



The

ECHO

Fall 2024
ST. JOHN'S
COLLEGE
ALUMNI
NEWSLETTER

A Division of St. John's College



Greetings fellow St. John's alumni,

I have been thinking about the word "change." I looked up definitions and synonyms as I was preparing to write this message. As we go through our lives, there are many times of change. The college's website is undergoing an update that will launch in a couple of months with changes that should make it easier to navigate. The current site still has an alumni page with a place to update personal information. I would encourage you to let other alumni know of the website and to update their information. The website address is hshs.org/stjohnscollege.

On the current website, there also is a link to register for the annual alumni banquet. The banquet will be at Northfield Center in Springfield on Saturday, Oct. 5. Please go online and register for the banquet at hshs.org/StJohnsCollege/Alumni/Alumni-Friends-Banquet. The class of 1974 is this year's 50th anniversary class, and 1974 graduate Nancy Eck has been organizing events for the class members to enjoy. Nancy and her fellow graduates have been working to confirm contact information for the class of 1974. She is planning on sending a separate communication to the class members regarding the banquet and weekend activities.

As some of you are aware this past year, I became the alumni board president as our former president, Brandon Leonard, class of 2018, as well as MSN, FNP class of 2024, unexpectedly passed away in 2023. He was honored posthumously at the May 2024 graduation with his parents and sister accepting his diploma. Brandon was one of those rare souls who left an impression on everyone he met.

At the alumni board luncheon for the graduates this past May, Sr. Trudy O'Connor, class of 1963, presented a copy of "The Nursing Sister: A Manual for Candidates and Novices of Hospital Communities" to graduate Justine Obert. Some of you may remember that this was the initial textbook for St. John's Hospital Training School and was entered into the Library of Congress in 1899. I found it on Amazon! It is an interesting historical question and answer format read of education for the nurse trainee at the turn of the 20th century. As much as things have changed in nursing, some things have not. Even after over 100 years, nurses still need to record information and be organized as the following excerpt details:

"Things important enough to write down.

Q. What things should be written down by the nursing sister?

- 1. The hours at which medicine in to be given, and each time it is given, the hour to be crossed in the tablet.*
- 2. How much beef tea or milk the doctor has ordered for the patient.*
- 3. How often this nourishment should be given.*
- 4. How long intervals should be left between certain kinds of medicine and certain kinds of food.*

Q. But what be done if this left to the discretion of the sister?

She must carefully arrange the time for giving food in such a way as not to destroy the patient's appetite by giving medicine immediately before the food, or nauseating him by giving it too soon afterwards.

Q. What will a good nurse have for all these things?

She will have a well arranged time-table for all these things, written out for the day, and will need all her ingenuity and care to keep the hours of medicine and food exactly apart."

What's Inside

Chancellor's message	2
Dean's message	3
Banquet information	3
Graduates	4
Supporting your	4
alma mater	
College Happenings	5
Class of 1974	6
2024 Distinguished	6
Alumnus Award	
Recipient	
College News	6
Distinguished/young	
alumni	7
In Memoriam	7

A Message from the Chancellor



Greetings St. John's College Alumni,

I hope you all are well. I know it has been some time since you received a copy of the St. John's College Echo newsletter. As many of you know, Chancellor Charlene Aaron resigned from the college in May 2023, and I joined the college at the end of that month. This past year, my focus has been enrollment and college operations. I did have the opportunity to meet some of you during our Alumni and Friends Banquet in October 2023.

This past year, we have been working to ensure the college is academically excellent and financially sound. To that end, our undergraduate curriculum was reviewed and revised at both the pre-licensure BSN level and the RN to BSN level. The updated curriculum will launch in August for fall 2024. To work toward a financially sound college, a strategic enrollment plan was created and targeted focus has been given to increasing college enrollment. To that end, the college has had over a 200% increase in enrollment from fall 2023 to fall 2024.

As the college works toward becoming a financially sound institution, we are making some changes to historical alumni practices. Currently, the St. John's College Alumni Association does not do any fundraising and is not supported by the HSHS Foundation, the philanthropical arm of the system. Because of this, the college bears the cost of everything associated with alumni events and interactions. This includes the U.S. Postal Service mailing of The Echo newsletter and the annual St. John's College Alumni and Friends Banquet. The last time The Echo was mailed, about half of the newsletters were returned, and the total cost of the mailing was significant. Because of this, The Echo will be mailed to only those alumni who have a current physical address on file. Additionally, the annual banquet registration falls significantly short of covering the cost of the banquet. This year, we will need to charge \$55 per person for the Alumni and Friends Banquet, and we have had to discontinue any no-charge registrations. I thank you for your understanding and rest assured, the college is working with the alumni association to explore fundraising solutions.

