth, he was impressed by the research and soon finished his master's degree. He is now juggling the doctoral program with a full-time job coordinating practicum programs at Pathways while teaching psychology courses at Salve.

"I get the most enjoyment out of life by helping other people," said Perrin, who has set his sights on a career as an educator but is open to the many options behavior analysis offers. "I have multiple focuses," he added, but has zoomed in on "identifying idiosyncratic variables and precise treatments to reduce the recurrence of challenging behavior."

Both Perrin and Ellsworth raved about the conference. "It's a terrific opportunity. The experience is amazing," said Perrin, noting that the local aspect of the conference, which was held in Worcester, Massachusetts, makes it very realistic for participants to collaborate.

"It was a perfect balance of networking, getting new ideas for research and finding potential collaborators," said Ellsworth. "Attending also underscores the broad applications of the field: not only in the classroom, but in sports, corporations and even with animals."

Morris, who runs the behavior analysis research lab where Ellsworth and Perrin study, noted the prestige BABAT holds.

"It's the oldest and largest conference for behavior analysis in New England – 45 years – with a rich history," said Morris. "I'm from Michigan and it's the number one regional conference I had wanted to check out before coming to this area. BABAT is an amazing opportunity for our Salve students to see cutting-edge research and meet researchers from around the world."

-Karen Carlo Ruhren

PELL CENTER LAUNCHES SUCCESSFUL FIRST SUMMER INSTITUTE OF POLITICS FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

It began with a question: is there an approach to politics rooted in the University's mission?

The Pell Center at Salve Regina University answered that question with an overwhelming "yes!" in its inaugural Summer Institute of Politics in July 2024. Over the course of a week, 20 rising junior and senior high school students lived and studied on Salve's campus, developing their own understanding of American politics and growing as leaders.

The agenda featured off-campus visits to local sites including Touro Synagogue and Fort Adams. Students also participated in a counter-terrorism simulation, learned about the role of communications in American politics, explored the meaning of the American republic, learned practical tools like stakeholder engagement, and developed and presented their own policy pitch to a policy shark-tank as a culminating project.

Katie Sonder, associate director for the Pell Center, led several sessions throughout the week, including a workshop that examined the nuances of American political polarization.

"I was genuinely impressed by the students' dedication to navigating complex political issues during the Summer Institute of Politics," said Sonder. "Their willingness to understand the other side's perspective was both inspiring and indicative of their potential as future leaders."

Jay Sullivan, an award-winning author, communications consultant and University trustee, served as a panelist for the student policy pitches. "What stood out was the deep

connection between a fearless expression of passion and the executive presence of the speakers," he recalled. "It was all the more remarkable because the presenters were all rising high school juniors and seniors."

Renee Dube '25 served as a peer mentor and drew from her experiences as a history and secondary education major to help develop and lead sessions. "It was an amazing experience to watch students work with excitement on a project I helped design," she said. "Seeing the curiosity and growth in each student was extremely rewarding and helped me gain confidence as an educator."

Reflecting on their experience, many students noted that the program challenged various assumptions they had going in, while others commented on the confidence the institute instilled in them.

"I used to think that I couldn't do things that I wasn't confident in. Now I think that if I push myself, I can do whatever I put my mind to," said one participant.

"This first Summer Institute of Politics exceeded even our wildest ambitions," said Dr. Jim Ludes, executive director for the Pell Center. "I'm not talking about the programming or the guest lectures, all of whom were excellent. It was the transformation we saw in the students who attended the program that was so inspirational. It's the kind of thing that draws so many of us to education in the first place; to meet students where they are and to help them grow and learn, to give them a glimpse of the mountain top, and to help boost them along the way."

-Erin Barry '19, '24 (MBA)

Summer Institute of Politics
JULY 13 - 19, 2025

Scan for more information on the program and how to apply.

CULTURAL AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS MERCY CRITICAL CONCERNS

The 2024 Cultural and Historic Preservation Conference, held Nov. 7 – 10, was a collaboration between the Eastern States Archaeological Federation and the Noreen Stonor Drexel Cultural and Historic Preservation Program. "The Critical Concerns of Preservation" spotlighted the role of preservation in uncovering and honoring diverse histories, with a focus on the five critical concerns of the Sisters of Mercy: immigration, environmentalism, nonviolence, race and gender.

"We incorporate these things into every facet of our coursework," shared Dr. Heather Rockwell, assistant professor of cultural and historic preservation. "From learning about the experiences of indigenous people in New England and the lives of immigrant servants in Gilded-Age mansions to how we can build a greener community while preserving our historic character, our work touches every area of our critical concerns."

In her keynote address, Rebecca J. Bertrand '08, executive director of the Newport Historical Society, challenged attendees to reimagine preservation through a justice-focused lens. As the nation nears its semi-quincentennial in 2026, she emphasized the need for historical institutions to serve as tools not just for remembering the past but for driving meaningful change in the present.

Dr. Heather Rockwell and Kaleigh Trischman '25

Rebecca J. Bertrand '08

Kaleigh Trischman '25, a CHP major, earned top honors in the student paper competition for her insightful contributions to the field – her paper, "A Palaeobotanical Analysis of Soil Samples Collected from the Munsungun Lake Formation Project," is part of her ongoing senior thesis research. Drawing from soil samples she collected during the summer 2024 archaeological field school in northern Maine, her study examines the floral species that existed in the region during the late Pleistocene, a time when mile-high glaciers dominated the landscape.

"To have her research recognized by a panel of professionals was a well-deserved honor," said Rockwell. "Kaleigh has grown so much in the last four years, and I am incredibly proud of her. It was so gratifying to see her hard work recognized and rewarded."

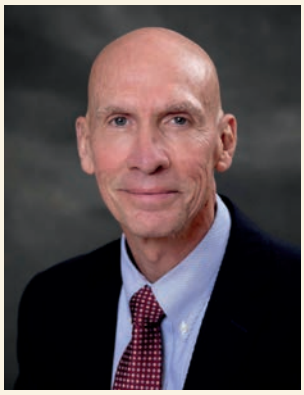
-Catherine Dolan '23

The Board of Trustees took a moment on Oct. 10, 2024 to honor Salve Trustee Kathleen B. Walgreen P'13, H'22 for her transformative gift endowing the Kathleen B. Walgreen Vice President for Mission Integration, ensuring Salve's mercy mission will remain central to the institution.

