

# IMMACULATA

MAGAZINE

*Exploring*  
**CREATIVITY  
& INNOVATION**

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INSIDE IU'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP  
AND INNOVATION CLASSES: BOOST YOUR  
CREATIVITY WITH THESE 4 HABITS

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CURIOSITY, EXPLORATION AND  
DISCOVERY: STUDENT RESEARCH  
AT IMMACULATA

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MAGAZINE

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Thank you to the Immaculata Magazine editorial board for their support and guidance.

#### ON THE COVER

Immaculata's allied health major, Taylor Gustafson '23, took this photo of boomwhackers for an assignment in her cell phone photography class taught by Sean Flannery, Ph.D.



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**LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT**

I am very excited about this edition of Immaculata Magazine because it focuses on two key concepts that continue to be a part of the Immaculata legacy: creativity and innovation.

For today’s students who will eventually become future leaders, creative problem-solving and decision-making are critical skills to master. Our world is in desperate need of these skills, and I am pleased Immaculata is providing opportunities for our students to think “beyond the textbook” so they can better understand not only the “what” but also the “how” and “why” of their learning processes.

The magazine is full of examples of how our faculty, students and alumni are demonstrating the importance of creativity in examining everyday problems and global issues. With numerous opportunities to express themselves creatively, students broaden their classroom learning and expand their worldviews. I do enjoy seeing how Immaculata students and alumni put their learning to use.

There is always more work to do in this regard, and I am pleased that we have the opportunity in this edition of the magazine to show you the creative and innovative ways our students are learning. Please don’t forget that your support enables us to provide these opportunities for our students to be successful in their studies, careers and lives. Thank you for all you do to support our mission.

I invite you all to turn the page and start reading the articles and catching up with what is happening here at Immaculata.

**Barbara Lettiere '72**

**IMMACULATA MAGAZINE IS ONLINE!**

Don’t forget to check out the digital version of Immaculata Magazine at [magazine.immaculata.edu](https://magazine.immaculata.edu). We’re focused on finding timely, environmentally friendly and cost-effective ways to deliver Immaculata Magazine content to you, so we’re continuing to enhance our magazine website. The online version of Immaculata Magazine includes the same articles, class notes, and alumni photos as the printed edition and includes interactive features like videos, polls, games and more. To ensure you’re receiving the most up-to-date IU news, please share your email address (and any other contact information) with us at [immaculata.edu/alumni-update](https://immaculata.edu/alumni-update).

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## with **Ellie Loose,** **Senior Class President**

By Vincent Damiri '23, *communication major*

**Ellie Loose**, the president of the class of 2023, earned a degree in a history and secondary education. Her outstanding leadership skills have led our campus through some tough times in the past few years in the wake of the pandemic. She reflected on what Immaculata has meant to her.

**Q: What was your favorite activity you've been involved with on campus?**

**A:** Cue and Curtain. It's the University's oldest organization and embodies the vibes here very well. It places a heavy emphasis on things like community and opportunity, and I felt at home there. It was awesome meeting everyone and finding my fit.

**Q: What was it about IU that called you here?**

**A:** The sense of community. When my tour guide mentioned to me that students here care about one another, that rang true.

**Q: How has IU changed you?**

**A:** My time here has allowed me to become more considerate and empathetic to those I lead. I've fine-tuned my strongest qualities as a leader, such as conflict mediation and taking initiative. I was head RA, and when you're placed in difficult situations like this role, you end up learning a lot about yourself and your environment.

**Q: What's your favorite location on campus and why will you miss it?**

**A:** The library! It gave us a nice talking floor for casual work, two floors for total quiet where you can do your super intense work, and helpful resources like the career center and writing center. I had my own spot I always went to every time I needed to focus, and it was always comforting and relaxing to be there.

**Q: What is your proudest accomplishment as a student leader?**

**A:** Cotillion 2021! I was tasked with planning the dance while we were still coming out of COVID-19. Lingering regulations made it almost impossible for us to host the event inside without masks, so we ended up hosting cotillion in a tent in parking lot C. The event was a huge success. Many people congratulated me on how well it went, from the administration to other students.

**Q: How has IU changed since you arrived here?**

**A:** We've had to work a lot harder at encouraging participation and keeping campus culture alive in the wake of COVID-19. I noticed that socialization here had become so different after isolation from COVID. We were no longer making the connections we used to because we were so fragmented by the pandemic. This wasn't unique to Immaculata; we saw it everywhere. This is why I was so inspired to be a part of student leadership and help build back that community feeling. IU has shown me that community can withstand anything, and it is important that we work together to maintain our community here. 🙌



**◀ SCAN THE CODE**  
to read more about  
Ellie Loose.



*"I am honored to be an Immaculata alum, and I feel grateful and proud to be able to share that title with my mom."*

– JENNIFER TETI '10

## MOM AND DAUGHTER ADVANCE THEIR CAREERS with Immaculata Degrees

By Lydia Szyjka '09 M.A.

People attend college for multiple reasons. Denise Teti '09 and her daughter Jennifer Teti '10 each enrolled at Immaculata University's College of Adult Professional Studies under different situations, but they both earned degrees that allowed them to have fulfilling careers.

