Dear Alumni and Friends:

At Villanova, we continue to explore the multiple dimensions and meanings of sustainability. This past spring, more than 150 attendees from five continents attended our International Sustainability Conference. The three-day event, which included a keynote address by environmental activist and attorney Robert F. Kennedy Jr., further established Villanova as an academic center of environmental responsibility.

We blend our commitment to sustainability with our reputation for academic excellence and innovation. This fall, students living in Fedigan Hall will conduct storm water management experiments right from their rooms. Renovations are nearly complete on the residence hall, converted this summer into a “green dorm” and a model of sustainability for the entire campus. The renovations incorporate sustainable technologies in the building for use by the College of Engineering curriculum.

Another thing that truly stands out about Villanova is our focus on community and commitment to service. This past spring, Villanova was inducted into the Special Olympics Pennsylvania Hall of Fame. It is a well-deserved honor for our students, who run the largest annual student-run Special Olympics event in the world.

Each September, more than 2,000 Villanova students, faculty, staff, alumni and their families come together, working in partnership with neighborhood agencies to perform service throughout Greater Philadelphia during our St. Thomas of Villanova Day of Service. This year’s date is Saturday, Sept. 19, and I invite you all to take advantage of this wonderful way to reconnect with other Villanovans and put into action our University ideals of Veritas, Unitas, Caritas.

Regards,

Rev. Peter M. Donohue, O.S.A., Ph.D. ’75 A&S
University President
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In concert with worldwide Earth Day celebrations, Villanova University hosted the International SustainAbility Conference April 22–25, 2009. With a keynote address delivered by Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., and more than 150 attendees from five continents, the conference achieved its two principal objectives. First, it sparked interdisciplinary conversations about the scientific, humanistic, political, economic, and ecological challenges and opportunities of sustainability. Second, it established Villanova as an academic center of environmental responsibility.
“The quality of the conference presentations was consistently outstanding,” said conference co-organizer Paul Rosier, Ph.D. “We’re proud of the achievements that collectively formed the intellectual heart of the event: The discussions that occurred among attendees, the high level of student involvement, the participation of all four Villanova colleges and the School of Law, and the emphasis on integrating sustainability into curricula.” Dr. Rosier explained that student participation was a key part of the event’s success. Students presented at the conference, joined sessions and wrote follow-up reports for their Villanova coursework. Student contingents from Bryn Mawr, Swarthmore, Temple, NYU and The New School were also in attendance.

In addition to the presentation sessions, the conference hosted an Earth Day fair, an Earth Day discussion led by students, a viewing of “Who Killed the Electric Car?,” Chanticleer Garden and Wissahickon Watershed nature hikes, an organic dinner and a live performance of “Sense of Wonder,” a play based on the life of noted ecologist and author Rachel Carson. Media outlets including NBC, FOX and KYW Radio came to campus to cover Kennedy’s keynote address, and Villanova’s video recording of the keynote and a number of sessions are available on iTunes U.

“We’re very grateful to the University administration,” said Francis Galgano, Ph.D., conference co-organizer. “Without the support of the President’s Office, the VPAA’s Office and Father Kail Ellis, none of this would have been possible. We also couldn’t have done it without the help of so many staff who supported the effort.”

The Rev. Peter M. Donohue, O.S.A., Ph.D., signed the American College & University Presidents’ Climate Commitment in 2007—publicly establishing a Villanova commitment to sustainability that had quietly thrived for more than 30 years. As a manifestation of its commitment to environmental education and protection, Villanova launched a Year of Sustainability in 2008–09. Led by an interdisciplinary executive committee of faculty members—including conference organizers Rosier and Galgano—this initiative was launched with the 80th Anniversary of the Mendel Medal Celebration.

The SustainAbility Conference represents the culmination of the Year of Sustainability, but it is viewed by the organizers as a beginning—not an end. “It’s our intention that the Year of Sustainability will help to usher in a new era of environmental responsibility to our campus,” said Galgano. “Although the Year of Sustainability spans a limited period of time, the long-term priorities it addresses have no such limit. Our hope—through the conference and the year—is to strengthen the foundation of the Villanova commitment to sustainability for generations to come.”

Watch Robert F. Kennedy’s keynote address at www.youtube.com (search Robert Kennedy at Villanova).
Mapping the Route to a Green Villanova

Villanova is active with green initiatives in academics, building projects and much more. From one end of campus to the other, we are committed to sustainability. We hope our alumni will join us in this effort.

Mendel Science Center: Green Academics
Undergraduates who wish to focus on the environment now have two new degree opportunities at Villanova: a B.S. in Environmental Science and a B.A. in Environmental Studies. Both programs graduated their inaugural classes in 2009. Students with other majors, in any college, may also choose to pursue an Environmental Studies Concentration.

Fedigan Hall: Aiming for the Gold Standard
In 2009, Fedigan Hall was renovated and transformed into a “green dorm.” The project was designed to LEED standards with a goal of a Gold Certification. The project includes solar power, LED (light-emitting diode) lighting and anti-bacterial/low-VOC (volatile organic compound) products. It also includes the use of recycled products, efficient plumbing fixtures and a “green screen” display in the building’s lobby.

Center for Engineering Education and Research: Here Comes the Sun
The College of Engineering solar electric system was installed on the south roof of CEER in 2007 as part of Solar Scholars, a six-college coalition created by the Sustainable Energy Fund of Central Eastern Pennsylvania. The output from the solar panels provides up to 4,000 watts of power to offset utility-supplied power for the CEER building.

Tolentine Hall: Father Peter Charts the Course
Father Peter Donohue, O.S.A., soon after his inauguration as Villanova’s 32nd president, signed the American College & University Presidents’ Climate Commitment. The commitment’s goals include offsetting carbon emissions and becoming a climate-neutral campus, as well as accelerating research and education to help society re-stabilize earth’s climate.

Moriarty Hall: Going with the Flow
A group of students—Ann Dillon, Carla Erskine, Jennifer Ramos, and Kaitlin Sullivan—replaced all traditional showerheads in this dorm with low-flow showerheads as part of an environmental science project. The result? A reduction in water release from 3.25 to 1.25 gallons per minute and a conservation example to which other dorms can aspire.

St. Thomas of Villanova Monastery: Grounds for Celebration
Natural treasures abound on Villanova’s beautifully-maintained 254 acres of land. Among them is the Villanova metasequoia tree—one of fewer than 30 trees of its type and size in the US. Legend has it that this tree is from the original group of seeds sent by the species’ discoverer in China to Harvard’s Arnold Arboretum between 1947 and 1950. The young tree was gifted to Villanova President Rev. John A. Klekotka, O.S.A. and planted in front of the monastery in 1954.

St. Thomas of Villanova Church: The Heart of the Journey
The Augustinian tradition is the cornerstone of Villanova’s respect for the earth in its curricula, research and institutional policy and practice. In Enarratio in Psalmum, 144.13, St. Augustine wrote, “You discover the earth’s springing energy, its amazing beauty ... swiftly there flashes into your mind the conviction that not by any possibility of its own can the earth have come to be, but only from the hands of its Creator. This very truth that you have discovered is the earth’s cry of confession, and to praise your Creator you make the earth’s cry your own.”
**Katherine Hall:** Live and Learn

Students who live together in this first-year community share their experiences in the Augustine and Culture Seminar. In class, students explore environmental issues as they relate to scientific, engineering, business, political and religious thought. Outside of class, students participate in cultural and community-service initiatives focused on environmental concerns.

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**Facilities Management Building:** Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

Since 1990, nearly 12 million pounds of material have been recycled at Villanova. From paper to plastic to furniture, Villanova Recycling diverts 25% of campus waste away from landfills and into recycling centers. Food waste is also diverted at Villanova; Dining Services upcycles 80 tons of food waste per year in partnership with a local composter.

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**Donahue Hall:** Waste Not, Want Not

Donahue Hall, along with the other “all-you-care-to-eat” dining halls on campus, is a trayless facility. Going trayless reduces wasted food and beverages and reduces water and soap usage. Dining Services also uses reusable dishware in all resident dining halls, 100% pre-consumer recycled plates in all university retail outlets, and 100% post-consumer recycled, no-bleach, soy-inked paper napkins throughout campus.

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**Driscoll Hall:** Caring for People and the Planet

Driscoll Hall, new home to the College of Nursing, was Villanova’s first LEED-certified building. It has green attributes including lighting that operates on occupancy sensors, an air handling unit that uses waste heat to reduce energy consumption and thermally-efficient roofing, including a green roof component. More than 90% of the project’s construction waste was recycled and diverted from landfills.

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**Galberry Hall:** Sustainability in Print

Villanova Graphics and Mail Services staff implement a wide range of green initiatives in their daily operations. These include printing university stationery on recycled paper, using soy-based ink, using an electric vehicle for pickups and deliveries on campus and donating off-cuts and waste paper to local nonprofits, such as elementary schools.

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**Bartley Hall:** Business Without Borders

A chapter of Business Without Borders was formed in 2009 by Villanova School of Business students, with a mission to use their business skills for lasting social and environmental good. Through events, projects and speakers, chapter participants seek to affect issues including microfinance, international development and clean water distribution.

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**Katherine Hall:** Live and Learn

Students who live together in this first-year community share their experiences in the Augustine and Culture Seminar. In class, students explore environmental issues as they relate to scientific, engineering, business, political and religious thought. Outside of class, students participate in cultural and community-service initiatives focused on environmental concerns.
The Answer Is “Blowing in the Wind”

By Bethanie Anderson

Leadership comes naturally to Taylor Henderson ’05 M.E. From his experiences as a Villanova undergraduate to his career today, his thoughtful management approach has brought him success. While earning his degree in mechanical engineering with a minor in communications, Taylor received a number of awards — including the Dean’s Meritorious Service Award and the Villanova Entrepreneurial Society Founders Award — and served in a number of Villanova community roles. These included founder and co-chair of the Engineering PEERS (Peers Enhancing Educational Resources for Students) program, fundraising chairman for a South Africa Habitat for Humanity trip, founder and two-term president of Villanova Club Lacrosse, and founding chairman of Student Government Association Club Sports committee.

Now, as manager of development for Renewable Energy Systems Americas Inc. (RES Americas) in Colorado, Taylor is living his career dream. He is a driving force behind the establishment of environmentally-sound wind and solar power projects throughout the Southwest U.S. and the Caribbean. These colossal renewable energy projects can take up to five years to develop and construct, and they provide hundreds of green-collar jobs to workers at local and national levels. They also ensure a much cleaner planet than one powered by fossil fuels.