As the landscape of higher education continues to change, please know that all these decisions are to ensure that the 138-year history of the college continues well into the future. This is particularly important as in 2023, 15 institutions of higher education announced closure, and 10 of those were religiously affiliated.*

Lastly, I also would like to share that the college pursued and received capital funding to update our website. We are very excited for the new website launch at the end of this summer.

Be well,
Dr. Traci Krause
Chancellor

* Moody, J. [2023, December 21]. A Look Back at College Closures and Mergers, Inside Higher Ed. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/business/financial-health/2023/12/21/look-back-college-closures-and-mergers-2023>

Continued from page 1.

We are always looking for people to volunteer for the alumni board. The meetings are held in person as well as virtually, so you do not need to be "local" to serve. Please reach out to sjcsalumni@outlook.com if you are interested in participating.

So, back to my earlier comment about change. We may not do everything exactly as we did before, but we do know what needs to be done. Change is just that — change. While our roots are in the 19th century, to continue to grow we need to be like Sr. Calista Roy and adapt to our surroundings. We have evolved from a training school to a hospital school of nursing to now a college of nursing. I look forward to seeing continued change so that the college can continue to grow and thrive, educating nurses to carry on our legacy of excellence at St. John's College.

Respectfully,
Linda Blakley, class of 1982
Alumni Board President

Update your contact Information

To update your physical address, phone number and/or email address, please visit:

hshs.org/StJohnsCollege/Contact/Update-Contact-Information

A Message from the Dean of Academic Affairs



Hello alumni, and thank you for this opportunity to address you with a recap of the 2023-2024 school year. I am Dr. Elaine Hardy, Dean of Academic Affairs, and I am proud to start with our successful ACEN accreditation for the DNP program and re-accreditation for the master's program. Thank you to those who participated in the community meeting with the ACEN visitors, and thank you to the faculty and staff who participated in writing of the ACEN self-study report. With the recent exit of Dr. Charlene Aaron, we welcomed Dr. Traci Krause, Chancellor, who hit the ground running in her new role. We have had many changes in personnel, as well as facilities, and we are adjusting well to those changes.

This past year, we were able to send 20 students and faculty to the 2nd Annual Kinniebrew-McNeese Health Equity Conference, which focuses on the social, educational, political and economic determinants of health and thriving. Our students in the community health nursing and diverse populations II (Peds and OB) courses collaborated with the Early Learning Center and hosted a health fair for 3- to 5-year-olds and their caregivers. Our senior-level students participated in Student Nurse Political Action Day in Springfield, hosted by the Illinois American Nurses Association.

I have worked with faculty member, Meagan Burton, MS, RN, Assistant Professor, and Hannah Jugan, Dean of Student Services, to write for an Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) Nursing School Grant, and we were awarded \$70,740 to help with faculty development, student success and renovation of our computer lab into a student success center. Those funds allowed faculty to attend local conferences, students to attend three-day Kaplan reviews at the end of their programs, and the college to purchase furniture for the student success center and the student lounge. Our NCLEX first-time pass rate for the first quarter of 2024 was 84%, and our first-time pass rate for second quarter of 2024 is 100%. Congratulations to our December 2023 and May 2024 alumni.



Congratulations to Assistant Professors Bettianne Casper, MSN, RN, CNE, and Cheryl Pope, MSN, RN, who were recipients of the FY24 IBHE Nurse

Educator Fellowship Award. The program is exclusive to accredited nursing programs. This yearly grant is awarded based on a competitive selection process and designed to promote the retention of highly qualified nursing faculty. Adjunct faculty, Malissa Talbert, MSN, RN, CMSRN, and I submitted an abstract to the 9th Annual Health Care Conference in San Antonio and won second place for her poster, "Nurse Retention: Creative Approaches from Leadership."

Looking to the future at the college, we are working diligently to increase our enrollment as we roll out a new undergraduate curriculum starting fall 2024 and prepare for our upcoming ACEN visit in 2025. We are working on increasing enrollment in the graduate program and will continue to encourage our alum to return for their doctor of nursing practice degree. I am encouraged that our students and faculty will become more involved in collaborating with the community and supporting policies that impact nursing. Thank you for your continued support as I serve the mission and vision of St. John's College of Nursing.