Denise earned her R.N. diploma in 1972 and has been a nurse for over 50 years. Her clinical experience includes medical-surgical nursing, critical care nursing in surgical and medical ICU, and coronary care nursing in both critical care and step-down telemetry care.

When Jennifer was born, Denise took time away from her profession. When she returned, she worked part time in critical care when needed on the weekends. After having two more daughters, she served as a nurse director for eight years for a specialty pharmacy/nursing group. She then moved to community education, presenting short lectures and facilitating a support group for patients with Lyme disease. However, with additional career ambitions, she realized she needed a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. So in her mid-50s, Denise decided to enroll in Immaculata's R.N. to B.S.N. program after talking to her coworkers who highly recommended it. She appreciated the flexible classes that accommodated her work schedule, which she referred to as "full-time plus" at that stage of her career.

"I enjoyed Immaculata's R.N. to B.S.N. program. It provided so much enhancement to my nursing career," Denise stated. Currently, she is a part-time infusion therapist, where she conducts one-on-one home visits and manages the nurses for a home infusion pharmacy/nursing organization. "I have to say that this field of nursing has been

an area that I have loved for the past 26 years," she stated.

Jennifer's path to Immaculata began about one year before her mom's, but for different reasons. She had always felt a passion for baking and intended to study pastry arts. First, however, she wanted a degree in management that would give her a foundation to build her career upon.

"I chose the human performance management major because the classes that it covered were a wonderful fit to achieve the future goals that I had for myself," Jennifer said. After she visited campus, it became clear that she would feel comfortable and safe at Immaculata.

"The beauty of the campus also brought a feeling of peace, which I was truly in need of during that chapter of my life," she added.

As adult students pursuing undergraduate degrees, Denise and Jennifer attended evening classes. Denise enjoyed the convenience of her off-campus cohort that met weekly in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania. Jennifer took classes on Immaculata's campus, which was also close to her home in Berwyn, Pennsylvania.

Ready to launch her career, Jennifer enrolled in the Restaurant School at Walnut Hill College after graduating from Immaculata in 2010. When she finished her associate degree in pastry arts, she took a huge step and opened Creperie Bechamel in Wayne, Pennsylvania in June 2012. She oversaw all daily operations of the kitchen, crepe execution, dining room, production and marketing while managing a team of three people along with a business partner.

The creperie established a loyal following. Jennifer admits that having the experience of being an entrepreneur and business owner/operator was life changing. Even so, in 2016, she decided to close the business. Thereafter, she spent a few years working in the restaurant industry before landing a job at QVC as a food stylist for their website and live television shows. In 2022, Jennifer was promoted to a supervisory role for the culinary department and now oversees food styling for the production of live shows.

Jennifer credits her Immaculata degree with providing the management skills that she uses daily as a supervisor. She applies excellent communication skills to interact with the culinary team, production staff, hosts, vendors and guests.

"I was able to implement and exercise everything I learned at Immaculata and the Restaurant School, and I feel that my degrees provided me with a solid foundation both intellectually and mentally," she said.

Although Denise and Jennifer worked hard to earn their degrees while working full-time jobs, they both found the perfect fit at Immaculata.

Summing up her experience at Immaculata, Jennifer reflected, "There was a respect, care and warmth that was felt from staff and other students. I am honored to be an Immaculata alum, and I feel grateful and proud to be able to share that title with my mom." 🏡

▲ PICTURED: Denise Teti '09 and Jennifer Teti '10 at the Immaculata On the Road event in Wilmington, DE.

# *The Arts at* **IMMACULATA**

By Lydia Szyjka '09 M.A.

Immaculata was founded as a liberal arts college more than 100 years ago, and during that time, the University has integrated the arts into the curriculum and the overall college experience to broaden the horizons of students and promote interdisciplinary learning.

Incorporating the arts into college education offers numerous benefits, such as allowing students to explore their own creativity and express themselves in unique ways that can be beneficial for personal growth and self-discovery. The arts also provide opportunities to learn about different cultures and perspectives, which promote understanding and empathy. Studies have also shown that students who participate in the arts tend to perform better academically, as the skills and habits developed through artistic practice can transfer to other areas of study.

Not only are the arts a big contributor to students' well-being, but participation in art classes and extracurricular activities enhances job skills and leadership opportunities. Below are examples of how the arts at Immaculata are interwoven into the curriculum and how the University community participates in the arts.





*"Music lives inside of us, and as such, it flows out so we can express ourselves with true clarity and definition."*

**BRUCE MACKNIGHT III M.A., MT-BC**  
*producer and adjunct music faculty member*

► **PICTURED L to R:** Breanna Kratz '23, music therapy major, during the recording of the song "Love, Moore"; Cast members pose for a photo during rehearsal for "Newsies: The Broadway Musical." Pictured L to R: Emma Allee, Grace Wight, Luke Biely and John Schuyler; Caitlin Clayton '24, music therapy major, practices on her flute.