(From left) President Kelli J. Armstrong, Ph.D., Trustee Kathleen B. Walgreen, the Kathleen B. Walgreen Vice President for Mission Integration Dr. Theresa Ladrigan-Whelpley and University Chancellor, Dr. M. Therese Antone '62, H'23.

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

DR. PAUL JOYCE CHRONICLES THE LIVES OF FORMER BOSTON GANG MEMBERS



> "In the mid-'90s, in addition to doing proactive law enforcement strategies, we were also doing outreach to young people to provide them alternatives to gangs and that lifestyle...We were able to do some really effective work with the community and build trust.
>
> DR. PAUL JOYCE

Dr. Paul Joyce, assistant professor and chair of the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology, came late to academia, and his credentials are unusual: He spent the first 30 years of his career as a police officer.

After three years in the Dedham Police Department, Joyce transferred to the Boston Police Department, where he would work for his remaining 28 years in law enforcement. When he arrived in Boston, the city was in crisis due to the emergence of gangs, the easy availability of firearms and the thriving trade in crack cocaine.

"What resulted were the highest levels of violence in the history of Boston," said Joyce. "In 1990, there were 152 homicides, the most ever in the city's history. Many of them were driven by the components of crack, gangs and guns."

Over time, Joyce and his colleagues were able to stem the tide of violence. Identifying perpetrators is one thing; preventing crimes from happening in the first place is another.

"In the mid-'90s, in addition to doing proactive law enforcement strategies, we were also doing outreach to young people to provide them alternatives to gangs and that lifestyle," Joyce explained. "By 1999, Boston had 31 homicides, the lowest in its history. We were able to do some really effective work with the community and build trust."

Joyce rose through the ranks; he became head of the Youth Violence Strike Force gang unit, then transferred to the homicide unit, where he worked on unsolved gang and drug homicides. He also collaborated with the district attorney on wrongful conviction cases, leading to the release of two innocent people and the apprehension of the actual criminals. Joyce ended his police career as a superintendent; for several years, he had been taking courses towards a Northeastern University Ph.D. in criminology and justice policy.

In 2017, he finished his degree with a dissertation called "Street Gang Membership in Boston: A Life Course Perspective." It told the story of what happened to gang members when they aged up, dropped out, or otherwise left the gangs that had defined their youths.

Gang studies, Joyce noticed, were almost exclusively focused on adolescence. The lives of former gang members were rarely documented. What happened to

one-time initiates as they entered their 30s, 40s and 50s? An editor from Southern Illinois University Press read the dissertation and reached out with a proposal for Joyce to write a book for the Press's new Perspectives on Crime and Justice series.

The resulting book, "It Started with the Hats: The Life Experiences of Boston's Founding Street Gang Members," expands upon the theme of the dissertation, telling the stories of 30 one-time gang members. The book would have been impossible without the relationships that Joyce built over his career; in the early stages of his dissertation research, Joyce's advisors worried that no one would be willing to talk with him. As it happened, their fears proved ungrounded, the former gang members trusted that he would relay their stories accurately, reliably and carefully.

Joyce made a simple and ultimately convincing pitch to potential interviewees: "I'm really interested in telling your story. It's never been told. The credibility of this book is that it's based on your words. It's not an academic, it's not a police officer, it's not a community activist. It's your words." In "It Started with the Hats," he has kept the promise he made to share these stories.

When Joyce arrived on campus in 2020, he worked to update the curriculum, changed the name of the department from Administration of Justice, and hired new faculty to replace recent retirees. "We have a very contemporary program; we focus not only on students' academics, but also their interpersonal skills, their public speaking skills, their writing, and their leadership, because that will separate them from the competition as they move into the working world," he explained.

On the Boston streets of the 1980s, Joyce watched new forms of crime emerge and responded with innovative methods. With the criminal justice system currently going through a period of reform he sees new opportunities for students interested in careers in the criminal justice profession. And so, "we created a new cybersecurity minor to address the growing need for cybersecurity trained individuals in the field and a psychology of crime minor that focuses on understanding the impact of mental illness as it relates to individuals involved in the criminal justice system."

Joyce has come a long way from the streets of Boston, but he has never wavered from his goal to protect and serve.

-Matthew Keeley

OUR MISSION.
OUR MOMENT.
The Campaign for
Salve Regina University

You Are Making a Difference

2023-2024 was an extraordinary year for Salve thanks to the generosity of our donors—the alumni, students, parents, friends, faculty and staff who believe in the power of a mercy education and have chosen to make this their moment to support Salve.

The impressive array of accomplishments and honor roll of donors shared in the Donor Impact Report highlight the power of community. Your support of ***Our Mission. Our Moment. – the Campaign for Salve Regina University*** is truly shaping Salve's next chapter in a variety of ways that enhance each student's educational experience.

The dedication of the Salve family has brought us to this moment. The power of one gift is extraordinary. The power of many is limitless. You are making a difference.

Scan to view Salve's 2023-2024 Donor Impact Report.

salve.edu/impact

FALL FESTIVAL WEEKEND 2024

From the welcome reception and annual Hunger Concert to Seahawk Village and cheering for our athletics teams, a good time was had by all.

Join us for the 2025 Fall Festival and Homecoming Weekend October 17 – 19.

Salve celebrated its longstanding tradition of honoring standout athletes, coaches and contributors at the Athletics Hall of Fame induction ceremony Sept. 29, 2024. (From left) Matt Kestler '99, Abigail Tepper '16, Rachel Porter '13, Lindsay Shorey '12 and Steve Cirella, former head baseball coach, were inducted during the 2024 Fall Festival Weekend celebration.

HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

Salve celebrated the holiday season Dec. 7 by hosting the inaugural Lights of Mercy celebration honoring members of the University's Mercy Society and volunteers who have made a significant contribution over the past year. Attendees enjoyed live musical performances from the University chorus and danced the night away to music provided by Jeffrey Thomas featuring The Ultimate Band.

President Kelli J. Armstrong, Ph.D., James Eagan P'11 and Deborah Eagan P'11

Jack Halliwell P'28, Karleen M. Halliwell '91, P'28, Anne Marie E. Pryor '92 and Trustee Brian A. Pryor '92

Trustees Nancy C. Cardoza '85 and Cheryl Mrozowski '70

The Salve family gathered for Christmas in Ochre Court for an afternoon of festivities Dec. 8, 2024. Guests enjoyed a visit from Santa, caroling, crafting and a variety of holiday delicacies topped off with a cup of holiday cheer!

Allison M. Chatowsky '99 and Jennifer A. Torbett '99 with their families

Michael J. Walsh '04 and his daughters

Lighting up the night in conjunction with the campus tree lighting Dec. 3, 2024, the annual luminaria display featured 1,000 paper lanterns with tributes from students, alumni, parents, faculty, staff and friends.

Seahawks soar during fall 2024 season

Entering the second year of competition in the New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference (NEWMAC), Seahawk student-athletes finished the season strong and brought their best to each game, match and meet.

Field hockey qualified for post-season play as did the men's soccer team, which earned the second seed, a first-round bye and the right to host a semifinal. In addition, congratulations go to Daniel Goba '27, a striker for the men's soccer team, who was named NEWMAC Athlete of the Year.

NEWMAC NEW ENGLAND WOMEN'S & MEN'S ATHLETIC CONFERENCE

SEAHAWK SHOUT-OUTS

VOLLEYBALL

- Volleyball player Siena DeCicco '25 reached 2,000 assists, the second highest assist total in school history.

ACADEMIC HONORS

- College Sports Communicators (CSC) Academic All-District® honors went to:
  Women's soccer: Ella Cence '26, Lily Chhun '27, Grace Hudson '26, Maddie Hudson '26, Marissa Perachi '26 and Olivia Tacconi '27
  Men's soccer: Evan Arpin '24 (graduate student), Aiden Crean '27, Ethan David '25, Brandon Frank '26, Aaron Muncaster '26 and Chase Zorner '27.

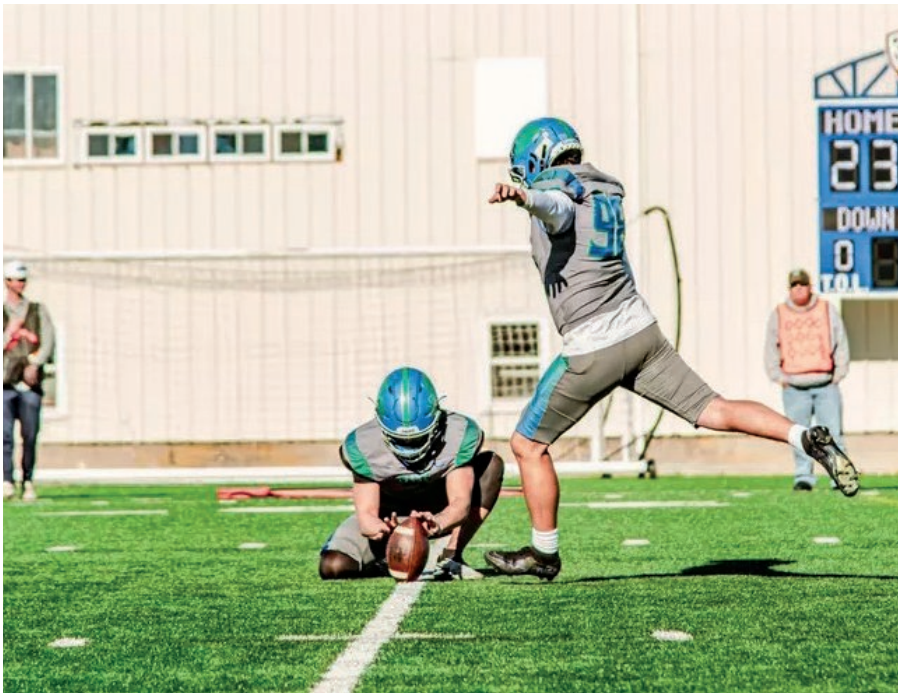
FOOTBALL

- Seahawks football players honored on NEWMAC All-Conference Teams: Nick Bostrom '25 and Aidan Canty '26 (First Team); Nathan DiRado '28, Josh Letellier '25, Justan Luzzi '26, Brayden Schuster '25, Mark Sokk '27 and Keith Sutton '25 (Second Team).

CROSS COUNTRY

- Men's and women's cross country raced at the NCAA Division III Mideast Regional Championship. Justin Ruffler '28 crossed the 8K line first for Salve in 29:52.50, his second fastest time of the year. For the women's 6K, Isabella Hastings '27 was the top Seahawk finisher in 23:02.60, a season best for her.

-Emily Winslow



For the latest news and scores,
visit salveathletics.com

Q&A with Michelle Barry '07

A new book by Michelle Barry '07 continues her "Plotting the Stars" series.

Author Michelle Barry '07 just released "Ashgarden," the third book in her young adult science fiction series, "Plotting the Stars." Described as a mix between Frances Hodgson Burnett's "The Secret Garden," and Jeanne DuPrau's "City of Ember," the series follows Myra Hodger, a young heroine at a lunar academy in a future where Earth's plants have turned toxic, and humanity now lives in space. In a Q&A with Julie Miller, public relations manager, Barry shared her inspirations and her path to literary success.

Q Could you tell us a little bit about the "Plotting the Stars" series?

It was a long journey from the first draft of the first book to its publication, and now with the third book going out into the world, it's really surreal. The story takes place hundreds of years in the future at a Lunar boarding school for those gifted with STEM-fueled magic. The reason humanity lives on the Moon (and other settlements throughout the solar system) is because the plants on the Old World (Earth) became toxic due to pollution, and humanity had to evacuate. In her first year at her magical school, the main character, Myra, discovers she has powers related to plants, which are forbidden.