Elaine Hardy, Ph.D., RN
Dean of Academic Affairs

You are cordially invited to the
2024 St. John's College Alumni Association

Alumni & Friends Banquet

Saturday, October 5

Dinner | 6 p.m.

Northfield Inn, Suites and Conference Center
3280 Northfield Drive | Springfield, IL

To RSVP, go to
hshs.org/StJohnsCollege/Alumni/Alumni-Friends-Banquet



Due to rising prices and the need to balance some of the costs associated with the banquet, this year's banquet is \$55 per person for all attendees.

Please register at hshs.org/StJohnsCollege/Alumni/Alumni-Friends-Banquet. You will receive a confirmation email. Checks can be made payable to St. John's College of Nursing and mailed to 729 E. Carpenter St., Springfield, IL 62702. If not received by Sept. 20, payment will be accepted the night of the banquet.

To book overnight accommodations, please visit northfieldinn.com.

For more information, email sicsalumni@outlook.com.

St. John's College of Nursing graduates

Class of December 2023



**December 2023
Baccalaureate Graduates**

Maya Aguado
Madison Clem
Jenna Dudra
Jamie Gochanour
Aliese Greenwood Fenske
Marissa Hasquin
Erica Kemple
Michael Shane Lewis
Jasmine Muhammad
Sophia Shepard
Cassandra Simpson
Jessica Young

Cylie Rekart
Emily Reynolds
Grace Reynolds
Marlene Rodriguez
Wyatt Sims
Erin Smith
Taylor Standefer
Isabella Thomas
Lauren Williamson

2024 RN-BSN Graduates

Tanya Austin
Casey Beggs
Elizabeth Lenhard
Kimberly McGregor
Lacey Nett

May 2024 BSN Graduates

Alixandrea Barlow
Emma Booker
Elizabeth Chapin
Max Couch
Jayden Ellis
Ann Gregurich
Morghana Kerwin
Kassidy Kirchner
Blake Markley
Emily Mercier
Brooke Montcalm
Bailey Mowen
Kathleen Nelson
Justine Obert
Zoey Obert
BreAnna Prater

2024 MSN-FNP Graduates

Amanda Bormann
Elizabeth Esker
Megan Kane
Brandon Leonard,
awarded posthumously
Tanya Loy
Mindy Smith
Andrea Staples
Mary Tumsutan
Courtney Williams

2024 DNP Graduate

Jacob Bunte

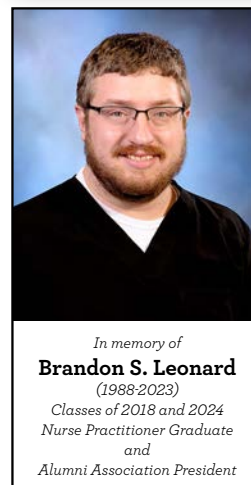
Class of May 2024



BSN



MSN



In memory of
Brandon S. Leonard
(1988-2023)
Classes of 2018 and 2024
Nurse Practitioner Graduate
and
Alumni Association President



DNP

Supporting your alma mater

Each year, your generous financial support allows the next generation of nurses to receive scholarships to off-set the cost of their education. These scholarships are critical as we work to educate more nurses to care for our communities. If you would like to support the college through designated scholarship or undesignated college funds, please visit hshs.org/StJohnsCollege/give or email Philanthropy Specialist Natalie Donaldson at natalie.donaldson@hshs.org.

Thank you for your continued support.

College Happenings

In March, Chancellor Traci Krause was featured in a question and answer segment in the *Springfield Business Journal*. For the full article, go to springfieldbusinessjournal.com/articles/qanda-with-dr-traci-krause-15215606

Q&A with Dr. Traci Krause

By David Blanchette

Dr. Traci Krause came to Springfield in May 2023 to serve as the chancellor of St. John's College of Nursing. She had spent a decade as dean of the School of Nursing, Health Sciences and Wellness at Minneapolis College and prior to that was the assistant director of nursing in the Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs.

An Iowa native, she served as a nursing instructor in Estonia during her time in the Peace Corps and she credits that experience with her decision to obtain a master's degree in public health and nursing.