**PERFORMING ARTS**

Immaculata has a rich history with the performing arts, including theater, music and dance. In fact, the oldest campus club, Cue and Curtain Players, continues to produce two plays a year. This past semester, Kelly Gebhardt, adjunct music faculty member, directed the Cue and Curtain performers in "Newsies." While many students participate in Cue and Curtain productions for the love of performing or to be part of a larger community of friends, some students, like Joseph Billetta '22, have used the experience to help them land jobs.

With an impressive acting résumé, Billetta, who graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Digital Communications, was cast in five campus productions and served as the vice president of Cue and Curtain during his senior year. His leadership role with Cue and Curtain provided him with a pathway to continue working in the theater.

"Not only did Cue and Curtain challenge me to sing and act in a variety of different roles, but it also gave me experience leading teams, as I had to lead rehearsals all on my own for the first time," Billetta said, referring to his directing debut for a Cue and Curtain cabaret production. Since then, he continues to act and recently served as an assistant director for "A Christmas Carol" at Footlighters Theater in Berwyn, Pennsylvania.

In addition to theater, Immaculata has a strong focus on music and is designated as an All-Steinway School. Music students can practice



and perform on 27 Steinway pianos and can join 14 different musical ensembles that provide them with opportunities to perform and hone their skills. Many music majors volunteer their talents while gaining invaluable professional experience.

Two music therapy majors, Breanna Kratz '23 and Marchello Barile '24, and their professor, Bruce MacKnight, who teaches a course on music in technology, collaborated on a project that leveraged the healing power of art. The trio volunteered to bring an overdose victim's rap song, posted on Facebook, to life by adding a chorus and instrumentation to the song and professionally recording it. The song premiered on campus and is available on iTunes.



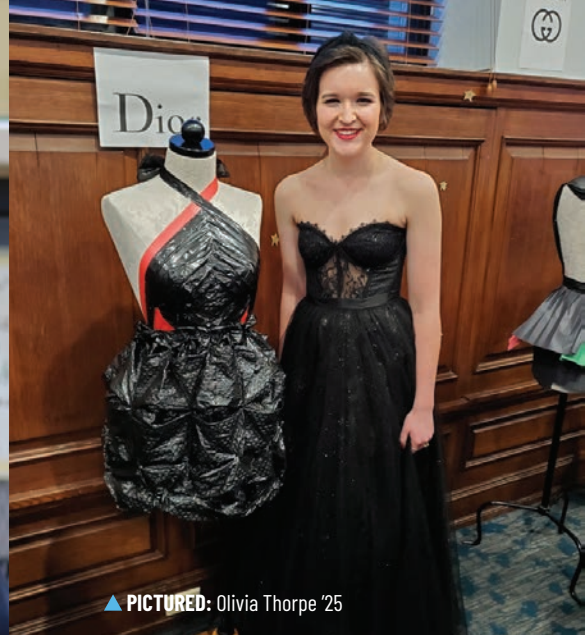
◀ **SCAN THE CODE**  
 to read more this special musical collaboration.

This project spoke volumes about the power of music to heal, which is at the crux of the music therapy field.

"Music lives inside of us, and as such, it flows out so we can express ourselves with true clarity and definition," stated MacKnight. "This really is what authenticates practices and crafts such as music performance, composing and therapy—the phenomenon of music is an inherently human thing."

Seeing the project from creation through distribution, Kratz and Barile also got an interdisciplinary crash course on the marketing side of the music industry as they contributed to the creation of the cover art and the song's title: "Love, Moore," which came from the original, deceased singer Stephen Moore. Additionally, building off the lessons they gleaned from MacKnight's music in technology course, Kratz and Barile gained invaluable experience through connecting art with technology by recording, mixing and producing the music and vocals for the song in a professional recording studio.





▲ PICTURED: Olivia Thorpe '25

## VISUAL AND APPLIED ART

The third floor of Loyola Hall houses classrooms dedicated to various visual arts programs at Immaculata, including painting, sculpture and ceramics. Interestingly, in addition to the more traditional art classes, Immaculata students can also take courses in digital art and design. Instead of paint brushes and clay, for example, they use computers and 3-D imagery to create visual works of art. Gaining exposure to such tools that combine traditional artistic design with modern technology provides students with in-demand skills. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the number of jobs in the digital design field are expected to increase 23% from 2021 to 2031.

Recently, 25 students participated in an art show featuring paintings, ceramics, cell phone photography and digital art designs they created in Immaculata classes. Abigail Yarrison '23, a digital communications major with a concentration in design, organized the event with the goal of increasing awareness of Immaculata's art classes by showcasing students' talents. Yarrison demonstrated how valuable an interdisciplinary approach to learning can be as she enhanced her event planning and project management skills while creating paintings for the art exhibit.

Another interesting interdisciplinary connection between art and other subjects is apparent when we consider how digital design can be applied to the fashion industry.

When Olivia Gray '20 was a fashion merchandising major at Immaculata, she minored in data analytics and product development. Her professor, Lina Castro, the director of the fashion merchandising program, encouraged her to take design courses. These skills have paid off as Gray is currently a freelance fashion designer with GTIG Esen, a global manufacturer and supplier of women's garments.

"It is so important to have graphic design skills, because almost every company needs a graphic designer to create labels, signage, tags, stickers, etc.," Gray explains. Now an adjunct fashion merchandising faculty member at Immaculata, she encourages her own students to add graphic design skills to their résumés and portfolios to expand their marketability when they graduate.