Q What kind of world and challenges does "Ashgarden" present to readers?

The books are middle grade and geared to middle school readers, however, I think they could be a fit for anyone in elementary school or older. The main themes of the trilogy orbit around climate change, corporate greed and the importance of the STEM fields. However – to me – the books have always been ones of friendship, and how relationships can evolve as we get older.

Q How and when did you get the idea for this series? What were you doing in your life when you were inspired to write it?

The idea for the first book, "Moongarden," began as a retelling of "The Secret Garden," one of my all-time favorite novels. However, the inspiration to create this story actually occurred while I was visiting Salve. My family and I return to Newport often and love walking the school grounds, around town and along the Cliff Walk. I don't remember exactly where we were, but during one visit, we walked past a beautiful home with a huge wall enclosing the yard. Vines and flowers were growing over the wall, and it struck me as so reminiscent of the imagery of "The Secret Garden."

In that moment, it reminded me of the feeling of magic the garden holds in that book, and it made me want to capture that in my own story. From there, the idea for "Moongarden" began to grow. As the plot developed, I decided to weave many of my favorite tropes into the story – magic, magical boarding schools and found family.

Q How do you balance the day-to-day work of writing with raising a family as well?

Lots of coffee! I think that no matter what you've got going on in your day-to-day life, there are always plenty of excuses to not find the time to write. It can be really daunting to start writing. But if you've got a story you are passionate about telling, you just have to be disciplined and make the time. That process might look a little different for everyone, but for me, setting a routine is critically important. In the early years, I would get up really, really early (like 4 a.m. early) to write several days a week before work, or before the kids woke up. More recently, my writing time has migrated to late nights, usually somewhere post 10 p.m. until around midnight, especially if I'm on deadline. So again, lots and lots of coffee!

Q How did Salve inspire or influence the direction you took with your writing or your life?

I always knew during my time at Salve that I would pursue a career that had to do with books and/or writing. Eventually, I landed on an English communications major, and it was a natural fit. I loved learning about the different ways to tell a story – from a newspaper article to a press release to a marketing brief. I've always loved books, but it honestly never occurred to me until much, much later that I could be an author. I think a lot of the publishing process is very mysterious – when I do my book talks at schools and bookstores, a large part of my presentation is usually explaining how a book becomes a book. Understanding the process I think makes it less daunting and feel more possible. So, while the idea of writing my own book didn't occur to me until years after graduation, the things I learned at Salve very much prepared me to be able to do so once I realized I could.

Q What advice would you give to aspiring authors who are here at Salve?

Start writing! And never doubt that it's possible to be published. Imposter syndrome is a real thing no matter if it's your first-ever draft or you're a New York Times bestselling author. It's normal to be nervous when starting to tell a story but just keep putting one word in front of the other, and don't get bogged down trying to make the plot or the writing perfect from the start – that's what revisions are for! But you can't edit a blank page. Just keep going and before you know it, you'll have a finished book!

AMENITY AID IS ON A MISSION TO ELIMINATE HYGIENE INSECURITY IN RHODE ISLAND

As a frequent traveler for her corporate marketing job, Elizabeth Duggan '08 spent a lot of time in hotel rooms, where toiletries such as soap and shampoo were amenities provided for guests. Realizing that such items often go unused, she began donating them instead to local shelters and community groups. This simple act led to the founding of Amenity Aid, Rhode Island's only hygiene bank, which provides essential products to those in need.

In educating herself about hygiene insecurity, Duggan learned that the need for such products throughout Rhode Island is too great for social service agencies to meet. She also learned that no government assistance program covers personal hygiene products and that one in three low-income families struggle to afford these basic items. The discovery led her to found Amenity Aid in 2013 – the state's only hygiene bank, which operates like a food bank, but for personal products that food banks typically do not provide.

People often think of donating food or clothing, but the need for the "nine necessities" – soap, razors, shaving cream, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste and period products – is considerable. To help alleviate the need, Duggan began hosting collection drives in her garage.

"What started as a volunteer group has grown into Rhode Island's only hygiene bank, serving over 110,000 residents annually," said Duggan. "In 2021, I transitioned from my corporate marketing role to become Amenity Aid's first full-time employee."

As executive director, Duggan relies on a dedicated team that includes three employees, along with volunteers and interns. Amenity Aid has outgrown her garage and moved into a full-sized warehouse. The nonprofit provides much-needed hygiene products to vulnerable populations throughout Rhode Island, including individuals who are unemployed, underemployed, unhoused, veterans, immigrants and refugees, LGBTQIA+ youth, students, victims of violence or human trafficking, and more. Working in partnership with a network of 11 social service agencies that distribute the products directly to the people they serve, Amenity Aid ensures that the nine necessities are made available to those who might otherwise go without.

Serving her community has long been a part of Duggan's life. As a college student, she immersed herself in volunteer opportunities across Aquidneck Island, which inspired her to continue giving back.

"I remember making eggplant parm in a soup kitchen," recalled Duggan. "Salve Regina made it so easy to be a part of the larger Newport community. Now seeing volunteering from the organization's perspective, I recognize how hard it was to organize options for those who wanted to give back. I give Salve Regina credit for the way they're able to get students involved."

The skills Duggan learned as an undergraduate marketing major have helped her in establishing and growing a successful nonprofit organization. Her day-to-day role includes building relationships and managing a donor database, securing grant funding, planning annual events and fundraisers, and posting on social media.

The recipient of Salve's 2019 Outstanding Young Alumni Award, Duggan earned her MBA from California State University and graduated in 2022 from the Leadership Rhode Island Sigma II class. She lives with her son and husband in Warwick, and now spends her time educating people on those impacted by hygiene insecurity. By bringing attention to a need that often goes unnoticed, Duggan has made a significant difference in the lives of Rhode Islanders and plans to continue her important work by expanding Amenity Aid's outreach in the community.

-Corilyn Richard '15, '20 (M)

Editor's note:
Visit amenityaid.org to learn more.