To date, RES Americas has constructed or is currently constructing nearly 4,000 megawatts of wind energy in the U.S. and the Caribbean—enough to power more than three million homes and significantly reduce carbon dioxide emissions.

Taylor’s position at RES Americas is complex, challenging and, above all, rewarding. He oversees property acquisition, permitting, budget management, relationships with utility companies, the sale and purchase of energy and the transition from project development to construction. He also has the opportunity to blend his professional interest in energy with his personal commitment to community service. “My education at Villanova taught me not only to work hard to achieve my goals, but to focus on professional areas where I can fulfill my passion for making a positive difference in the world. For this reason, I decided to pursue a career in renewable energy development,” Taylor says. “Now, every day when I wake up, I know I’m engaged in work that challenges me — and that I’m passionate about.”

Taylor views renewable energy as a manifestation of the Augustinian ethos. “A lot of common attitudes encourage self-serving actions by individuals,” he observes. “But renewable energy projects represent long-term investments in communities and ecosystems. Diverse groups of people come together to take big steps with big results. When this happens, their focus is not solely on their own agendas or quick profits. They step back and include the well-being of a wide circle of community members over a long period of time.” And that process, Taylor explains, captures the very nature of the work he had hoped to do one day when he enrolled at Villanova.

“My education at Villanova taught me not only to work hard to achieve my goals, but to focus on professional areas where I can fulfill my passion for making a positive difference in the world.” —Taylor Henderson
Roads and Bridges: Journey to Sustainability

By Colleen Lynne Curley G.S. ‘97

When Deborah (McDonald) Murray ’94 C.E., was working at her first post-college position, designing roads for a mid-sized, municipal engineering firm in New Jersey, she felt fortunate just to have a job in that familiarly challenging economy — but she knew in her heart that it wouldn’t keep her happy for a lifetime. Even her master’s program in Environmental Engineering at the New Jersey Institute of Technology left her with a need for something more, so in 1999, the Allendale, N.J., native began her part-time pursuit of an M.B.A. at New York University. There, in a course titled Environmental Management & Strategy, she and the term sustainability were formally introduced.

“For me this was when things really started to come together,” Murray recalls. “I discovered that it actually was possible to have a successful career that would nurture my mind and my soul — not that I had it yet, but that it was possible.”

The stirring of her soul — that calling to make a difference in the world — had begun more than five years earlier, at Villanova, where she enrolled in what she describes as “the most fascinating course I ever took,” Environmental Ethics. After a slew of civil engineering courses focused on regulatory and technical aspects of the environment, she found herself contrasting Native American philosophies and that culture’s inherent respect for nature with the damaging effects western civilization has produced. These philosophical discussions would lay the foundation for Murray’s career path — and would reverberate, a decade later, in London, where she completed the final semester of her M.B.A. program. As the “token American,” Murray now found herself fielding a barrage of questions from her European classmates about “why every American drives a huge SUV, and why we as a society are so wasteful.”

She may not have had the answers then, but the dialogue left her wiser about the world and surer about her own goal of helping companies and individuals make sustainability-related improvements. Only one year later, her education would be further heightened and her objectives elevated through a Net Impact Service Corps volunteer project, in which she would confront the environmental justice issues surrounding sustainability.

“The whole ‘green initiative,’” she explains, “is typically marketed to the middle and upper middle classes, while disregarding lower-income people” — a reality she witnessed firsthand in her engagement with the non-profit, Sustainable South Bronx. Teaming with activist Majora Carter, Murray worked bringing sustainability to the residents of this impoverished neighborhood, developing a business plan for a farmers’ market after surveying the “practically non-existent” produce in the grocery stores there. “The children in these neighborhoods have barely any access to fresh fruits and vegetables and little or no green space to play,” she laments.

Murray immediately adopted Carter’s determination to change all that—to do her part in making sustainability accessible to everyone. “I saw an amazing potential for greening these neighborhoods—for developing jobs and creating a better quality of life,” she says.

Not surprisingly, the seeds of this passionate vision were sown at Villanova—or more accurately, in Panama, where Murray traveled as a junior to help build a bridge in a small village. Years later, as a speaker at her alma mater’s International SustainAbility Conference, she would succinctly describe that spring break bridge-building effort: “It was my first time working with a group to accomplish something that helped change people’s lives.” As what she calls one of her earliest “defining moments” — moments that changed her as a person — this experience indeed altered Murray, who would henceforth strive to enact meaningful change in all of her endeavors.

She seized upon such an opportunity in the Sustainability Services group at KPMG, where she assisted companies in identifying key environmental and social impacts; provided sustainability-related recommendations to the public sector; and developed economically viable strategies for supply chain greening — the effort to standardize sound environmental policies across every company involved in the making of a particular product.

When her hard work was cut short last year by a layoff, she recognized it as another defining moment that would lead her toward the truly mind-and-soul-nurturing work she is meant to do. Currently involved in a second project through Net Impact Services Corps, Murray is working with a non-profit called Who Is My Neighbor, advising a group of Rutgers University undergraduates researching green community centers and their potential to make a difference in low-income neighborhoods. This advisory role gives her more experience and time for planning her ultimate goal: To establish a non-profit organization that would service low-income communities in the New Jersey and New York metro area, “making energy-efficient and environmentally-friendly improvements in their homes and neighborhoods.”

Meanwhile, Murray is making a difference in her own Union, N.J., home, educating her two young children, Claire, 4, and Kieran, 2—as well as her husband, Craig, her greatest source of unwavering support—on what a sustainable lifestyle entails.

“When Debbi first told me that she wanted to pursue a career in sustainability,” he recalls, “I said, ‘That’s great — go for it. Now what exactly does that mean?’ He certainly has learned more than he could have imagined from what Murray calls her “journey to sustainability” — a journey, to play on the poetic words of Robert Frost, with miles to go before she sleeps.
A lumna Sarah Banas Mills has a remarkable academic background. After graduating from Villanova with an undergraduate honors degree in mechanical engineering, and a peace and justice minor in 2004, she earned a master of philosophy degree in engineering for sustainable development at the UK’s University of Cambridge — then the only program of its kind in the world.

Armed with this knowledge in engineering, science and sustainability — and driven by a deep sense of Augustinian mission — Sarah became a program associate at the American Association for the Advancement of Science in Washington, D.C. In this role, she oversees the Forum on Science and Innovation for Sustainable Development.

“The forum provides a virtual network for scientists who are working on sustainability issues,” Sarah says. “It’s unique because it brings together scholars from diverse disciplines and institutions worldwide.” In addition to information-sharing online, Sarah explains, the forum’s members have the opportunity to connect in person during the association’s annual conferences.

“IF WE CAN MAKE IT EASIER FOR PROFESSORS TO EDUCATE THE FUTURE ‘DOERS’ IN THE AREA OF SUSTAINABILITY, THEN THE EARTH WILL BE A MUCH MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND PLACE.”

—SARAH BANAS MILLS

Networking for the Environment
Bottled Up: First Grad of New Major Pours Green Idea

BY COLLEEN LYNN CURLEY G.S. ’97

If you tend to walk around with a disposable water bottle in hand, you’ll want to tuck it away should you run into Katie O’Gara ’09 B.A. She’s got a thing about the seemingly ubiquitous plastic bottles — and with good reason. The solid, water and fuel waste resulting from the production of all those drinking vessels is staggering, says O’Gara, the first ever graduate of Villanova’s Environmental Studies major. And she should know. For the past two years, the Newton, MA, native has poured herself into a research project on bottled water and plastic waste, as well as the unhealthy leaching of chemicals from plastic that can become very warm during transport — miles and miles which, as she points out, require “even more oil on top of the millions of barrels used to make the bottles.”

O’Gara’s project, part of the Villanova Bottled Water Initiative, isn’t simply focused on collecting data for journal publication. Setting a lofty bar for those who follow in her path, she seeks to provide Villanova students, faculty and staff with a reusable, earth and health-friendly hydration bottle — a goal the university has been interested in implementing for quite some time. The push it needed to make the vision a reality seems to be the dedicated persistence and passion that O’Gara has displayed in putting together two separate test group studies, complete with “a lot of research and surveys” — and bottles, too, both metal and plastic, in order to present her findings to the Villanova Bookstore and Dining Services.

Now that she is finished “working out all the kinks” — including a test for bacteria (one of the university’s concerns about a reusable container), there remains the hurdle of cost-effectiveness in what O’Gara describes as “the worst financial time to embark on this endeavor.” But she remains optimistic, especially considering the university’s increased focus on sustainability under President the Rev. Peter M. Donohue O.S.A., Ph.D. ’75 A&S’s administration, as well as the unwavering support from her advisor, Lisa J. Rodrigues, Ph.D., assistant professor of geography and the environment, who assigned the research paper that sparked O’Gara’s water bottle crusade.

“It’s been really great to see how Katie has been able to translate the material from a strict academic paper into this very important project with practical application for the university and how it functions,” says Rodrigues, who clearly shares her advisee’s enthusiasm.

O’Gara will continue on the project and see it to its fruition as a new alumna, then plans to apply her skills in the field of science research, writing and lobbying for environmental policy with an emphasis on preserving the ecosystem and protecting wildlife. “I have always had dual interest in animals and nature,” says O’Gara, noting that her career plans shifted from veterinary medicine after John Olson Ph.D. introduced her to Environmental Studies as the unwavering support from her advisor, Lisa J. Rodrigues, Ph.D., assistant professor of geography and the environment, who assigned the research paper that sparked O’Gara’s water bottle crusade.

Part of the Villanova University mission is to “encourage students to engage in service experiences and research, both locally and globally, so they learn from others, provide public service to the community, and help create a more sustainable world.” With More than 400 scholars from 60 nations in the Forum on Science and Innovation network so far, and countless students benefitting from these scholars’ expanded knowledge, Villanova has certainly fulfilled its mission in Sarah Banas Mills.

“The impact of Sarah’s work comes down to teaching teachers. “If we can make it easier for professors to educate the future ‘doers’ in the area of sustainability, then the earth will be a much more environmentally sound place,” she says.

When Sarah began her Villanova education, she had no particular interest in environmentalism. “Other than knowing I should recycle, I had no awareness of sustainability issues,” Sarah remembers. Her engineering focus was water desalination, or the removal of salt and other minerals from water. But her enrollment in a peace and justice course called “Caring for the Earth” — which is still offered today — shifted her perspective. She began to think about the broader issues of water quality and distribution as human rights and justice issues, and then began to consider a broader application of her own skills. “The Augustinian ideal of caring for one’s community — especially trying to use one’s gifts for benefit of humankind — has definitely driven the decisions I’ve made,” Sarah reflects.