These examples are just a cursory overview of the many different media used as vehicles of creativity. These artistic experiences create a rich, interdisciplinary learning environment for students to develop their creativity and passion for the arts.

Immaculata has been steeped in the creative process since its founding. During Lent, Sister Antoine Therese Lawlor, IHM, D.Min., vice president for mission and ministry at Immaculata, wrote in an email to the campus community, "We are called to receive the gifts that are all around us, using a little hope and lots of creativity, not only to deal with irksome issues or huge challenges, but to move forward to a new time with our charism of love, creative hope and fidelity." 🙌

▲ PICTURED TOP L to R: Sister Elaine Glanz, IHM, visits with students during the student art exhibit; Abigail Yarrison '23 learns how to make ceramics; Taylor Gustafson '23 took a photo of boomwhackers for her cell phone photography class.

## Unconventional COUTURE

Immaculata's fashion merchandising students use more than just a computer to design clothing. Students in a visual merchandising class were challenged to make an outfit from unconventional materials; they could use anything but fabric.

For this project, Olivia Thorpe '25, a fashion merchandising and business management dual major, created a cocktail dress. "Since I challenged myself with using one material, I had to get pretty creative," she acknowledged. "I went to Target where I purchased an inexpensive box of 20 trash bags, all of which were utilized in my project."

She explained that she used staples to bunch up the plastic bags to give the dress volume, pinned it to a mannequin and then gathered it around the waist. Thorpe cut off the top of the bags to make strips that she arranged in a crisscross diamond pattern across the bust to create a halter-style top. She accented the dress around the waist and neckline with the red ties.

Thorpe's "trash bag dress" demonstrated the creativity of Immaculata students at the annual Immaculata Fashion Show, where it was featured during the event with other original designs by fashion merchandising majors.





# FULL CIRCLE:

## Alum Calls Upon IU Lessons to Foster Creativity in the Classroom

By Allison Duncan

Last spring, Zack Robie '11 assigned teams of freshmen in his robotics and engineering studio class at Salesianum School in Wilmington, Delaware to design a mechanism that would lift a ring and drop it over a post. Robie kept the assignment open-ended without providing specific instructions for what to build.

"A lot of groups fell back on what they were comfortable with, using a claw and arm mechanism," Robie said. "But I had one group that built what sort of looked like an elevator. They had two different belts that needed to work together to drive up and lift the ring. It was definitely the most creative build."

Robie sensed some of these students were uncertain about their innovative design and thought they were tempted to start over and do something more traditional. So he stepped in to support them.

"They got it to work, which was impressive," he said. "It was the best one, not as quick and efficient as the others, but their grade didn't suffer because of that, because they tried something new and innovative. I was really proud of them."

Robie tried something new himself when, after teaching math for the past 10 years at Salesianum, an all-boys Catholic high school, he became chair of the arts and innovation department last fall. "I was ready for something completely new," he said. "After so many years in math, I kind of felt like I had it all figured out, and it would've been easy to continue in that path. But this has opened up a lot of new opportunities and experiences." Robie says the school administration supported his professional development and his experimentation with

new pedagogies as he teaches robotics and engineering classes while also overseeing classes in visual arts, music, theater and design.

Robie enjoys giving his robotics students opportunities to be creative. This past school year, he assigned projects such as coding robots to travel through a mini golf course, designing 3-D printed baskets to cushion eggs thrown off Salesianum's stadium and using rubber bands and popsicle sticks to build catapults that shoot ping pong balls. Robie incorporated competitions to generate excitement among students, assigning them to build robots that play versions of freeze tag and soccer. For their culminating project, they used motor groups and gears to design bots that competed in a 100-meter drag race.

In all these assignments, Robie provides just the basic framework and gives students time to explore options and figure out what works. "You let them take their ideas a step or two down the road to see if they're worthwhile and let them make their own decisions," Robie said.

He also emphasizes to his students that failure is an opportunity to learn. He ensures his classroom is a safe environment in which students aren't ashamed to make mistakes, and he says Immaculata provided a similarly supportive learning community. "You felt safe asking questions, getting things wrong and knowing that you're going to learn from that," he said.

As a math and secondary education major, Robie enjoyed taking classes with David Brennan, Ed.D., and Joseph Corabi, Ed.D., education professors who helped him explore the kind of teacher he wanted to be. Knowing Robie was

also on Immaculata's golf team, Brennan and Corabi often asked him how the season was going. "I tried hardest in their classes because they made that connection with me," Robie said. Following their example, Robie seeks to form healthy relationships with his students based on what interests them, not just what he is teaching in class. "That's when students open up, and you can help them grow," he said.

Brennan encouraged Robie to take creative approaches to meet students where they are. Robie recalled that the dominant pedagogy at the time was direct instruction, which centers on teachers communicating basic facts to students. "Dr. Brennan pushed us to find alternate routes where the students would be the center of the lesson, and they would create their own understanding, with the support of the teacher," Robie said. He and his classmates taught mini-lessons using more creative approaches. "My group and I attempted to teach a 'flipped lesson,' which included the use of video and other technology, both of which were new to education."