PHOTO COURTESY TRACI KRAUSE

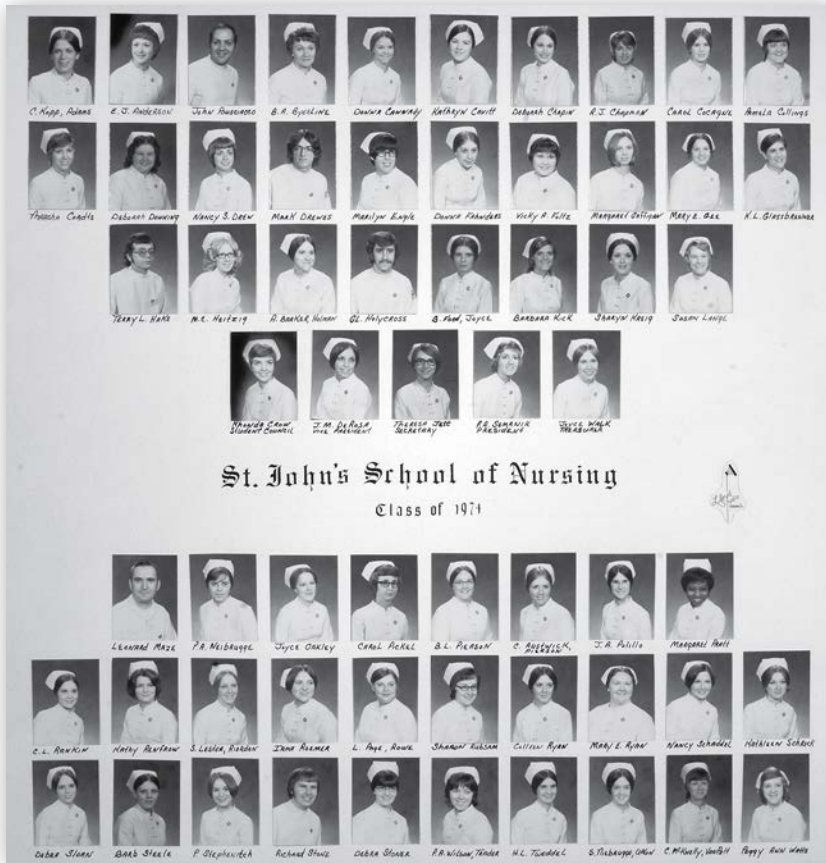
The college participated in the Illinois State Fair Parade on Thursday, August 8. We also had a table in the Illinois Building throughout the fair's run August 8 - 18. We hope you stopped by!



In April, our students participated in the Cindy Ackley Health Fair and Teddy Bear Clinic at the Springfield Public Schools Early Learning Center. More than 100 families participated in the event.



Class of 1974: What was happening 50 years ago?



This year marks the 50th anniversary for our 1974 St. John's School of Nursing graduates.

In 1974:

- White caps and white uniforms were standard issue for nurses.
- We were watching M*A*S*H, The Mary Tyler Moore Show and All in the Family.
- The movie theater was playing "The Towering Inferno."
- Muhammed Ali was being crowned the heavyweight boxing champ.
- Post-it Notes were born.
- Skittles candy launched.
- We were listening to ABBA sing "Waterloo."
- Richard Nixon resigned and Gerald Ford became our 38th president.
- The median household income was \$11,100 (census.gov).
- Global population hit 4 billion, compared to 8 billion today (thepeoplehistory.com/1974.html).

2024 Distinguished Alumnus Award Recipient



Please join us in congratulating our 2024 distinguished alumnus award recipient, Dr. Nancy (Pamela) Semanik, President of the class of 1974. The following is the nomination letter submitted by Rowland W. Chang, MD, MPH from Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine.

"It is my pleasure to enthusiastically nominate Pamela Semanik PhD, APN, for the Distinguished Alumna Award. Since 1985, Dr. Semanik has served as my nurse practitioner in the Arthritis Center of the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago/Shirley Ryan Ability Lab. During this time, she has exemplified so many of the St. John's College core values: in particular, professional competence, leadership, and innovation. During her time in our clinical practice, she became curious about the effect of physical activity on arthritis and became involved with our research group. This led to her returning to school for a PhD in nursing science at the University of Chicago, where she won the Dean's Nursing Science Excellence Award for her dissertation work on physical activity in women with rheumatoid arthritis. This work has continued with multiple NIH-funded grants and publications involving the measurement and promotion of physical activity in persons with joint symptoms. She is also a passionate teacher of doctoral nursing students at Rush University College of Nursing where she is an Associate Professor in the Adult-Gero Primary Care Department. In addition to her professional activities, she adopted her son from China and is active in her church community and on her condo board. Pam is an ideal candidate for the St. John's School/College of Nursing Distinguished Alumni Award. I recommend her to you with my highest enthusiasm."

Dr. Semanik will be honored at the 2024 Alumni and Friends Banquet in October.