O’Gara affirms, noting that the long-time environmental focus on land conservation and separating people (or “the polluters”) from nature has changed. “Now it’s about interacting with nature and learning how to do that without destroying our ecosystem,” she explains.
Lucky 7: Brothers Make Sustainability Part of Life and Business

BY COLLEEN LYNNE CURLEY G.S. ’97

If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.” Henry David Thoreau wrote these words in his book Walden in 1854. Chances are, if Thoreau could see the work of Brendon Dolan ’93 A&S and his six brothers at Pine Street Carpenters today, he would be pleased.

Brendon Dolan, son of the late William F. Dolan A&S ’63 and the third of seven Dolan brothers, founded Pine Street Carpenters just after graduating from Villanova. Over the years, all of his brothers — five of whom also earned Villanova degrees — have joined the company. Located in West Chester, PA, it employs 35 people and specializes in high-quality craftsmanship in residential, kitchen, commercial and institutional renovations. Environmental stewardship runs through the grain of the company as part of the Dolan family’s approach to life and work.

Although Pine Street Carpenters has recently entered the national spotlight by helping to manage a series of green projects for Home and Garden Television, Brendon Dolan’s care for the environment is deeply rooted in his experiences at home and at Villanova. “Our parents instilled a ‘waste not, want not’ mindset in us from the beginning,” Brendon says. “With seven children in our family, we simply didn’t waste things or take them for granted. We learned how to recycle, reuse and rebuild things long before it was called ‘being green.” This mindset has influenced the company’s practices, including extensive use of architectural salvage, careful recycling of waste materials, and regular donations of materials to the Habitat for Humanity HomeStore.

Brendon’s Villanova education served as another formative part of his commitment to helping the environment. During his freshman year, he joined a Villanova Habitat for Humanity trip to Coahoma, Mississippi, and returned to the site during his senior year. He took an environmental science elective, which deeply affected his perspective. Lastly, he lived in Sullivan Hall above the Peace and Justice Center for two years, where he learned about environmental responsibility as a justice issue. “The Augustinian emphasis on community, along with my Villanova experiences—academic,
It’s Easy Being Green

Forget what Kermit the Frog once sang; this list of tips and simple changes will start you off on your own rewarding journey to sustainability:

1. Follow Debbi Murray’s lead and base your purchasing decisions on research (done online) to find companies who practice transparency in their disclosure of ingredients and materials, and in their operations, with profit-making based upon sound social and environmental practices, like fair trade and sustainable agriculture.

2. Diligently recycle plastic, glass and paper and reduce unnecessary “throw away” products like Styrofoam cups and bottled water. Join Katie O’Gara’s cause and invest in a reusable hydration bottle that you can fill with water from a sink or refrigerator filter — far more economical and healthier than the bottled alternative.

3. Save a tree by paying bills and reviewing bank statements online and storing as much information as possible electronically.

4. Eat more whole, organically-grown foods by supporting local farmers and cooperatives and/or planting your own organic garden using compost and non-toxic means of weed and pest prevention.

5. Invest in reusable bags for grocery store trips, as well as reusable containers for lunches and refrigerator/freezer storage.

6. Toss out all of those toxic cleaners and try a natural alternative — like vinegar and baking soda, for example, which will make your sinks and windows sparkle, not to mention improve air quality and eliminate worry about children’s contact with dangerous chemicals.

7. Purchase recycled, non-chlorine bleached paper products like bath tissue and napkins, now widely available and competitively priced.

8. Select soaps, cosmetics and other personal care products made with natural ingredients and not tested on animals. Your skin and body will be healthier and so will the earth!

9. Practice energy efficiency by turning off lights when you leave a room or when sunlight is sufficient; being conservative with your heat and AC settings—especially overnight; and using racks and clotheslines to reduce dryer time and be kinder to your clothes.

10. When doing home renovations, reuse materials when you can and donate any unwanted items to a local Habitat for Humanity ReStore; install low-flow toilets and shower heads and replace old appliances with Energy Star-rated ones; and paint your house green — not literally (unless it’s your color choice)—but by using a VOC-free product.


“With seven children in our family, we simply didn’t waste things or take them for granted. We learned how to recycle, reuse and rebuild things long before it was called ‘being green.’” —Brendon Dolan

service, and personal — had a tremendous impact on me and influenced my vision for Pine Street Carpenters when I started the company.”

Brendon’s perspective was changed not only by the mission and vision of St. Augustine, but by the writings of Henry David Thoreau. In fact, Thoreau’s Walden was so influential among the Dolan brothers that Pine Street Carpenters built a replica of Thoreau’s Walden Pond cabin for the Tyler Arboretum as part of a 2008–09 exhibit on ecology and sustainability.

“From a business perspective, it’s challenging to balance priorities,” Brendon says. “We all have to make tough choices as we care for our customers, our employees and our planet. But with some thoughtful decisions about the nature of the work we do, and the steps we can take that are both financially and ecologically responsible, it’s possible.”
Body Burden: A Health Promotion Priority

By Bethanie Anderson

Body burden. It’s a term unfamiliar to many of us, yet it refers to a condition that affects the health of all of us. Body burden is the collection of external chemicals — industrial pollutants, pesticides, and other radioactive or toxic substances — present in all people’s bodies. They are absorbed simply by eating, drinking and breathing during the current era of our planet’s industrialization. Exposure also is caused by countless materials in our daily lives — such as cosmetics, soap, clothing, carpets, wooden decks and playground equipment.

Body burden puts people at risk for cancer; damage to the brain and nervous system; and toxicity to the kidneys, reproductive system, and immune system. Fetuses, babies and children are at especially high risk for body burden effects including birth defects and developmental delays.

At the Villanova University College of Nursing and around the world, nurses are focusing on body burden as a health promotion priority. “Early in my nursing career, I noticed that people with similar characteristics repeatedly fell ill,” reflects Ruth McDermott-Levy Ph.D., who teaches Environmental Health at the college. “The similarities weren’t just genetic or behavioral — they were also environmental.” Dr. McDermott-Levy realized that nurses, as a primary and trusted point of patient contact, have a tremendous opportunity not only to treat the effects of body burden, but to prevent them. She also saw the impact that nurses could have on the health care industry itself, in terms of its disposal of pollutants and biohazardous waste, which adds to the problem of body burden worldwide.

To help address the issue of body burden, the College of Nursing teaches students about the influence of the environment on human health. Villanova nurses are taught to include body burden in a list of risk factors for their patients, and to help educate the public — especially pregnant women and parents of young children — about environmental exposures that can lead to health problems. They are also encouraged to explore the ways in which nurses can make a positive difference in the

Body Burden: The Toxins We Encounter in Our Everyday Lives

Body burden is an issue that affects every human being on the planet. Many people — especially pregnant women and parents of young children — are now educating themselves about how to prevent the onset and progression of disease through healthy environmental choices. These are some common toxins we encounter in our everyday lives.

Bisphenol A (BPA)
BPA is found in polycarbonate plastics, canned foods, and dental sealants and fillings. BPA is also contained in the thermal paper used for many receipts and is increasingly used in medical devices. Health concerns associated with BPA include birth defects and developmental delays.

Chlorinated Dioxins and Furans
These are byproducts of the manufacture and burning of products that contain chlorine. Most people are exposed to dioxin through the food they eat, including meat, dairy, fish and eggs. Health concerns include organ system toxicity, cancer, birth defects and developmental delays, and damage to the immune system.

Perfluorochemicals (PFCs)
These chemicals are widely used as water, stain and grease repellants for food wrap, carpet, furniture and clothing. They include brand names such as Scotchgard and Teflon. PFCs stay in the body for decades, acting through a variety of toxic mechanisms to cause harm to the endocrine system and a wide range of organs.

Trihalomethanes (THMs)
THMs are the most common byproducts formed when water is disinfected. Numerous studies have shown that although drinking water is a major exposure route for THMs, showering and bathing are important routes through inhalation and dermal absorption. Health concerns associated with THMs include organ system toxicity and varying degrees of birth defects.

Source: Environmental Working Group, 2009
Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs)
These chemicals were used from the 1930s until the 1970s as coolants and lubricants for electrical equipment, surface coatings, plasticizers, pesticide extenders and copy paper. Although production of most PCBs was banned by the late 1970s, its waste has been leaching into the soil and water ever since. In turn, PCBs have contaminated the marine food chain, making seafood another source of human exposure. Health concerns include birth defects and developmental delays.

Metals (Including Arsenic, Cadmium, Lead and Mercury)
Sources of toxic metals include adhesives, wooden decks and building materials, household dust, detergents, paints and coatings, playground equipment, solvents, dental fillings, and vaccines. They also can be found in food sources including chicken, fish and rice. Health concerns include birth defects and developmental delays, damage to the brain and nervous system, and toxicity to the kidneys, reproductive system and immune system.

Parabens
These chemicals commonly are used as synthetic preservatives and are found in most cosmetics and personal care products. Parabens can disrupt the endocrine (hormone) system, and were found in the breast cancer tumors of 19 of 20 women studied. Additional health concerns associated with parabens include organ system toxicity, reproduction and fertility, and birth defects and developmental delays.

Phthalates
Phthalates, or “plasticizers,” make plastics more flexible, make nail polish chip-resistant; and are used as solvents and ingredients in a range of cosmetics and cleansing products. They are found in toys, food packaging, hoses, raincoats, shower curtains, vinyl flooring, wall coverings, lubricants, adhesives, detergents, nail polish, hair spray and shampoo. Phthalates can disrupt the endocrine (hormone) system. Phthalate compounds have caused reduced sperm counts and structural abnormalities in test animals, and some studies link phthalates to liver cancer.

Learn More and Take Action
Learn more about body burden and the ways that you can help to protect yourself, your family and your community at these Web sites:

Environmental Working Group
www.ewg.org

World Health Organization
(see environmental health and pollution)
www.who.int
The weather was a bit chilly for mid-May, but warmth was evident throughout Villanova University’s 166th Commencement Sunday, May 17.

Student commencement speaker Sherrie-Ann Martin ChE ’09 challenged her peers to stick to Augustinian values. “We cannot live for ourselves alone. Certainly, our lives should be marked by our deeds, which should be motivated by love.”

Keynote speaker Admiral William J. Fallon ’67 A&S, United States Navy (Ret.), former head of United States Central Command, urged graduates to “Be bold. Make a difference.” He received the degree of Doctor of Military Science, honoris causa.

Villanova men’s basketball head coach Jay Wright was a surprise speaker at the ceremony, thanking the Class of 2009 class for supporting the team through 102 wins in four years.