In addition to preparing him for his teaching career, IU is also where Robie met his wife, Lindsay Murphy Robie '12. "That was the best takeaway from Immaculata, and we have two kids now, and one more on the way!" Robie said, adding that his wife is a radiation therapist with Main Line Health.

At home, Robie continues learning and trying new things. He taught himself to build a deck, landscape his yard and replace carpeting with hardwood floors. He hopes that his renovation projects will help him continue to foster a mindset that embraces growth and lifelong learning, both for himself and for his students. "We need to create more opportunities for students to try new things," he said. "I believe in failing forward, growing from mistakes and not shying away from the unknown." 🙌

▲ **PICTURED:** Zack Robie teaches robotics and engineering at Salesianum School, where he encourages his students to explore creative solutions.

PHOTO CREDIT: BRYAN SARGENT PHOTOGRAPHY

**INSIDE IU'S ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION CLASSES:**

# *Boost Your Creativity with These 4 Habits*



◀ **PICTURED:** Elaine Perignat, Ph.D.

You are more creative than you think you are. That's something Elaine Perignat, Ph.D., assistant professor in Immaculata's Department of Business, Fashion and Leadership, wants her students—and everyone—to know.

Even if you're not an artist or an inventor, you've probably had to adapt to cover a coworker's responsibilities when she calls out sick. Or you've figured out what to make for dinner given the constraints of time, ingredients on hand and your kids' picky eating. Maybe you were given a task you'd never done before, and you worked out a plan to complete it. All these tasks require innovative problem-solving.

You can learn to be more creative, says Perignat, who specializes in creative cognition. "Learning it, like anything else, takes practice. So some of what I try to do is give my students tools and strategies so that they can feel what it's like to think creatively," she says. She makes her classes on entrepreneurship, innovation and leadership as engaging as possible, aiming for "an active classroom full of idea-sharing, curiosity, and really pushing past conventional ways of thinking and viewing the world."

Want to boost your creativity? Here are some insights and strategies Perignat emphasizes in class.

By Allison Duncan

## **1 IDENTIFY SMALL, EVERYDAY WAYS IN WHICH YOU USE CREATIVITY.**

In her Innovation and Leadership class, a requirement for the M.S. in Strategic Leadership, Perignat assigns her students to journal each week about a creative victory. That victory could be something as small as finding a new way to use technology to save time or something more significant, like starting a small business and developing a clever name.

Perignat explains that researchers describe different levels of creativity, from the "Big-C" eminent creativity that genius inventors display to the "mini-c" day-to-day experiences we have when we learn something new and useful. "We can't all be Steve Jobs. And that's OK; we don't need to be." But, she adds, "we all are creative problem-solvers."

## **2 GENERATE LOTS OF IDEAS FIRST; EVALUATE THEM LATER.**

Perignat says some studies show that the first one-third of ideas people develop tend to be less useful than the ones they think of after having adequate incubation time. "Usually when we're driving home or in the shower, we get our most creative ideas, because our brain has time to kind of relax and work in the background," Perignat says.

She advises students to brainstorm many possibilities first, even seemingly silly ones, and not to be too quick to evaluate them, which could cause them to stop short of developing better options. "Withholding judgment is one of the premier elements of divergent thinking and creativity," Perignat says.

At an organizational behavior conference this past spring, Perignat and a colleague from Villanova University presented strategies for leading productive team brainstorming sessions, such as asking individuals to generate ideas separately from the group first, then inviting them to share their ideas anonymously.

"The culture of the workplace is the foundation of any successful team brainstorming session," Perignat and her co-presenter said. "Do employees believe that their ideas are valued? Do they feel safe to be able to share ideas without judgment? If one employee's idea is selected and fails, are they fearful of losing their job/position? The manager and team leaders must help establish an environment of trust, respect and openness among team members."



*"This is a safe space; I want you to be as wacky and crazy as you can."*

3

### **PUSH PAST CONVENTIONAL ANSWERS TO PRACTICE DIVERGENT THINKING AND GET UNIQUE IDEAS.**

Perignat asks her students to participate in the multiple uses test, which researchers often administer to measure creativity. She gives students one minute to write down as many uses of a paper clip as they can think of, resulting in about five to seven ideas. Then Perignat challenges them to think about paper clips from different perspectives—their metal or plastic elements, their durability and flexibility, various possible sizes or numbers of paper clips used together, the potential to melt them down to create new shapes and the metal's ability to conduct heat and electricity.

Perignat then gives students another minute to write down more uses. "This is a safe space; I want you to be as wacky and crazy as you can," she tells them. They scribble feverishly, thinking of 15 to 20 new ideas this time.

When Perignat challenged her students to devise paper clip uses she has never heard before, Josh Weikert, Ph.D., '23 M.S. said, "Snowshoes for a hamster!" Perignat and the class burst out laughing. "You win!" she said.

Weikert, who earned his master's in strategic leadership at Immaculata while also serving as an associate professor at IU and director of the honors program, says he enjoyed this and other activities Perignat assigned. "They made it easy to see how we tend to 'hit a wall' in terms of creativity, but that we can push through it and find still more ideas."