A CAREER IN CYBERSECURITY IS A NATURAL FIT FOR RILEY RANCOURT ’20, ’21 (M)

When Riley Rancourt ’20, ’21 (M) first arrived at Salve, he knew that one day he wanted to pursue a career that was related to government. As an administration of justice major, Rancourt began taking classes where students studied computer-based crimes. As time went on, he became drawn to policy and technology and a career in cybersecurity became his new calling.

“I never expected to work in cybersecurity,” said Rancourt, who is now an information systems security manager and officer at BAE Systems, a leading aerospace, defense and information security company. “Technology was something that I thought of as recreation more than as a career. Here, I have found a career that harmonizes my interest between policy and technology.”

In his role, Rancourt works on Department of Defense (DOD) contracts on behalf of a government contracting organization. He and his teammates build systems based on a risk management framework cybersecurity model that successfully meet DOD specifications.

Given the evolving and complex nature of cybersecurity, the job is challenging and rewarding.

“There is something new every day, and we are always busy,” said Rancourt. “One of the first things I heard is that if you are bored, you are doing your job wrong. It can be difficult at times to manage, but I think that is what makes the job so rewarding.”

Rancourt joined BAE Systems after spending a year as an ISSO/cyber vulnerability assessment analyst at Raytheon Missiles & Defense. In that role, he assessed and monitored system compliance and investigated information systems security violations, among other responsibilities. Having earned his master’s degree from Salve in homeland security, cybersecurity and intelligence, being in cybersecurity is a natural fit for him.

“What I enjoy about my role is problem-solving,” said Rancourt. “We have 1,620 discreet requirements. Trying to make the business work within that framework and help our program secure as much as possible, I find that very rewarding.”

Growing up in Warren, Rhode Island, Rancourt’s time at Salve was instrumental in shaping his view of the world, and he noted how his experience was helpful in directing him toward his career. A 2020 David L. Boren Fellowship recipient, Rancourt said his computer forensics courses served as a foundation for his current tech skills.

When he’s not working on pressing cybersecurity matters, Rancourt enjoys cooking – something he picked up as a college student. A four-year member of the cross-country team, Rancourt also said he lives a very active lifestyle.

“I love the outdoors,” he said. “I am a big hiker and runner. Anything to keep myself in good health.”

- Andrew Clark

A Dance Studio with a Mission

"Miss Maddie, I got a new toothbrush," a kindergartener announced while warming up in her beginning ballet/jazz combo class. With a smile, Miss Maddie responds and willingly learns more about her tiny dancer's day, along with the stories of a dozen other classmates at the barre. Any topic is fair game. It's a typical afternoon at Studio Be in Dover, New Hampshire, where feeling confident to express yourself is implicit in the mission: "Be as you are."

Maddie Stewart '19, '21 (MBA) and her older sister Lexie Stewart '16 work hard on and off the dance floor to reinforce this mission and authentically promote their brand in the studio they built from scratch in 2021.

"Lexie and I wanted to create an environment where kids could come as they are," said Maddie. Their studio, situated on the southern New Hampshire seacoast, serves girls and boys of all abilities, ages 3-18, from nearby towns and as far away as York, Maine. No pressure is put on dancers to compete, perform or load up on classes. The children can take one class per week and focus on other activities such as sports, or they can dance six days a week and join the studio's performance team. The choice is theirs. Regardless, Maddie explained that the studio's unique grade-level (not skill-level) categorization of classes allows kids to "be with kids in their age group and expand their friend group." Small class sizes of under 14 students further enhance this idea of one-on-one interaction in an intimate group of peers.

From ballet to jazz, hip-hop, contemporary, musical theater and yoga – the variety and flexibility seem to be working. Enrollment has skyrocketed from 30 students when they opened, to the studio's current roster of 110 dancers.

> "[We] wanted to create an environment where kids could come as they are.
>
> MADDIE STEWART '19, '21 (MBA)

"We're growing abundantly," said Maddie, who believes this momentum is the result of staying true to their mission. "All of the dancers are comfortable and happy on stage."

With 100 percent participation in the winter showcase and spring recital, Studio Be is doing something right. Maddie credits part of their success to their focus on having a vision, establishing a clear mission, fleshing out a comprehensive business plan and maintaining a consistent brand – not an easy feat for any young entrepreneurs, and especially challenging during the peak of the pandemic.

Lindsay Guarino, professor and chair for the Department of Music, Theatre and Dance, is not surprised by the Stewart sisters' success.

"Maddie and Lexie were both such bright lights during their time in Salve Dance," said Guarino. "In addition to being talented dancers, they both so genuinely brought out the best in everyone around them. They exuded a contagious kind of joy then and I would imagine it's that same energy that is driving the success of their business today."

Guarino recalled that along with their younger sister, Mackenzie '21, the Stewart family's time with Salve Dance spanned 10 years.

"I'm so proud of them for carrying forward the values of Salve Dance as they shape and inspire the next generation," she shared.

"Salve's program matured my relationship with dance and inspired me,"

Maddie reflected. "Our teaching is a nice fusion of all the things we learned as children combined with what we learned from Salve Dance. Jazz, contemporary, personal movement style, rhythm, musicality...we try to introduce it all to [young dancers] in a digestible way while having fun, and they don't even realize they learned it."

Fun and function are synonymous at Studio Be. It's important to the Stewart sisters to strike what Maddie calls a "cool balance" between being open to the kids' needs as a friendly figure in their lives and being professional as a teacher. In line with Salve's mission to cultivate compassionate leaders, the Stewarts take their positions seriously.

"We are role models," Maddie acknowledged, "and I don't take that lightly. These kids are impressionable so how we communicate with each other as teachers is how our students see us."

The Stewarts continue to build relationships with families at the studio and are proud to know parents, grandparents and siblings by name. They are reaching their local neighborhoods, as well, by launching their performance team – an idea they borrowed from Salve Dance – to introduce the community to dance at benefit shows in collaboration with local studios, sporting events and fundraisers.

"We just want to bring joy to people," Maddie explained.

As one sixth grade dancer reflected, "What I like the best about Studio Be is that you do not have to be the best to feel good about yourself."