Sister Teresita Hinnegan, RN, CNM, MSW, a well-known and respected advocate for maternal/child health, received the degree of Doctor of Medical Science, honoris causa.

On Saturday, May 16, the Rev. Peter M. Donohue, O.S.A., Ph.D., ’75 A&S celebrated a Baccalaureate Liturgy.

Overall, Commencement Weekend was a time of joy, reflection and pride for the graduates and their families.

If you would like to purchase commencement photos, please visit www1.villanova.edu/villanova/president/initiatives/commencement/graduates/video.html.
“Key Change is a perfect illustration of what the business school faculty and students truly value and why I am so appreciative of my education.”

The Business of Caring
Elizabeth Circe
School of Business

Elizabeth (Liz) Circe, ’09 VSB, really enjoyed her double major in accounting and finance at Villanova, but perceptions she sensed about business students being underrepresented in community service really bothered her. She began sharing her frustrations with fellow business majors and very quickly, their informal conversations turned into meetings when they established Business Without Borders in the spring of 2009.

The organization, says the Morganville, N.J. native, rests on three “pillars”: educating business students on alternative career options; bringing non-profit organizations to campus for recruiting events; and planning local and international service trips, beginning with a summer ’09 expedition to a village near Kenya, Africa.

As Business Without Borders co-founder and outgoing president, Circe is thrilled that more than 50 students joined the club in just one semester, and is excited by its potential for “changing unfair stereotypes.”

Circe already served as “living proof” that the stereotypes were incorrect. As a sophomore, she led a trip to Slidell, La., to assist victims of Hurricane Katrina. And after a junior year audit internship at Deloitte & Touche kept her too busy for travel, she made up for lost time as a senior, packing the year with service trips. The first immersed Circe in Native American culture on an Eagle Butte, S.D., reservation — an experience that inspired her to spend winter break in San Salvador, El Salvador, learning about the area and serving the community. Then, in the spring, she led a group of 12 students to Chicago, Ill., for a week-long project working with teachers in an inner-city school.

“It was really eye-opening,” she reflected, “to witness the hardships of families and a school system that can’t afford kids the advantages I was so lucky to have.”

Yet, this was not Circe’s first encounter with an urban school. Through Management Essentials service learning course she took during her sophomore year, she became C.E.O. of a 15-student organization known as Key Change, which worked with Philadelphia’s Cooke Middle School “to create and fund a peer mediation program for students that is still used today.

“Key Change,” she adds, “is a perfect illustration of what the business school faculty and students truly value and why I am so appreciative of my education.”

Although Circe is excited to begin her new position with Deloitte & Touche in September, she also looks forward to one day founding her own consulting practice exclusively for non-profits, noting that her alma mater has given her “a passion for service.”

“I don’t think I would be the person I am today,” she says gratefully, “if I didn’t go to Villanova.”

“… sacrifice is sometimes necessary in order to achieve greatness down the road.”

Exemplifying the Scholar-Athlete
Osayi Osunde
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences

In his speech to Villanova’s early action candidates for the class of 2013, Osayi Osunde, ’09 A&S, described his freshman year as “a reality check.” Jolted by his demanding schedule as a student-athlete at the Division I level, the 2009 captain of Villanova’s football team underwent two shoulder surgeries in three months, trading in his helmet for a shoulder sling and his
playing time for trips to rehab. He resolved to turn things around, seeking help from his advisors and professors and inspiration from his mother, Awawu Osunde — “the hardest-working person I have ever seen,” he notes — as well as his three athletically and academically gifted older brothers, Isoken, Uyi and Osagie.

By the end of his second semester, Osunde’s name appeared on the Dean’s List. And by the start of his senior year, with all requirements for his psychology major fulfilled, the Bloomsburg, Pa, native began work on his master’s degree in Human Resource Development, which he will complete in 2010. Osunde’s accomplishments hardly went unnoticed, as he received the Thomas J. Burke Award in 2007 and the Jake Nevin Award in 2008 for consistency on the field and in the classroom. “I was very honored to receive these awards,” he says, “because they show that a person can be both a good athlete and an outstanding student — a message needed to end the ‘football jock’ stereotype and set a long-lasting standard for all Villanova athletics.”

Certainly Osunde has done that in his own right. And if you ask him about his experience as captain of the football team, expect to hear about what he gained from the program, rather than “war stories” from the playing field. “Nothing has been more important than the lessons and values I have learned through Villanova football,” he asserts. “I’ve developed a ‘never give up’ attitude, self-discipline… and an understanding that sacrifice is sometimes necessary in order to achieve greatness down the road.”

Inquire about a particularly meaningful experience — an example of greatness — and he’ll likely skip the story of the season’s biggest win to explain “Get in the Game and Save a Life,” the bone marrow program that Villanova’s football team participates in with more than 20 other schools. Registering 8,100 donors in 2009, the program is particularly important to Osunde; a family friend has been battling cancer for eight years. “It’s amazing to see the immediate impact this effort has on people’s lives,” he says, “and the sheer gratitude their families express to our team and coaches.”

Osunde’s own gratitude is evident when he notes his most cherished accomplishments: becoming captain of the football team and receiving the 2009 Villanova University Scholar of the Year Award. Both, he notes, “are a true reflection of my character.” Both couldn’t be more well deserved.

“… the dedication to the underserved that I learned at Villanova will continue throughout my career.”

Next T-Shirt: Georgetown Med
Brian Freeze
College of Engineering

B rian Freeze, ’09 Ch.E., chemical engineering can sum up his undergraduate years at Villanova with a survey of his impressive T-shirt collection, which includes “a shirt from our victory over first place University of Connecticut in basketball my freshman year when we stormed the court; my special Olympics T-shirts from weekend volunteer competitions; and shirts from break trips spent building houses with Habitat for Humanity,” he proudly catalogues. It’s not the shirts themselves that he prizes, Freeze explains, but the “wide range of experiences and memories I associate with them.”

Service activities alone would fill up his laundry basket. Freeze is one of 60 seniors comprising Who’s Who at Villanova, a group recognized annually for outstanding leadership and involvement. From helping freshmen transition to college through New Student Orientation to assisting fellow engineering students as a PEER tutor, the Phoenix, Ariz., native has spent countless hours giving to others. “I have learned a lot about myself and the kind of person I want to be through the amazing opportunities and experiences that I’ve had outside the classroom,” notes Freeze.

When he talks about his service projects, he humbly highlights the generous spirit of those he helped rather than his own, remembering, for example, the athlete who sparked his involvement with Special Olympics: “I was volunteering at the ‘spin art’ booth in the ‘Olympic Town’ carnival on the quad, helping a disabled athlete with this very involved process. At the end, he gave me the artwork to keep. I was very moved by his generosity, especially considering all the time he had spent creating it.”

Freeze witnessed the same generosity and kindness, he says, on a spring break Habitat for Humanity trip to Slidell, La., during his sophomore year, when he and his cohorts stayed with “people who had lost everything” to Hurricane Katrina.

“They took time to sit down and share their experiences and continued to give as they came and cooked meals for us,” he recalls. It is no surprise that Freeze has chosen to apply his engineering knowledge and problem solving skills to a career in medicine because he loves “working with and helping people.” In addition to his studies at Georgetown Medical School, he plans to become involved with the University’s Social Justice and Health Advocacy program, which provides medical education and free clinics to the homeless, at-risk youth, and many others in need, as well as to extend his service with Special Olympics and the developmentally disabled in the Washington, D.C., area.

“I know that dedication to the underserved that I learned at Villanova, will continue throughout my career,” he affirms. And the T-shirt collection will continue to grow.

“It was very sad and emotional, but also empowering and amazing to see what these nurses do every day.”

Forging Her Own Path
Anna Menard
College of Nursing

A nna Menard, ’09 B.S.N., had no idea she would someday graduate from Villanova when she attended “Siblings Weekend” with her eldest sister, Laura Menard Fitzgerald, ’00 A&S, as a fourth grader. In fact, by the time the
Doylestown, Pa., native was ready to look at colleges, she staunchly intended to “forge her own path” unlike those taken by her three older sisters. But at her parents’ urging, she re-visited Villanova and its nursing school and “fell in love with the University.”

As she savors her good fortune in being accepted and studying here, it becomes clear that the University is equally lucky to have had her for the four years that she packed solid with service work and leadership. “Villanova offers so many opportunities for travel, and I’ve definitely taken advantage of them,” she happily reflects.

Through her involvement with Villanova’s Student Nurses Association of Pennsylvania chapter, Menard has attended conventions in cities across the country, including Grapevine, Texas, and Anaheim, Calif., and served as the organization’s president as a senior. Two mission service trips transported her to Chulucanas, Peru (sophomore year) and to Belize City, Belize, as a junior, followed by the Habitat for Humanity trip to Slidell, La., that she led as a senior. Last May, she traveled to Durban, South Africa, where, along with seven other students, she worked in a nurse-run hospice unit, caring for patients with HIV-AIDS who were undergoing treatment or dying with dignity in a loving environment. “It was very sad and emotional,” she says, “but also empowering and amazing to see what these nurses do everyday.”

Equally rewarding were the opportunities to instruct on hygiene, HIV-AIDS and drug abuse at a local orphanage and to teach seventh grade anatomy at a nearby school, while fielding many questions about America. “It was very interesting to hear their views and to realize how often culture overrides education,” she notes.

Back on campus, Menard was just as busy helping others. Along with 11 other students, she organized a retreat last semester through Campus Ministry. Additionally, through her role as the College of Nursing senator on the University Senate, she worked with Dr. M. Louise Fitzpatrick, the Connelly Endowed Dean and Professor of Nursing, to establish the now credit-bearing Spanish for Health Care Professionals course. (Menard herself graduated with a minor in Spanish that included study abroad in Spain.)

Her newest role is a full-time position at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) which began with an externship in 2008 on the Oncology and Bone Marrow Transplant Units. “My mom gets teary-eyed when she thinks of me working at CHOP, since I was a patient there in the NICU as an infant,” says Menard. Like her alma mater, the hospital is most fortunate that she has chosen to return.

“Ther’s a certain compassion at this school that makes studying law here so great.”

Different Kind of Lawyer
Michelle Orsi
Villanova Law School

When asked about the recent turbulence in the legal industry — all the downsizing and graduates like herself with-
Daniela Guzman, '09 VSB, never thought she’d graduate from Villanova because she hadn’t intended on being there in the first place. In 2005, Guzman had applied and gained acceptance to Tulane University in New Orleans, a mere three-hour flight away from her home in the capital city of Managua, Nicaragua. Her plans all settled, she and her parents arrived at Tulane for freshman orientation, which began with an ominous warning about the approach of Hurricane Katrina.