To help undergraduate students in her entrepreneurship course generate ideas, Perignat asked them to think of 10 problems they encounter in their lives. They then chose one as the basis for a product or service they wanted to develop. They created a business plan and pitch to potential investors, with an analysis of their target market, competitors and marketing opportunities. The students developed a range of innovative business ideas, such as a credit repair app with financial advice based on big data and artificial intelligence, a solar battery pack for electric vehicles, a tablet that connects to customers' wardrobes and chooses outfits, a swimwear shopping service with a virtual fitting room and an app for amateur photographers to easily edit and sell photos.

Throughout the semester, Perignat helped her students refine their ideas. "No entrepreneur gets it right the first time," she reassures them. "Failure is part of the process ... not the end result."

She points to her research and publishing work as an example. "When I send out articles to peer-reviewed journals, I don't expect them to be accepted straight up." Editors and scholars note ways Perignat can improve her work. "Great, now I have feedback," she says. "So the next draft of a manuscript I send off will be markedly better."

4

### **COLLABORATE WITH A DIVERSE TEAM TO GET MORE INNOVATIVE IDEAS.**

One key to obtaining valuable feedback, Perignat says, is by building a diverse team with people from different cultures and disciplines and with various skills. Research shows "the necessity of cognitive diversity within a team to provide unique perspectives to a problem," she shared in her organizational behavior presentation.

In the graduate leadership course Perignat taught earlier this year, she helped students explore ways to build cultures of innovation in their workplaces by motivating, supporting and rewarding their teams for developing creative and profitable ideas. "Innovation is not about solo genius, it's about collective genius," said Linda Hall, professor at Harvard Business School, in a video Perignat assigned to the class to watch. "Our task [as leaders] is to create the space where everybody's slices of genius can be unleashed and harnessed and turned into works of collective genius."

"There's actually strength in the creativity of others," says Seante Warren '21, '23 M.S., one of the students in the graduate leadership class and a member of the highway patrol unit for the Philadelphia Police Department. "I used to be more focused on my own level of creativity, but now I value others' input," he says.

Dennis Szveda '21, '23 M.S. appreciated the diverse ages of students in the class and enjoyed learning new ways to use technology from his younger classmates, such as making PowerPoint presentations more engaging with animations, sound and videos. In turn, he drew upon his years of work experience, first in emergency services and now as an analyst for Boeing, to encourage younger students when they gave a presentation and help them feel more confident.

Many of Perignat's students gain confidence after taking her classes. Some tell her, "I didn't think I would see myself at this point."

"I get such a jolt, I get so energized, just seeing students break through and start to let themselves be creative without judgment," Perignat says. 🙌



### **CREATIVITY CONTEST**

Try your hand at a game to see how creative you can be! Scan the QR code for instructions and submit as many ideas as you can. Professor Perignat will judge entries received by Aug. 20, and winners will receive IU prizes!

# Using Music to Calm, Comfort and

# CONNECT

By Allison Duncan



▲ **PICTURED:** Assistant Professor Dan Benonis works with students in IU's music therapy clinic, training them to adapt to clients' needs in the moment.



## Music therapist Daniel Benonis '13, '15 M.A. felt intimidated as he quietly approached his new client, who was lying in a seclusion room. The client, a man on the autism spectrum, had a history of being violent and was nonverbal, Benonis had been told.

“Hi, my name is Dan, and I’d like to play some music for you today,” Benonis said. Hoping to soothe the client, he started playing an ocean drum, with metal beads inside that sound like ocean waves. The client became agitated, overstimulated by the sound.

Benonis shifted to playing his guitar. He strummed and sang “Let It Be” by the Beatles while watching the client’s body language carefully.

The man became calmer. He looked up at Benonis and said, “Pink Floyd.”

Stunned, Benonis scrambled to think of a Pink Floyd song to play next. “It wasn’t that he was nonverbal,” Benonis reflected later. “It was just that he didn’t have the avenue or didn’t have the opportunity to speak.”

Over time, Benonis worked with the client and helped him gradually learn to tolerate the sound of the ocean drum and even participate in group activities again. “He had bumps along the road,” Benonis said. “But music can be that bridge.”

As an assistant professor and director of music therapy clinical training at Immaculata, Benonis teaches his students to prepare a session plan but also to “be prepared to throw that out the window because sometimes it’s just not going to work for that client.” He trains music therapy students to use music and creativity to adapt to clients’ needs in the moment.

“To me, the opposite of creativity would be rigidity—something that’s not flexible, not bendable,” Benonis said. Using music creatively is like pouring water over a jar of rocks, he said. The water can reach not just the rocks on the surface, but the ones at the bottom. Music can move past obstacles and touch places inside clients that may not be accessible to other interventions.

While music can be powerful by itself, Benonis emphasizes the need for skilled practitioners to tailor music to clients’ needs for maximum benefit. “As healing as music can be, it can be difficult for people,” Benonis cautioned. He



*I believe  
that music  
can heal.*

DANIEL BENONIS '13, '15 M.A.

gave the example of retirement homes playing music from residents’ early years, which may be enjoyable for some but could bring back traumatic memories for others.