- Karen Carlo Ruhren

JORDAN ELSTER '19 HELPS ENTREPRENEURS FIND RESOURCES FOR SUCCESS

As an undergraduate, Jordan Elster '19 developed connections with his professors that would ultimately help him launch his own business.

In his senior year, Elster landed an internship at Innovate Newport, a coworking center and business meeting space designed to spark innovation and build community. He described Innovate Newport as a "hard hat zone" when he started as an intern and helped build the organization working with the director. The experience remained with him after graduation as he began his career with a focus on innovation.

Today, Elster lives and works in Boston as the director of Innovation Studio's THE STUDIO, an innovation and event center in the Seaport district. The nonprofit organization strives to create economic opportunity for underserved individuals through entrepreneurship and business ownership. He also created the Foundation Group for young professionals making an impact in the startup community. Each member is committed to answering questions and working to connect each other to the right people to help grow startup businesses.

"Coming from a small school, it was really important for me to create resources for students after graduating," said Elster. "My goal is to make it easier for people who want to start companies, so they know and can tap into the different resources that exist."

"I work with multiple nonprofit organizations, colleges and corporations in the Boston area hosting networking events to get students and others integrated into the various programs that exist," explained

Elster, who also launched Unbox Boston, which spreads awareness through social media about happenings for Boston's technology startup scene.

"My goal is to work with the city government in creating programs that give students coming out of universities access to resources that can help point them in the right direction," he said. "I believe the key to anyone's success is directly correlated to their ability to communicate effectively with others and build relationships with them. 'Your network is your net worth' is one of my favorite sayings and something I have focused on throughout my professional career."

As Elster continues to grow his network, he also gives his time, talent and expertise to his alma mater, returning to Salve to talk with students and participate in events such as judging the annual Seahawk Tank pitch competition.

"Salve Regina University, and especially the faculty in the business department, played a pivotal role in nurturing my entrepreneurial spirit, helping guide me to where I am today," said Elster.

-Morgan Rizzo '23

Advocating for a more secure and peaceful world

Life took a drastic turn for Bilal Omari '24 following the collapse of the Afghan government during the Taliban's takeover of Kabul.

"I was among the few lucky American University of Afghanistan (AUAF) students evacuated to Iraq to continue their studies," said Omari, who was one of five Afghan students offered a full tuition scholarship to Salve. He credits Erin Fitzgerald, director of the Center for Global Education and Fellowships, with helping to create a smooth transition. "Before I arrived on campus, she helped with the immigration process and selection of courses for my degree," Omari explained.

Following his arrival, Omari found the continued support from the Center, as well as Salve's community, unmatchable. "Professors and academic advisors helped navigate academic expectations, and offered mentorship," he said.

Fluent in five languages (English, Pashto, Urdu, and basic Arabic), Omari's multicultural and multilingual perspective enhanced both his academic and extracurricular engagements.

"As vice president and later president of the International Students Club, I worked to foster a more inclusive and interconnected campus community," said Omari. "I led efforts to create a space where international students felt supported and celebrated for their diverse backgrounds."

Omari also worked as a research assistant under Dr. Jim Ludes, executive director of the Pell Center for International Relations and Public Policy, and was a fellow in the Nuala Pell Leadership

> "My time at Salve deepened my belief that global peace and security are built upon mutual understanding, diplomacy and collaboration.
>
> BILAL OMARI '24

Program, which facilitates leadership development with an emphasis on public service. Students engage with leaders in the public sector and explore leadership theory, ethics and the evolution of public issues. The fellowship culminated with a visit to Washington, D.C., which served as an instrumental step for the start of Omari's career.

"I gained a firsthand understanding of how federal policies are crafted and how representatives advocate for their constituents," he said. "Meeting leaders from diverse fields, ranging from government agencies to non-profits and private organizations, offered me a well-rounded perspective on leadership and problem solving."

After an introduction with prominent individuals in national security, Omari landed internships in the capital city, working concurrently with New America and Useful Fiction in summer 2024. In September, he began working as a program associate through HFX International Security. One of his first assignments was running the Halifax International Forum. Held in Novia Scotia, the conference brings together a diverse group of world leaders – including government officials, military leaders, policymakers, academics, journalists and other experts – to discuss pressing global security challenges.

In 2025, Bilal plans to return to graduate school to complete his master's degree in international relations.

"I hope to focus on international security, working toward a more secure and peaceful world," he said. "My time at Salve has deepened my belief that global peace and security are built upon mutual understanding, diplomacy and collaboration. I plan to pursue a career in international relations or policy development, where I can contribute to efforts that address global conflicts, promote stability and protect human rights."

Bilal understands the opportunity that education provides," explained Ludes. "He works hard to seize opportunities, is humble enough to seek assistance from others, and skilled as a thinker, writer and doer. He is the real deal."

- Tara Watkins '00

1970

Margot DiCairano Durkin '70 hosted **Carmela Lepore Doucette '70, Nancy Crane Erkman '70, Pam Sweeney Foss '70, Kathleen McArdle '70, Connie McBrier '70, Helen Howard Koster '70, Susan Keally Thebarge '70, and Mary Ellen Litwin Ledwith '71** in Bethany Beach, Delaware, to celebrate the life of their deceased sister, friend and classmate, **Cathy Litwin Bellenger '70.** Together during their "Nine Star Weekend," they toasted, told stories and renewed friendships while creating new memories.

1978

Lynda Bouchard '78 received the Charlotte Ledger 40 Over 40 Award, which honors and celebrates often unheralded people over the age of 40 making impactful contributions to Charlotte, North Carolina. Bouchard received the award for her work with Booking Authors Ink, a boutique public relations firm dedicated to Southern authors, where she is the founder and chief inspiration officer. Her background as a flight attendant and a deep love for the South has created a space where authors can bring their stories to life. In an interview with the Charlotte Ledger Podcast, Bouchard talked about the importance of collaborative storytelling in book marketing and encouraging authors to share their unique stories and backstories.