“The next thing we knew, part of the city was underwater; the University’s streets and buildings were flooded; and orientation was cancelled,” Guzman recalls. “It was horrible.”

Devastated and suddenly college-less, Guzman called 10 different universities that had committed to integrate students from Tulane, as well as Loyola and the University of New Orleans. Villanova was the first to get back to her with a confirmation of enrollment and housing, as well as an invitation to a welcoming program for the group of 30 displaced students to which she now belonged.

She recalls the day she arrived on campus with her father, who, she says, loved the University right away. “We were carrying suitcases and people started coming up to us offering to help. Everyone was so friendly.”

That sentiment also applies to the Office of Admissions and the International Student Office, staffed with “the nicest people in the world,” she asserts. “They were always checking on us to see if we needed anything and make sure we were all doing OK.” And she gratefully acknowledges her first-semester professors, who went out of their way to bring the latecomer up to speed and formally introduce her. “Everyone at Villanova makes an effort to help you feel like you’re not just one of the bunch — that you matter,” she says.

To that end, the University is one of the few that offered its ‘Katrina students’ the opportunity to apply for a transfer and remain if accepted — “and thankfully, I was!” Guzman happily exclaims, noting that she hadn’t originally planned on staying. “I was still attached to the idea of going to Tulane at first. But all the things that were so different from my expectations — the smaller school, the changing seasons, even trudging to class in negative-degree weather — just grew on me,” she admits. However, it was the strong sense of community and her educational experience that truly sealed her decision.

Guzman is quick to point out the distinction between her post-Katrina experience and that of the residents of New Orleans. “It was traumatizing for me,” she remarks, “so I can’t even imagine what people who lost their homes went through.”

The newly graduated marketing major reiterates her good fortune in being transported far from the ravages of the storm, surrounded by “so many different people with so much to give.” And now, four years later, she is one of them.

Everyone at Villanova makes an effort to help you feel like you’re not just one of the bunch — that you matter.

Triumph over tragedy
Daniela Guzman

out job prospects — Michelle Orsi, '09 J.D., is forthright in her response: “The whole model has to change,” she says. “The economy has shown us that we must be advocates for our clients first and moneymakers second.”

This notion of becoming what she calls “a different kind of lawyer” is precisely what attracted the Connecticut resident (formerly of Chicago, Ill.) to Villanova, where the people and the quality of the faculty won her over. “There’s a certain compassion at this school that makes studying law here so great,” she says. “The professors are amazing and the students are genuinely interested in becoming lawyers to help people.”

Orsi’s service-minded intentions for her own career are brightly reflected in her many law school accomplishments. A member of the Pro Bono Society, she participated in the Street Law Program, teaching legal studies at Chester High School. As the society’s fundraising coordinator, she held a series of sales and events — including “Villanova’s Got Talent,” a competition in which she captured third place for singing — that funded Villanova’s Birth Certificate Clinic Program and a post-Hurricane Katrina service trip to New Orleans.

Additionally, she served as the 2008–09 president of the Trial Advocacy Club and has been a two-year member of the National Trial Competition Team — “one of the best experiences in law school,” she notes, “for really learning how to be a strong advocate for my future clients and how to use and apply evidence.” Equally meaningful was her membership in Villanova’s Health Law Society. The law school recognized Orsi’s work in this area at Commencement, when she, along with two fellow graduates, received the ABA-BNA Award for Excellence in the Study of Health Care Law.

Orsi’s original goal to forge a career in the courtroom changed course in 2007, when a posting appeared for a position with the Office of the Legislative Counsel of the U.S. House of Representatives. She applied and found herself in Washington, D.C., writing amendatory bills and other legislation for 11 weeks last summer in preparation for her official October 2009 start date.

 “[The House] is a really exciting place to be,” she says, adding that the non-partisan position will involve “doing something new every day” as she tackles the challenge of depoliticizing and constructing legislative language. “It’s a very exact science,” she notes, “since people are going to interpret these laws.”

Eventually Orsi hopes to carve out her niche in the House and apply her legislative writing skills in the areas of education and health care. Her interest in the latter is very personal; watching her mother battle the devastating neuromuscular effects of Lou Gehrig’s disease, to which she succumbed in 2005, Orsi developed a deep understanding of the need for good health care policies, fueling her desire to head to Villanova Law School.

Certainly Orsi’s mom would be pleased with that decision — and proud of the “different kind of lawyer” her daughter has already become.

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“Everyone at Villanova makes an effort to help you feel like you’re not just one of the bunch — that you matter.”

Triumph over tragedy
Daniela Guzman

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“Everyone at Villanova makes an effort to help you feel like you’re not just one of the bunch — that you matter.”

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Triumph over tragedy
Daniela Guzman
“Let Us Be Fearless”
Student Commencement Speaker Sherrie-Ann Martin

BY HOLY STRATTS

If energy and enthusiasm had a name, it would be Sherrie-Ann Martin ’09 Ch.E. As Student Commencement Speaker, Sherrie-Ann shared her thoughts about what Villanova has taught her — not just academically — but the real life lessons such as living, learning, helping and appreciating.

Sherrie-Ann majored in Chemical Engineering and had a concentration in the Honors Program. This academic diversity allowed her to gain a substantive background in both the arts and sciences. Villanova also taught her to appreciate thought diversity. “You are exposed to different ways of looking at things and interpreting situations. I have learned to appreciate other people’s perspectives even though it might be different from the way I look at things. I have learned not to be so narrow-minded. Anywhere you go, you are going to meet people who are not just like you. It is an opportunity to learn. The Honor’s concentration gave me the chance to have smaller classes, more writing intensive classes and more discussions. The Program helped me grow as a person.”

Among her student activities, the West Chester, Pa., native was a member of the Society of Women Engineers, the National Society of Black Engineers, vice president of the Caribbean Student Association, Special Olympics volunteer and was involved in many community service projects. She looks forward to gaining some professional experience before pursuing doctoral studies. “I want to pursue research, but I feel I should have some time in the work world to find my real interests,” she said.

She reflected, “Being the Student Commencement Speaker was something I greatly desired and prayed for fervently, so I truly believe that being selected is not only an honor but a beautiful blessing.”

In her speech, Sherrie-Ann noted that, “Today, our families and friends have the greatest sense of pride witnessing their loved ones on a path to realizing their dreams. As we look across at the sea of caps and gowns, and gleeful faces, we reminisce on the hard work, the sleepless nights and courage that made this graduation day a possibility. The gowns are symbolic of our achievements.

“Now what if we were to parade around in our robes for days, weeks or even years after our graduation ceremony? Ridiculous would not even begin to describe us. So later today, we will take off our gowns, and there will be no distinguishable feature to identify us as graduates anymore. We will all blend in. So my question is how will we differentiate ourselves to our communities, countries and our world? Are we willing to just blend in? Are we comfortable settling with just being ordinary? I dare you all today to be on the offensive as you determine in every core of your being to allow this first step to help facilitate living dangerously extraordinary lives.

“Our University seal is our daily reminder of Villanova’s proclamation of Veritas, Unitas, Caritas—Truth, Unity and Love—three valuable virtues that are deeply interconnected to perpetuate us leading a dangerously extraordinary life.”

Sherrie-Ann concluded, “Don’t be afraid to pursue your dreams, and strive for the very best. This is our opportunity, now is the moment to discover our truth; to live a life filled with and motivated by our compassion for others; and to do something dangerously extraordinary for our communities. Let us be fearless. Let us evoke positive change. Let us remember that we represent our Villanova family and as Jay Wright would say, ‘We should represent with class.’ And let us always remember Veritas, Unitas and Caritas.”
He is a 40-year Navy veteran who thought he would fulfill his ROTC requirement and return immediately to civilian life.

He is a combat veteran who used philosophy to understand the mindsets of those he opposed.

He is a former military commander who views armed intervention as a tool of social and economic progress.

Admiral William J. Fallon ’67 A&S, United States Navy (retired), never was one to get from A to B in a straight line. That independent bent, that willingness to step away from conventional wisdom and see things for himself, has served him well. It has put him on warships and in fighter planes, taken him around the world, set him amidst every U.S. military engagement since the Vietnam War, and carried him to the highest echelon of his calling.

And on May 17, it brought him back to where it all started, to Villanova, where he was presented with an honorary doctorate and addressed the Class of 2009 at this year’s commencement ceremonies.

The journey from naval Reserve Officers Training Corps graduate to the top post in U.S. Central Command was one Fallon could not imagine taking four decades ago.

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“I expected I would do my time, whatever I owed the Navy in service to the country,” he says. “Our nation historically has worked under the citizen-soldier idea, and I thought that was good. I had no intention of staying on. To imagine I’d have the opportunity to command the forces and positions around the world to try to influence events large and small wasn’t even on my radar scope.”

Growing up in Merchantville, N.J., Fallon was interested in West Point, but his congressman was out of appointments. Then again, he had read all 15 volumes of Samuel Eliot Morison’s History of United States Naval Operations in World War II, so perhaps a seafaring career was nearer to his heart than he suspected. Fallon enrolled at Villanova on an ROTC scholarship as physics major, though he eventually switched to engineering; he supplemented the surfeit of science and technical coursework with classes in the arts and humanities.

At times, the experience seemed overwhelming, but there was a lesson to be learned in the way he challenged himself. “It was quite a broadening experience for me,” Fallon says. “I was trying to figure out how many things I could juggle in my field and learned that one has an incredible capacity for working the brain. Sometimes when we think we’re pushing ourselves, we’re in fact only scratching the surface.”

After graduating, Fallon began serving out his required time in the Navy with no thoughts of sticking around for the long haul. But he found success at every turn, beginning with his first assignment, serving as a carrier-based combat aviator during the Vietnam War, and before long his ROTC commitment turned into a career. He led a Central Air Wing in combat during 1991’s Gulf War and commanded a Navy Battle Group and the U.S. 6th Fleet Battle Force during NATO operations in Bosnia. In the wake of the September 11 attacks, when he was stationed at the Pentagon as Vice Chief of the Navy, he led missions against Al Qaeda and Taliban forces in Afghanistan. Other notable achievements include commanding the U.S. Atlantic Fleet and U.S. Fleet Force Command, with responsibility for the readiness of U.S. naval forces worldwide; leading the U.S. Pacific Command; and heading U.S. Central Command, responsible for all U.S. military operations in the Middle East, Central Asia and the Horn of Africa, focusing on combat efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

A thoughtful conversationalist with a dryly witty, unassuming manner, Fallon is not one to trumpet his experiences. Rather, he places them within the larger

“Treat all people respectfully and listen to varying viewpoints. You might learn something. But challenge assumptions, and don’t believe everything you hear.”