“We experience music differently,” Benonis said. He trains students to get to know their clients and their varied relationships with music. He also prepares students to handle situations in which clients feel triggered and help them process painful experiences.

Benonis frequently begins group music therapy sessions with a check-in, asking clients, “How are you connecting with music? What do you feel like you need?” From there, he makes clinical decisions about whether clients need guidance to shift out of their current state or remain where they are. For example, if the group seems energetic, he sometimes gives them instruments to play, harnessing their energy to express themselves, connect with each other and build rapport. Or if clients seem quiet and withdrawn, Benonis may choose songs to guide them in meditation and optional discussion.

“The beauty of music is that everyone can hear the same song and take something different from it,” he said. He gives the example of Coldplay’s “Fix You,” a song about healing that he likes to use in groups with people recovering from substance use disorder. Though the song wasn’t written specifically for this population, Benonis encourages his group to think about what the song says to them, regardless of what the composer intended. Some group members connect with the song’s line, “When you try your best, but you don’t succeed,” relating it to their experiences with relapsing and participating in rehab programs.

Benonis, who is conducting his dissertation research on music therapy and addiction, says music can help clients mourn the loss of a substance that was part of their lives and build coping skills, self-awareness and a support network. He has seen the unique power of music to reach people in agonizing circumstances. “People still connect with music even when they’re in the depths of their addiction and they have nothing,” he said.

Even so, “people won’t change unless they want to,” he continued. “My job is to be a guide; and the music’s job is to be a guide to help [clients] to come to [their] own insights. And with those insights, they reach their own recovery. When it’s forced upon people, it doesn’t work as effectively.”

To support clients in their recovery process, Benonis uses songs such as “Stand by Me” by Ben E. King. He invites clients to reflect on who is standing by them, or who they want to stand by them. He sometimes leads them to replace some of the lyrics, perhaps replacing “Darling, darling,” with “Friends and family” or a person’s name.

“I believe that music can heal. I think that’s why I’m here,” Benonis reflected. “It’s been such a meaningful part of my life.” 🙌

# CORPORATE & COMMUNITY PARTNERS



By Lydia Szyjka '09 M.A.

Providing opportunities for students to network and connect with local businesses is a key pathway toward securing internships and jobs upon graduation. Immaculata University strives to enhance these connections by engaging and creating partnerships with local businesses in Chester County and beyond.

During the spring semester, several of Immaculata's business partners attended a corporate and community partnership breakfast event where they networked with fellow employers and were able to hear from two Immaculata students and their internship supervisor on the benefits to both the student and employer about the internship experience.

Kelli Dombroski '23, who attended the event before graduating in May with a degree in business management and data analytics, is a perfect example of the benefits of these partnerships. She secured an internship with Customers Bank at their headquarters in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania as a data analyst during the summer of 2021. They invited her back the following summer to do an internship with their specialty lending internet team.

Oriana Weatherington '23 worked with another Immaculata partner, Piazza Management Company, during the 2023 spring semester as a human resource intern and receptionist. She also graduated in May with a double major in business and human resources management and a double minor in legal studies and entrepreneurship.

Out of Immaculata's 450+ corporate partners, 81 attended the event that included companies in health care, education, accounting, finance, banking, municipal government and the military. Of those 81 in attendance, 23 provided internships for Immaculata students during the 2022–2023 academic year. 🏡





▲ **PICTURED:** Daniel Burns '14 with Karen Matweychuk '83, director of alumni relations and The Immaculata Fund.

**450+**  
CORPORATE  
PARTNERS



# CURIOSITY, EXPLORATION AND DISCOVERY: Student Research at Immaculata

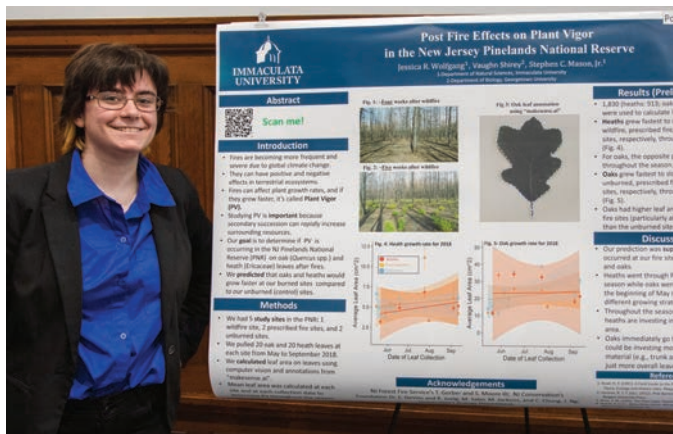
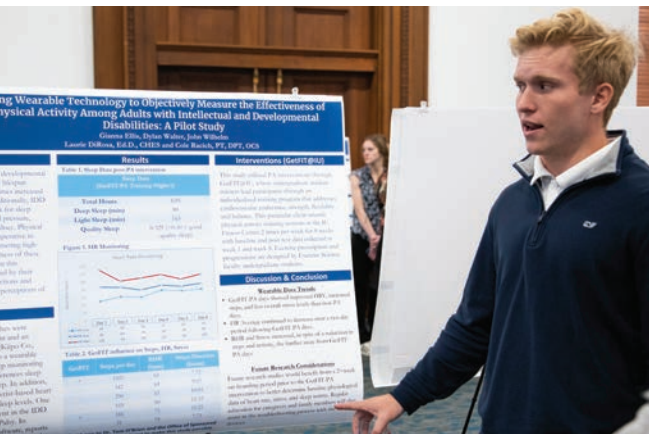
At five student research poster presentation events Immaculata held this spring, visitors saw the curiosity and enthusiasm on students' faces as they explained their projects and what inspired them to investigate their chosen topics.