1981

Vincent Howell '81 (M) was presented with the Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School 2024 Distinguished Alumni Award in May 2024 for his scholarship, teaching, leadership and contributions to vocational formation for ministry, which reflect CRCDS's commitment to excellence in theological education. Howell was also appointed associate dean to the Doctor of Ministry Program at Hood Theological Seminary in Salisbury, North Carolina, where he was previously the director.

1985

Michael Holloway '85 completed his eighth and most recent book, "Designed Experiments for Science and Engineering." He designed the cover, which features a picture he took while visiting Slovenia of the oldest wagon wheel ever discovered. Holloway also was selected to write the machinery lubrication section for the 32nd edition of Industrial Press's "Machinery's Handbook," which is considered the ultimate reference for machinists and engineers. Holloway was on the closing panel at the annual conference for the Society of Maintenance and Reliability Professionals roundtable on The Future of Our Workforce.

1986

Michelle Costa '86, DNP has been recognized by "Marquis Who's Who Top Doctors" for her dedication, achievements and leadership. With over two and a half decades of experience, Costa has built a successful career in leadership development. She currently excels as the chief clinical officer at National Health Care Associates, a role she has held since 2022. In this position she oversees nursing, clinical reimbursement, case management, dieticians and regulatory compliance, as well as clinical programming, managing employee engagement, retention, recruitment and handling reimbursement.

1987

Lisa Steimer '87 was appointed deputy executive director of the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education in July 2024. The organization assists local and regional boards of education in providing high quality public education for all Connecticut children through effective leadership.

1991

Kelley Dow Coen '91 was named the 2024 Woman of the Year by the Newport, Rhode Island, chapter of the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians. In recognition of her service and commitment to the community, August 8, 2024 was proclaimed by the city as "Kelley Coen Day."

1995

Sean Rich '95 has remained involved in supplying antique props for movie productions in the years following his appearances on "Pawn Stars." As an antique warfare expert, he has supplied props to "Pirates of the Caribbean 5: Dead Men Tell No Tales"and "Jungle Cruise" and has worked as an executive producer for the television projects "Forgotten" and "Galleon Quest." He also served as a weapons consulting producer for the Discovery Channel's "Master of Arms." He has continued to entertain ideas for new television shows and started creating content on YouTube with company, Tortuga Productions, LLC.

1996

Cathal O'Connor '96 joined the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA) as an adjunct research staff member in the Strategy, Forces and Resources Division of IDA's Systems and Analyses Center. O'Connor is a member of the Surface Navy Association, which promotes greater coordination and communication among military, business and academic communities.

1997

Michael Smith '97 was promoted to deputy chief of the Smithfield (Rhode Island) Police Department in September 2024 after serving as captain.

2005

Andrea Dunbar '05 joined Bowditch & Dewey's family law and probate litigation practice as partner. Dunbar has over 15 years of experience assisting clients with high net-worth divorce and contested custody matters in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. In addition, she represents clients in all aspects of probate and family court litigation in both jurisdictions.

Eric Jennings '05 has been promoted from officer to lieutenant by the Wall Township (New Jersey) Police Department where he now serves as a patrol division commander. He is WTPD's training and accreditation officer, and at the committee's April 2024 meeting, the department was awarded its fifth accreditation, which 3.6% of departments in the state have achieved.

2006

Jennifer Astrella '06 achieved a National Certification Corporation credential in inpatient obstetric nursing. This achievement is earned by meeting educational and practice requirements and taking a rigorous national examination that covers the specified specialty areas.

Send us your news and updates!
alumni@salve.edu

Lynn Smith '06 has been a nurse practitioner for over 10 years, with experience in medical and cosmetic dermatology. She is an adjunct clinical faculty member at Quinnipiac University, where she received her doctorate in 2022. Additionally, Smith serves on the Education Advisory Council for the Dermatology Nurses' Association and has recently been appointed chair of education for the Connecticut Dermatology NP/PA Organization. She received her dermatology nurse practitioner certification in 2022 through the accreditation board for specialty nursing certification and is one of eight nurse practitioners in Connecticut holding that certification.

Krista Titone '06 (Ph.D.) accepted a position as a full-time remote lecturer of psychology with the Department of Psychological Sciences at Texas Tech University. After being a resident of New Hampshire for 40 years, she recently moved to Providence, Rhode Island, and looks forward to visiting Newport and Salve more often.

2007

Leera Kpea '07 was interviewed by NBC10 News in September 2024 on his role as the blood drive coordinator at Bishop Hendricken High School in Warwick, Rhode Island, where he is an active teacher, coach and club advisor who continues to pay forward a request he received 20 years ago. As a first-year student at Salve, Kpea misplaced his cell phone. While the gentleman who found the phone refused a small reward Kpea offered, he asked that he donate blood instead. "He explained that someone in his family had leukemia and that blood donors, everyone who gave, saved that person's life. Twenty years later, I've donated a couple dozen times," said Kpea.

2009

Mark Jumper '09 (Ph.D.) recently released a biography, "Presbyterian Prophet: The Life and Ministry of J. Rodman Williams." Additionally, he has co-authored the textbooks "Chaplaincy: A Comprehensive Introduction" and "Doctors for the Church" and co-edited "The Holy Spirit and the Reformation Legacy."

2010

Nicole Warren Shevory '10, '13 (M) has been appointed as the first earnings loan officer for the Veterans Benefits Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs. This position allows her to lend her subject matter expertise in disability compensation programs for issues of both sensitive and high-profile natures. Additionally, Shevory will be advising leadership on the national and local impact of changes in process, protocol or legal statutes.

2011

Justin Merhar '11 has been welcomed by The Office of the General Counsel to the U.S. Department of Commerce's 2024 Attorney Honors Program. Participants in this cohort work closely with managers and senior attorneys to prepare legal opinions, conduct legal research analysis, and draft legal documents to support the department's diverse mission.

Vin Testa '11 was recently promoted to Director of Student Affairs at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts in Washington, D.C.

2013

Ashley Bendiksen '13 was featured on the Pell Center's "Story in the Public Square" in October 2024, where she spoke about domestic violence healing and prevention. She is an author, domestic abuse survivor, speaker and an award-winning activist. Additionally, Bendiksen is a nonprofit founder, co-owner of a life coaching agency for youth, and founder of the Blue Hearts Project.