College News

Colleague changes

Long-time Financial Aid Administrator **Tim Marten** left the college for a new opportunity. **Madison Jeffers**, past student services coordinator, was promoted to the financial aid administrator role and has been doing an amazing job.

College Registrar **Mary Werries** left in early 2024 for a new opportunity. She was replaced by a new colleague, **Heather McCullough**. Heather brings years of higher education experience and is doing a great job in her role.

Please welcome **Amanda Moriconi** who joins us as the student services coordinator.

Faculty retirements

Mary Barnes, Linda Blakley and **Julie Varns** retired from the college this past year. Linda continues at the college as the president of the St. John's College Alumni Association.

College graduation

In December 2023, the venue for the college graduation ceremony was changed. In recent years, graduation was held at a local Catholic church. The decision was made to move graduation onto campus. Graduation Mass was held in the HSHS St. John's Hospital Chapel, and the graduation ceremony was at the Dove Conference Center at Prairie Heart Institute. This change in venue allowed for the opportunity to celebrate our graduates' accomplishments in a more visible way.

Know a St. John's College graduate who is exceptional?

Of course you do! St. John's College graduates excel!

The St. John's College Alumni Association would love to hear about graduates and their accomplishments. There are two categories: Young Alumnus (graduated within the past 10 years) or Distinguished Alumnus (graduated more than 10 years ago). Each year during Nurses Week, we would love to honor and celebrate a graduate in each of these categories. In order to do that, we need to hear from you!



Young Alumnus Criteria for Nomination

- Nominees must be living graduates of St. John's College who graduated within the past 10 years.
- Selection is based on professional accomplishments, including but not limited to contributions to nursing, community/public service, academic achievement, professional publications and attainment of increasingly responsible positions within an organization or business.
- Selection also is based on alumni who exemplify the Core Values of St. John's College: innovation, leadership, competence, lifelong learning, justice, mutual respect, stewardship and holistic health, inclusive of caring, joy and spiritual growth.



Distinguished Alumnus Criteria for Nomination

- Nominees must be living graduates of St. John's School of Nursing/St. John's College.
- Selection is based on exceptional professional accomplishments, including but not limited to contributions to nursing, community/public service, academic achievement and professional publications.
- Selection also is based on alumni who exemplify the Core Values of St. John's College: innovation, leadership, competence, lifelong learning, justice, mutual respect, stewardship and holistic health, inclusive of caring, joy and spiritual growth.

How to nominate:

- Submit a brief statement on why you think the nominee should be considered for the award along with a summary of accomplishments.
- Other details or pertinent data that might prove helpful in supporting your nomination include, but are not limited to, documentation of public/professional recognition, articles or books published or contributed to by the nominee and synopsis of how the nominee demonstrates the college core values.
- Send all the required information to:
St. John's College of Nursing
c/o Young OR Distinguished Alumnus Award
729 E. Carpenter St.
Springfield, IL 62702

Or, complete the online form located at sjcs.edu/Alumni and then chose Young Alumnus Award Nomination or Distinguished Alumnus Award Nomination.

In Memoriam

Condolences

Margaret Ann Riley Puschel, '44. Passed April 5, 2023

Sister Ruth Brueggemann, '56. Passed April 15, 2023

Marie Therese Henebry, '58. Passed May 5, 2023

Virginia L. Broccardo, '69. Passed June 7, 2023

Anna Marie Seaborn Schaddell, '49. Passed
Sept. 8, 2023

Sister Jonette Devlin, '51. Passed Oct. 5, 2023

Marie Virginia Pope, '53. Passed Oct. 17, 2023

Margaret Jane Jabusch, '54. Passed Oct. 20, 2023

Sister Arlene Winkler, '60. Passed Nov. 24, 2023

Theresa Rose Kraus, '51. Passed May 5, 2024

Marilyn K. Killion, '72. Passed May 6, 2024

Sister Josepha Schaeffer, '56. Passed June 23, 2024



A Division of St. John's College
729 E. Carpenter Street
Springfield, IL 62702

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SPRINGFIELD, IL
PERMIT NO. 667

We are interested in you!

Please take time to drop us a note about your professional activities, honors, employment or other items of interest.

Please mail to:

St. John's College
729 E. Carpenter St.
Springfield, IL 62702

Or email:

sjcsalumni@outlook.com

Name _____

Year graduated _____

News _____

Where are you working? _____

Email address _____

Become a fan of St. John's College on Facebook:
facebook.com/StJohnsCollegeSpringfieldIllinois