—Admiral William J. Fallon ’67 A&S

Admiral William J. Fallon’67 A&S, received an honorary degree and served as Commencement speaker.

“Listen to Varying Viewpoints”
Admiral William J. Fallon ’67 A&S Inspires Class of ’09
context of what he sees as the military's necessary role in establishing "security and stability as an underpinning to any kind of economic and social progress for people."

"The best example of that in today's world is money. Money doesn't flow to places that are unstable and insecure," Fallon says. "Development lags, if there's any at all. They go hand in glove, development and security. You can't have one without the other."

Fallon retired from the Navy last year after more than 40 years of active service. His uncompromising ethics and dedication made a mark, according to friends. "The first word to describe him is loyal," says Admiral James Eastwood, '68 C.E. "He's fiercely loyal to his friends, to his family, to his university and, of course, to the Navy and our country."

In his commencement address, Fallon urged the graduates to use the gifts Villanova had given them to make a difference in the world. "Treat all people respectfully and listen to varying viewpoints," he said: "You might learn something. But challenge assumptions, and don't believe everything you hear."

"Bill Fallon was an outstanding choice to be Villanova's graduation speaker for the Class of 2009," says General P. X. Kelley, '50 VSB, 28th Commandant of the Marine Corps. "He is a person of extraordinary honesty, integrity, and global experience. I hope the graduates listened carefully."

Currently Fallon is the Robert E. Wilhelm Fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Center for International Studies and also does some consulting. He is a member of the Congressional Commission on the Strategic Posture of the United States and serves as co-chair of both the Center for Strategic and International Studies' Commission on Smart Global Health Policy and the National Association of Corporate Directors' 2009 Blue Ribbon Commission. He is writing a book about his later years in the Navy and, he says, "failing at golf."

"My wife wants to know when this retirement stuff is going to start," he says. "I said, I retired from the Navy—that's still a lot things I haven't done yet. Nothing's different. It's the same as back at Villanova—gotta try, gotta try."

As a child of the Great Depression, Teresita Hinnegan witnessed first-hand the suffering and humiliation caused by poverty. As a child of her time, she saw the injustice and unfairness directed toward women. As a child of her mother and father, she was empowered to do something about it.

"I was blessed with great parents who believed change was possible," she says. "You could do anything you wanted to do. Education and hard work were part of that scene."

Gifted with such inspiration, Hinnegan joined the Medical Mission Sisters, a small group of nuns dedicated to serving the poor, especially women and children and those without access to health care.

For decades Sister Teresita has fulfilled her order's mission with unceasing passion, beginning with a 14-year tenure as a nurse-midwife in what is now Bangladesh. After returning to the United States, she embarked on a notable career blending advocacy, service and education throughout Philadelphia. Her accomplishments include founding the Maternity Care Coalition to address high infant-mortality rates and poor health care for pregnant women; launching Dawn's Place, a residence and therapeutic program for women escaping commercial sexual exploitation; and starting Roxborough's Center for the Empowerment of Women and Girls, which addresses issues of violence and exploitation of women at all levels.

Along the way Sister Teresita earned advanced degrees in nursing and social work and spent 20 years at the University of Pennsylvania's School of Nursing, teaching health-care policy to graduate nurse-midwives and nurse practitioners. Recognizing her commitment to fairness for all, especially the most underserved, Villanova presented Sister Teresita with an honorary doctorate in medical science at this year's commencement ceremony.

"All through my life, as a child and as a Medical Mission Sister, we've talked about justice being part of the healing process," she says.

Sister Teresita has not only lived that mission but also preached it. As a lecturer at the University of Pennsylvania, she sought to demonstrate that nurses and nurse-midwives could—and should—be true agents of change.

"Sister Teresita inspired her students to have a passion for caring for the poor," notes Dr. Kimberly K. Trout, an assistant professor of nursing at Villanova and one of many taught by Sister Teresita over the years. "She continually emphasized that there should be no distinction between those whom society renders as the 'deserving poor' or the 'undeserving poor.' Teresita let us know that we are called simply for all, especially the most underserved, to be true agents of change.

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"Sister Teresita inspired her students to have a passion for caring for the poor," notes Dr. Kimberly K. Trout, an assistant professor of nursing at Villanova and one of many taught by Sister Teresita over the years. "She continually emphasized that there should be no distinction between those whom society renders as the 'deserving poor' or the 'undeserving poor.' Teresita let us know that we are called simply for all, especially the most underserved, to be true agents of change."
The Law School awarded 235 Juris Doctor degrees and 40 Master of Laws in Taxation degrees at its 54th Commencement. John F. Scarpa, director of United Wireless Network and founder of the John F. Scarpa Foundation, received an honorary Juris Doctor degree in recognition of his outstanding service and contributions. Scarpa established the John F. Scarpa Chair in Catholic Legal Studies at the Law School, creating the first such chair in American legal education. Scarpa is a dedicated philanthropist, primarily in the fields of legal education, health care and disadvantaged families.

The Most Reverend Wilton D. Gregory, Archbishop of Atlanta, delivered the Commencement address and was presented with the Law School Medallion Award for Outstanding Service. Bishop Gregory was elected president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2001, the first African American to hold that position. Thanks to his leadership, the Conference of Bishops wrote the Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People, a landmark document that created a comprehensive set of binding procedures for preventing and for punishing sexual abuse by clergy and church volunteers, insuring that there would be transparency, and a forthright response to all allegations, including full cooperation with authorities.

Led by a pipe and drum corps, undergraduate and graduate engineering students, along with faculty and administrators, processed onto Mendel Field on Saturday, May 16, to celebrate their achievements at the 2009 College of Engineering Recognition Ceremony.

After the invocation by Rev. Joseph Farrell, O.S.A., STD, Kenneth Koncilja EE ’09 delivered the student address. He reminded his classmates of the close link between their engineering education and their responsibility to serve the world. Dr. Gary A. Gabriele, the Drosdick Endowed Dean of Engineering, congratulated the students on all that they had accomplished and charged them to “remember that you will always be a Villanova engineer.”

In addition to acknowledging each of the students by name, the College presented medallions to distinguished students for their academic performance and demonstrated leadership. Undergraduates Myles Durkin, Morgan Kapp, Jonathan Perkins and Jacob Sabulsky received outstanding student awards from their respective departments.

Bryan W. Wagner received not only the Civil and Environmental Engineering Faculty Award but also the Robert D. Lynch Award. Named for Dr. R. D. Lynch, the dean of the College of Engineering from 1975 to 2000, the award is given by the Engineering Alumni Society to a graduating senior who has achieved academic excellence and shown exemplary dedication to serving the community. The College of Engineering Outstanding Graduate Student Award was presented to Reza A. Soltan.

2009 College of Nursing Convocation a Proud Event

This Convocation celebrates you and your potential to do good in the world,” said M. Louise Fitzpatrick, Ed.D., R.N., F.A.A.N., Connelly Endowed Dean and Professor of Nursing. Her address to the College of Nursing’s Class of 2009, written as a collegial letter to the class, acknowledged their contributions to Villanova, their excellent professional preparation and their status as the inaugural class to graduate from Driscoll Hall. “We have confidence in you and all that you will do,” she said. The May 16 ceremony in the St. Thomas of Villanova Church celebrated the accomplishments of its baccalaureate, master's and doctoral degree candidates. Awards were given to both undergraduate and graduate degree candidates for academic achievement, service and leadership in the College.

Among the undergraduates recognized were four women who were commissioned into the United States Navy Nurse Corps as ensigns. Symbolizing the entire class, there were four other students who were called forward to have their alumnæ mothers affix the College of Nursing pin to their robes. The pin signifies the graduates are emblematic of the University motto “Veritas, Unitas, Caritas” that is included in the pin’s design. Those assembled enjoyed a musical interlude with Bach’s March in D Major, a duet for violin and viola, played by Colleen Avery and Catherine “Carisa” Bautista, respectively. It was a moment symbolic of the multidimensional talent in the Class of 2009. Each of those graduates can now say “I am a Villanova nurse.”
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences Honors Graduates at Its First-Ever Recognition Ceremony

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences proudly recognized the academic achievements of all its graduating students from the class of 2009 at its first Recognition Ceremony held on Saturday, May 16, in the Pavilion. A reception followed the ceremony on Sheehan Lawn.

Joining the College’s faculty and administration in this celebration were the parents, families and friends of the College’s graduates. The events attracted nearly 6,000 people.

During the ceremony, graduating seniors who have excelled in their major course of study received a special medallion with their name engraved on the back. In addition, students who have been awarded prestigious national scholarships were presented with a special Dean’s Award in recognition of their significant accomplishments.

The College’s medallion is an annual award given to recognize the accomplishments of select graduates, identified by the department chairs within the College, who have excelled in their major coursework. The awards are based upon the cumulative average of the student. Each academic department has named its medallion either for a luminary from the past who has deeply affected the discipline or an outstanding person who helped to shape the course of study at Villanova.

Furthermore, the names of all graduates were called during the ceremony. Rev. Kail C. Ellis, O.S.A., Ph.D., dean of the College, was joined on stage by all of the College’s department chairs who shook the hands of each of their graduates as they processed across the stage.

Helen K. Lafferty, Ph.D., an associate dean and the University’s first college professor in liberal arts and sciences, served as the event’s master of ceremonies. Graduating seniors Erica Kemp, ’09, and Jaclyn Olsen, ’09, served as the senior class speakers during the ceremony, and Danielle Robert, ’09, the Senior Class Poet, recited her original work, “The Heraldic.”

Villanova School of Business Hosts Annual Graduates’ Recognition Ceremony

The Villanova School of Business celebrated the next generation of business leaders with its annual Graduates’ Recognition Ceremony on Saturday, May 16. The Class of 2009 was honored by The Helen & William O’Toole Dean James Danko, faculty, administrators and staff of the business school. Dean Danko commended the soon-to-be alumni during his remarks to graduates, families and friends. He underscored their academic achievements while attending Villanova and offered words of encouragement and assurance for those achievements he predicted they would soon reach as business innovators.

The dean reflected upon the current state of the world in which the graduates were set to embark upon. Although current conditions are a state characterized by unparalleled world issues and economic challenges, Danko praised the graduates as being aptly qualified to meet those challenges.