2014

Rear Admiral Philip Polewara '14 (M) was recently promoted to Commander of the Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF), where he has served for more than 30 years. In addition to earning his master's degree in international relations from Salve, he is a graduate of the U.S. Naval Command and Staff College, U.S. Joint Forces College, National Defence University and U.S. Naval War College.

2016

Rachel Deluca '16 is celebrating two years as the academic programs manager at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Musuem. Her work involves managing the paid internship program and co-managing university memberships that provide students in Boston schools with free admission and tours to the museum.

David Gevorkian '16, '17 (M) started Be Accessible, a company of experts certified in accessibility who are working to ensure that everyone has a barrier-free experience on the web. He discovered a common need for web and mobile accessibility during his previous roles working for financial institutions in sales, treasury and product management, and as a result, he created Be Accessible to advocate for creating aesthetic and accessible products usable by people across the globe.

Annamaria Loia '16 is the first-ever resident artist at Sylva's Gallery 1 in North Carolina. In addition to her in-studio creation, Loia teaches K-8 art in Greenville, South Carolina.

Kirsti Svendsen '16 (Ph.D.) recently published a book, "Confessions: The Tangling and Untangling of Another Preacher's Kid: A Memoir," chronicling her spiritual journey as a Lutheran minister's daughter whose story begins in the north of Norway during World War II.

2018

Allyson Gilbert '18 was a finalist for Maine Teacher of the Year as a ninth-grade physical science and 10th-grade biology teacher at Mt. Ararat High School in Topsham, Maine. Her strengths lie in project-based learning where she puts an emphasis on connecting topics to local and global contexts. She has been named the 2024 Sagadahoc County Teacher of the Year and has recently presented at two conferences on the importance and value of nature-based play and learning.

Amanda Miller '18 graduated from medical school at Western University of Health Sciences in 2022 and is currently working as a U.S. Navy active-duty flight surgeon in Washington State. In the spring of 2022, she married Erin Davis.

2019

Kelly Baxter '19 received a Rhode Island Monthly 2024 Excellence in Nursing Award for her service in the health care community. She is the founder of Baxter Palliative Care and has practiced in critical care, palliative care and hospice. Additionally, Baxter is an active member of the Rhode Island End of Life Coalition and is the Rhode Island State Ambassador for Hospice and Palliative Nurses Association.

2022

Laura Dahlke '22 (Ph.D.) published her book, "Outer Origin: A Discourse on Ectogenesis and the Value of Human Existence." Within the book she examines the individual, social and spiritual implications of ectogenesis, also known as artificial womb technology.

Eilis O'Neil '22 ran the 50th Berlin (Germany) Marathon for the Home Base Organization, which allows veterans, service members and their families to receive world-class care and support. Each month, she runs in honor of a veteran or service member to help raise awareness. In July 2024, O'Neil ran to honor Vincent Petrarca, a former administration of justice professor.

2023

Sydney Austin '23 pitched and curated the "Comics, Cartoons & Graphic Novels" exhibit at the Warwick Center for the Arts in August 2024. The exhibit showcased the work of 15 New England-based cartoonists.

Grace Brongo '23 was featured on Ocean State Stories in November 2024, where she spoke about her own experience with type 1 diabetes and medical advancements in treatment of the autoimmune disease. She works in medical oncology and is in the process of becoming a diabetes educator.

2024

Sabrina Boccuzzi '24 is an assistant account executive at Mercury Marketing Communications, where she is responsible for writing press materials, securing media coverage and assisting with social media management for several of the agency's clients.

Lindsey Boswell '24 (M) joined the team at Southcoast Health Family Medicine in Dartmouth, Massachusetts in October 2024 where she is a family nurse practitioner.

IN MEMORIAM

The Salve Regina community mourns the loss of alumni, faculty, staff and friends who have recently passed away.

Paula Armstrong ’97
Lois Daignault Audley ’85
June Carmello Barton ’61
Thomas Bily ’89
Denis Bousquet ’78
Barbara Barry Cattel ’52
Rose Jalette Chagnon ’52
Ronald Champagne ’80
Mary Cantore Chaves ’57
Aliana Ciacciarelli ’23
Marianne Swift Clark ’84
DeForest Colegrove ’91
William Cooper ’77
Jane McHale Cotter ’71
Charles Desrosiers ’03
Jill Delano Eckert ’77
David Edes ’76
Jane Gibney Frado ’64
Bernard Gonsalves ’73
John Gordon ’85
Norman Guarinello ’96
Byron Haskins ’75
Joan Claffey Hopkins ’62
James Janetakos ’01
William Keller ’85
Gloria Goyette Lamontagne ’70
James Lovelace ’91
Donald Magee, COS member
Ellen Martin, RSM, ’90
Sheila Megley ’89
Janis Miles ’59
Kathleen Reed Moraes ’82
Susan Pratt, former staff
Helena Rodrigues ’64
Joseph Rossi ’78
Joan Carney Ryan ’55
Suzanne Sawtelle ’81
Julianna Tache ’86
Susan Dwyer Wallace ’97

IF YOU’RE A MEMBER OF THE CLASS OF 2014 OR 2019, please look for an invitation to participate in the National Alumni Career Mobility (NACM) survey in spring 2025. Your feedback is extremely impactful for current students and the entire Salve community.

WELCOME TO THE SQUARE!

SUPPORT SALVE ALUMNI BUSINESSES

Salve Square is a central marketplace featuring alumni-created products and services.

The Square has grown to more than 40 businesses created, owned and run by Salve alumni. Businesses range from real estate to health and wellness, retail, food and beverages and finance. All this and more can be found on the Square.

Next time you need a photographer, legal advice, or simply just want to do some shopping, look to Salve Square. You will support your fellow alumni by investing in quality products and services, and many offer discounts to Salve alumni— it's a win/win.

Want to become a part of Salve Square?
Visit salve.edu/salve-square or email alumni@salve.edu.

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Registration and housing reservations open in early March.

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