Graduating senior, Ryan McCann, later echoed Dean Danko’s thoughts — charging fellow undergraduate, graduate and executive-level students with unifying the technical business expertise learned in the classroom with the moral traditions they’ve inherited as Villanovans, and using these attributes as a means to make an impact on the world.

The 2009 Graduates Recognition Ceremony also marked the start of a new tradition with the awarding of the first Meyer Innovation and Creative Excellence Awards. Inspired, designed and endowed by Patrick Meyer, this award represents Meyer’s commitment to have VSB recognized for its outstanding merit in innovation and creativity. The student award was given to Joseph Mancari, for his innovative school spirit in the creation of “Wildpants,” a set of medical scrubs with Villanova Wildcat stripes. The faculty award was given to Dr. James W. Klingler for his service to the business school as Assistant Professor of Management and Entrepreneurship for more than 20 years. He displayed exemplary creativity and innovation throughout his development of VSB’s entrepreneurship minor and the “Beyond Ideas” program, which brings together hundreds of students across the University to foster and exchange creative ideas.

The annual Gerald A. Dougherty Teaching Excellence Award was presented by Professor Gerald Dougherty to Nancy Heck Professor of Finance, for her unwavering devotion to the success of all VSB students both inside and outside the classroom.
Growing up in Washington, D.C., James A. Anderson, ’70 didn’t know his parents; indeed, he does not remember much about his early upbringing. A high school psychology class began stirring lingering issues about his unknown past, and when he got to Villanova, a sociology psychology course with Dr. John Aboud fanned that spark until it was ablaze.

“Before that course was over, I knew two things: that I was going to be a college professor and that I would be in psychology,” he says. “It was one of those great examples of the profound impact a great instructor can have on your life.”

Anderson graduated and earned his Ph.D. — in psychology, of course — at Cornell University, then embarked on an immensely successful and influential academic career. It began with faculty posts at Xavier University of New Orleans and Indiana University of Pennsylvania and continued with progressively more responsible administrative positions at North Carolina State University, Texas A&M University and the University of Albany. Last June, Anderson was named chief executive officer of Fayetteville State University, North Carolina’s second oldest public college, taking the reins as chancellor.

Along the way, Anderson amassed an impressive record of scholarship in the fields of student-learning assessment and the impact of diversity on student learning, retention and overall institutional effectiveness. He wrote three books, earned fellowships from the American Council on Education, the Compton Foundation and the National Learning Communities, and was named to Villanova’s Board of Trustees.

Eight years on the University’s board has done more than simply given him a voice in Villanova’s future. It has also illuminated his leadership at Fayetteville and elsewhere.

“Our board understands that this task carries with it an expected responsibility that is associated with accountability, leadership and commitment,” Anderson notes. “I have asked my leadership team at Fayetteville and at my previous institutions to provide the members of our university community with public evidence that we are exhibiting such values. My Villanova leadership experience also has crystallized my thinking about the relationship between strategic planning, budgeting, and the use of metrics to inform my decision-making.

Few institutions practice their mission of student-centeredness as well as Villanova, hence I keep student needs and concerns at the top of my priority list. Finally, the Augustinian community promotes the spirit of family at Villanova, and in my various leadership roles I have attempted to emulate this ethos.”

His leadership achievements notwithstanding, Anderson remains an instructor at heart, and he continues to teach a class each semester. Perhaps it is natural, then, that he cites Villanova’s incorporation of faculty into the decision-making process as evidence of the University’s maturation, along with a rising research profile and tremendous strides made in academic excellence. In the near future, Anderson believes, the University must continue addressing diversity issues and decide how to position itself in the national marketplace.

“The alumni and friends of the university will continue to generate the necessary financial resources to support Villanova even in the context of a difficult economy,” he predicts. “Therefore, the decisions about resource utilization must be on the mark and reflect the University’s priorities.”

—Thomas Durso
William T. Garland, O.S.A. ’58
Trustee

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It would be understandable for the Rev. William T. Garland, O.S.A. ’58 A&S, to slow down after a 50-year career. But after five decades teaching and shepherding public and parochial school districts throughout the northeastern United States, turning away from education just isn’t on his to-do list.

For nearly a decade, he has brought the expertise gleaned from his experience to Villanova’s board of trustees, on which he serves with a blend of commitment, vocation and talent.

“Teaching has always been a calling for me,” says the priest, who goes by “Father Bill.” “An educational ministry was possible with the Augustinians because we have a number of apostolates related to teaching on the secondary- and higher-education levels. I had always wanted to be a teacher and was wonderfully pleased to find out that with the Augustinians I could answer a call both to the priesthood as well as the teaching profession.”

That call took Father Bill after ordination 10 miles west, to Malvern, where he taught at Malvern Prep for five years. The Augustinians then sent him to Harvard for a doctorate in educational administration. After commencement, he stayed in Cambridge, taking a job with the management consulting firm Arthur D. Little, before moving to Yonkers, New York, to direct public special-education teacher training programs. Then came teaching and administrative posts in East Boston, and Cambridge once again. He was named superintendent of Catholic schools for the diocese of Manchester, New Hampshire, followed by a one year sabbatical in Leuven, Belgium, and San Gimignano in Tuscany. Upon his return to the United States, he was named director of education for the Fall River, Massachusetts, diocese. In 2000 he was elected to Villanova’s board, and two years after that he was elected counselor of the Augustinian Province of St. Thomas of Villanova and a member of the leadership team of the Province.

Over the course of his career, Father Bill has drawn on his atypical early childhood as a source of inspiration and perspective. He was raised by deaf parents, his father having lost his hearing to scarlet fever, and his mother hers to a swimming accident; Father Bill’s ordination at Merrimack College in 1962 was translated into sign language.

“My parents were not formally schooled themselves, but they were certainly educated in the fine art of being good human beings,” he says. They were always sensitive to the needs of other people, always sensitive to improving oneself through formal processes and education. I developed a love of reading through them, and the excitement of traveling and doing different things. They always brought with them, and consequently to me, a sense of wonderment and surprise. Growing up in that household had some drawbacks, but it was filled with love and affection. I’m very grateful for the background I had, though it was very different from those of my classmates.”

As his remarkable career transitions into its next phase, Father Bill looks forward to the simple things: some traveling, some reading (Robert Ludlum is a favorite), some TV (C.S.I., Law & Order), anticipating opportunities to serve at a slower pace.

“At 73, I have no intention of turning my face to the wall,” he says, “but I’m looking forward to cutting down on professional commitments and having the time to do some reflection of my own.”

A first-hand witness to Villanova’s immense evolution over the last half-century, Fr. Bill acknowledges the campus’s physical changes — many of which occurred during the presidential tenure of his classmate, the Rev. Edmund J. Dobbin, O.S.A., STD ’58 A&S, president emeritus, whom he praises for “his deep love and commitment” to the University. At the same time, he points out that under current president Peter Donohue O.S.A., Ph.D. ’75 A&S, the University is enjoying “a renaissance of spirit throughout the campus as Fr. Peter continues to emphasize and reinforce at Villanova its Catholic roots and Augustinian core values of veritas, unitas, and caritas.”

And, ever the educator, Fr. Bill offers a lesson to fellow alumni who wonder in what direction their alma mater will head in the years to come.

“I would hope that in the future Villanova University will continue to draw its nourishment and strength from its foundation in the Catholic faith and traditions as well as from the presence and influence of the Augustinian Order with its rich educational heritage,” he says. “Our future is not shackled to the past, but the past is, rather, an invitation to Villanova’s further growth as one of our nation’s preeminent universities.”

—Thomas Darso
In 1983, recognizing the need for its students to have a better understanding of how the dynamics of the Arab and Islamic world affect international politics and economics, Villanova University established the Center for Arab and Islamic Studies. It proved to be a prescient move.

The goal at the time was to give students the opportunity to add an Arab and Islamic dimension to their understanding of global issues and world cultures.

“We live in a global world, and there is a need for our students to understand one another, to have knowledge of the different regions and their people and to have a mutual respect for one another,” says the Rev. Kail C. Ellis, O.S.A., Ph.D. ’69 G.S., Villanova’s dean of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences and founding member and first director of the Center for Arab and Islamic Studies.

“The Center shows Villanova’s openness in considering other areas of the world,” adds Villanova professor Silvia Nagy-Zekmi, Ph.D., professor of Hispanic and Cultural Studies and director of the Center for Arab and Islamic Studies.

Villanova was one of the nation’s first universities to create an Arab and Islamic Studies program, she says. It has since been used as a model for other international centers that now exist at the University.

The Center’s mission is two-fold. Academically, the interdisciplinary program serves undergraduates who wish to emphasize Arab and Islamic studies in conjunction with a regular major, allowing them to add an Arab and Islamic dimension to their understanding of international issues and world cultures. It prepares them for work in government or business related to the region, and for advanced graduate studies.

It also serves as an intellectual home for those wishing to learn more about Arab and Islamic cultures, says Villanova professor Nasser Chour, the Center’s associate director. The Center organizes lectures, film series, conferences and outreach programs for the University and the Greater Philadelphia communities, in addition to hosting academic seminars by well-known scholars in the field.

The Center offers students the opportunity to acquire a basic grounding in Arabic in addition to a wide range of interdisciplinary courses.

“It offered a complete approach — courses on the history, politics, religion, culture and art of the Middle East. Also, I started learning Arabic there, which became essential at later stages of my career,” says Brian Katulis, ’94 A&S, currently a Senior Fellow at the Center for American Progress, a Washington, D.C. think tank.

“It wasn’t just the facts or the knowledge imparted by the Center’s professors and leaders. They also helped me develop a way of thinking that has been useful throughout my career.”

David Heayn, ’08 A&S, ’09 G.S. says he was most attracted to the interdisciplinary approach.

“The Center really adds something to the campus, as you can take diverse courses and acquire a new linguistic background. Dr. Nagy-Zekmi and Professor Chour, are so receptive and hardworking, and they try to make the program exactly what the students need.”

At a special banquet during the conference, the Rev. Kail C. Ellis, O.S.A., Ph.D., dean of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences (left) paid tribute to Hafeez Malik, Ph.D., (right) a professor of political science and founding director of the Center for Arab and Islamic Studies at Villanova.
Fulbright Scholar and International Affairs Expert

Brian Katulis ’94 A&S

Brian Katulis’ freshman year at Villanova coincided with the Gulf War. “I had a strong sense that our country had been involved in the Middle East for a long time and that the involvement would increase,” he recalls. “Villanova’s Arab and Islamic Studies program offered the full package, including studies in Arabic. Without the Center, I might not have pursued my current career.”

At Villanova, Katulis majored in history with a concentration in Arab and Islamic studies. In 1994 and 1995, he was a Fulbright Scholar in Amman, Jordan. He went on to receive a master’s degree from Princeton University’s Woodrow Wilson School for Public and International Affairs.

Katulis is of Lithuanian descent, and both of his grandfathers were Pennsylvania coal miners. “In my family, the notion of speaking Arabic and actually visiting the Middle East was far-fetched,” he observes.

He spent a semester of his junior year at the American University in Cairo. “I was 20 years old, and it was the first time I’d ever been on a plane,” he recalls with a laugh.

It was the first of many international trips to come. From 1995 to 1998, he lived and worked in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and Egypt.

Today, Katulis’ work focuses on U.S. national security policy. Fluent in Arabic, he has served as a consultant to numerous U.S. government agencies, private corporations, and non-governmental organizations. He has been a guest on ABC World News Tonight, Hardball with Chris Matthews and Fox News, among others.

“The Center expanded my horizons in ways I couldn’t have imagined before I entered Villanova,” he says.

International “Mirror Images” Conference Marks Anniversary

Top scholars, artists, educators and authors from around the world converged on the Villanova campus this past spring to discuss a wide variety of Arab and Islamic topics, including history, religion, politics, art and culture.

“Mirror Images: Challenges for Arab and Islamic Studies” was part of the celebration of the 25th anniversary of Villanova’s Center for Arab and Islamic Studies. It featured more than 40 events, most of which were open to the public.

Juan R.I. Cole, Ph.D., the Richard P. Mitchell Collegiate Professor of History at the University of Michigan, delivered the conference’s keynote address, “Foreign Affairs, Contemporary Politics and Middle East Studies: The Contributions of Academia.” Other featured conference speakers included James Zogby, founder and president of the Arab American Institute and host of the TV show Viewpoint with Jim Zogby, and Saad Eddin Ibrahim, an Egyptian-American sociologist, author and human rights activist, as well as renowned scholars Valerie Orlando, Ph.D., of the University of Maryland and Abdul Karim Baraghouti, Ph.D., of Birzeit University.

Following the keynote address, the University hosted a banquet and paid tribute to Villanova professor Hafeez Malik, Ph.D., founding member of the Center.

Arts and culture also were celebrated, starting with a packed screening of the film “Caramel,” followed by a question-and-answer session with its director, internationally acclaimed actress and director Nadine Labaki. Among other activities, noted authors Pierre Joris, Susan Abulhawa, Habib Tengour and Eric Sellin read from their works and took part in a book signing, and “Women Take the Camera in the Middle East” featured a one-on-one session with popular music video producer Mayada al-Hiraki.

The conference was the result of a year’s worth of hard work and intensive planning by Dr. Silvia Nagy-Zekmi and Professor Nasser Chour. With its unique mix of cultural and intellectual offerings, it attracted attendees from all over the region.

“People kept asking if this is something we offer every year,” says Professor Chour. “It was a great compliment.”
Sister Helen Prejean, C.S.J., a nationally-recognized anti-death penalty advocate was a featured presenter at the two-day Catholic social teaching and criminal justice conference held on campus in March. Sister Prejean’s discussion, “Dead Man Walking — The Journey Continues,” put the spotlight on the controversial issue of capital punishment and her ongoing work to end the practice, promote justice and healing, and assist both the unjustly accused and crime victims.

Sponsored by Villanova’s Office for Mission and Ministry, along with the Office for Service Learning in the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, the Villanova Theology Institute and The Journal of Catholic Social Thought, the conference featured Sister Helen and a host of scholars who examined the theory of punishment and how to deal with offenders from a Catholic social teaching standpoint. Topics such as vengeance, forgiveness, justice as punishment, restoration to community, restorative justice and exoneration were covered. Sessions included “What is Fair Punishment,” “Forgiving Violent Crime,” “The Christian Virtue of Justice and the U.S. Prison,” “An Innocent Person Who Survived Death Row,” “Strategies to Reduce Gun Violence” and “The Community-Level Consequences of Mass Incarceration.”

“Our hope was that this conference would foster a dialogue about ways to achieve the common good for all people and bring greater understanding of the need for healing, forgiveness and reconciliation in the lives of victims, offenders, families and neighborhoods most affected by violence and crime,” said Barbara Wall, Villanova’s vice president for mission and ministry.

A native of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and a Sister of St. Joseph, Sister Helen is the author of the best-selling book “Dead Man Walking,” which was nominated for a 1993 Pulitzer Prize, spent 31 weeks on the New York Times bestseller list and inspired the motion picture by the same name. As the founder of “Survive,” a victim’s advocacy group in New Orleans, she counsels not only inmates on death row,
but the families of murder victims, as well. She has served on the board of the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty and is an honorary member of Murder Victim Families for Reconciliation. She served as Honorary Chairperson of Moratorium Campaign, a group gathering signatures for a world-wide moratorium on the death penalty. Sister Helen also wrote the 2004 book, “The Death of Innocents: An Eyewitness Account of Wrongful Execution,” which examines the flaws in the death penalty system. She has been a vocal foe of capital punishment, speaking out on the subject in high profile venues, such as 60 Minutes, ABC World News Tonight, ABC’s Primetime Live and PBS’ Frontline, among others.

While Sister Helen is grateful for the success of the book and movie, these days she is focused on the adaptation of her work into a play written by the film’s director, Tim Robbins. The Dead Man Walking School Theatre Project was formed by Sister Helen and Robbins to raise awareness and promote discussion about capital punishment. It was crafted by Robbins specifically for schools, and participation in the project includes a requirement that two departments in the school, other than theatre, participate in the ensuing discussion of the issue. The play was performed last semester at Villanova University, and Robbins surprised and inspired students by making an unannounced visit to a performance.

The play and speaking appearances bring Sister Helen’s message to the next generation. “What we need to do to end the death penalty is to bring it closer to people. My job is to be the witness and tell the story,” she says. “The death penalty is not in line with Catholic teaching, and we must consider it with other pro-life issues such as abortion, physician-assisted suicide and euthanasia. At the heart of it, most people don’t think about the death penalty. I have found, in 20 years experience, that most people in America are not into vengeance. If we educate people, we have half a chance to bring them closer to this issue so they get it. I’ve witnessed six executions. It’s over for them, but not for me. I have to work hard, to stay true and be the witness.”

Walking Away From a Death Sentence

In May 2007, then 44-year-old Curtis Edward McCarty walked out of an Oklahoma prison after serving 21 years — 19 years on death row — for a murder he did not commit.

McCarty was charged in the 1982 killing of 18-year-old Pamela Kaye Willis. In 1986, McCarty was tried and convicted of murder and sentenced to death. The conviction was overturned due to prosecutorial misconduct and testimony from forensic analyst Joyce Gilchrist, who altered, “lost” or withheld evidence that could have cleared McCarty. He was retried in 1989 by the same team that again participated in misconduct that garnered a conviction. In 2002, McCarty’s lawyers were able to secure post-conviction DNA testing. That testing concluded that semen found on the victim, was not a match for McCarty. In 2005, McCarty was granted yet another new trial. In 2007, McCarty was represented by the New York based Innocence Project. Additional DNA testing, this time scrapings from the victims finger nails, were tested, and found to belong to a male, but not McCarty. A bloody footprint found on the victim also was tested, and findings showed it did not belong to McCarty.

The judge dismissed the charges against McCarty prior to the start of what would have been his third trial, and he was released from prison, finally a free man. Gilchrist, who was being investigated for her conduct in several cases, was later fired by the state of Oklahoma, but she had worked on or testified at more that two thousand criminal cases. Those cases resulted in many convictions including two death sentences that were carried out prior to her firing. Pamela Kaye Willis’ murderer has not been caught.

As for McCarty, he has channeled what could have been rage, into working to change the system that convicted him and urging young people to stay on positive life paths.

In addition to working with Sister Helen, McCarty began what he called his “life on a new planet” by searching for the daughter born two-months after his imprisonment, whom he had never met. He did meet his eight year-old granddaughter for the first time and grinned from ear to ear at the mention of her. He remains positive and hopeful.

“I was uneducated and a drug addict when I was charged,” he says. “I suffered the consequences for those failures. But I believe in justice, and I hope we can reform the system.”
Paul "Chip" Donohue, ’89 VSB, was on his way home from a successful fundraising event he’d organized for a local hospital when he got a call from a nurse on the pediatric ward.

Della, a young patient with a brain tumor, was having a rough night. Donohue had met Della previously on visits to the ward, and the nurse asked him to stop by. Della, stabilized on an air mattress and unable to move, perked up at the sight of Donohue. He asked if he could do anything for her, and she told him she’d love to see the movie “Jumanji.”

“I went out to the nurses’ station and said, ‘Where are the videos?’” Donohue recalls. “The nurse answered, ‘Chip, we don’t have any.’”

He was shocked. “I said, ‘We just raised Big Impact Little Smiles, Alums’ Charity Brings Joy to Lives of Hospitalized Kids

BY JENNIFER SCHU

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in Florida. “I met him after work, and figured he was going to take me to a bar,” Mullen recalls with a laugh.

Instead, Donohue took him to a supermarket, instructing him to fill a cart with cookies, candy, crackers, chips and “anything kids love.”

“I’m thinking, ‘What is he doing?’” Mullen remembers. “Then Chip gets on the phone and orders 20 pizzas. Twenty minutes later, we pull up to a hospital, where nurses load all the stuff onto gurneys.”

He and Mullen followed the nurses up to Pediatrics, where they distributed the treats and pizzas to delighted kids. From that moment, Mullen was hooked. “I thought, ‘This is so cool, so easy. I’m in.’”

Today the volunteer-driven organization is based in both south Florida and eastern Pennsylvania, with a future goal of expanding nationwide. Their motto is “Anything for the kids.”

“Keeping it fun”
The Stars Ball is just one of the creative things Donohue, an exuberant new father, and Mullen, a seasoned father of four, are constantly dreaming up for the kids.

For example, kids fighting cancer now have Nerf gun fights in the room where they receive chemotherapy. “The kids all call it ‘the bad room.’ We decided to make it a ‘good room’ by having something fun happen there,” Donohue explains.

Surprise pizza deliveries go to the nurses’ station to encourage patients and parents to get to know each other. “Normally these parents and kids wouldn’t meet, but put 10 pizzas out at the station and there’s instant community spirit,” Mullen explains.

Donohue and Mullen are never short of ideas to bring smiles to kids’ faces.

“I was at the store today and saw these really cool remote control helicopters kids can launch right from their beds,” Donohue enthuses to Mullen. “We’ve got to get some!”