The events included capstone presentations by graduate nursing and nutrition students and research posters created by undergraduate students in disciplines ranging from athletic training to political science. The students told guests about the academic journals they consulted, the studies they designed, the variables they explored, the hours they spent in the lab, the people they polled, the data they crunched and the outcomes they got that either confirmed their hypotheses or surprised them and raised new questions.

Through their research projects, students learned about both their subject matter and themselves, discovering their interests and talents and how they can use them to benefit patients, ecosystems, their academic fields and their local communities. And even when their research didn't go as expected, they learned from mishaps, built their troubleshooting skills and gained crucial experience for their résumés and for further studies. 🙌

## HERE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE MANY RESEARCH PROJECTS STUDENTS CONDUCTED:

- » How fast do the leaves of oaks and heaths grow after wildfires and prescribed fires compared to unburned sites? Based on the average area of 1,830 leaf samples taken from various sites throughout the growing season, heaths and oaks grew at different rates at each site, which may represent different growing strategies between the two taxa.
- » An educational program will prepare hospital nurses to manage incivility through cognitive rehearsal training. Giving nurses strategies to address incivility should improve relationships among the clinical care team and reduce nurse attrition.
- » For dialysis patients with elevated phosphorus levels, replacing some animal products with plant-based foods improved phosphorus and albumin levels without interfering with other nutrients. Eight of the 10 patients achieved phosphorus levels within the recommended range.
- » A group of 21 patients with mental and/or physical disabilities were more likely to report negative experiences in health care settings, such as feeling stigmatized and neglected, compared to a control group of people without disabilities.









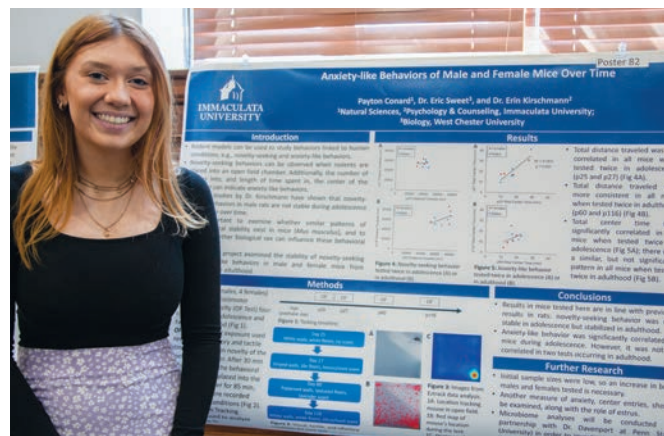
▲ **PICTURED L to R:** John Wilhelm '25, Jessica Wolfgang '25 and Elizabeth Miller '25 presented their posters on subjects such as physical activity interventions, post-fire plant growth and sustainable fashion, respectively. Wolfgang's poster won first place at IU's undergraduate Posters under the Dome event.





## STUDENT RESEARCH POSTERS BY THE NUMBERS:

|  |   |   |   |  |  |
|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| <br><b>5</b><br>POSTER PRESENTATION EVENTS | <br><b>151</b><br>POSTERS | <br><b>200+</b><br>STUDENTS | <br><b>15+</b><br>DISCIPLINES | <br><b>33+</b><br>FACULTY MENTORS AND JUDGES | <br><b>85+</b><br>SURVEYS AND TESTS ADMINISTERED |
|--|---|---|---|--|--|



▲ **PICTURED L to R:** Tyler Tillery '23 discusses weightlifting for baseball pitchers, and Payton Conard '24 shares her second-place-winning poster about anxiety-like behavior in adolescent and adult mice. ABOVE: Katherine Centeno '24 was awarded third place for her poster exploring the benefits of chunking for working memory.

## COMMENCEMENT 2023

# Travel, Serve Others and Accept Challenges

The campus of Immaculata University is always beautiful, but the month of May presents one of the most beautiful and special times of year as the culmination of everything that the students work toward: graduation day.

The 99th commencement ceremonies were held on Friday, May 12 for graduate students and concluded on Sunday, May 14 with ceremonies for traditional undergraduate students in the morning and adult undergraduate students in the afternoon. In all, 487 students graduated from Immaculata this academic year.

“Commencement is a very special day for our graduates, and we are so pleased to recognize their hard work and accomplishments,” stated Immaculata President Barbara Lettiere ’72. “We wish them well as they begin their careers or go on to further studies. It is a proud day for the graduates, their families and friends and all of us at Immaculata University.”

Eighteen students received academic medals during the ceremonies. In addition, President Lettiere bestowed honorary degrees upon each of the three commencement speakers. In her speech, Tiffany Gill ’04, MLS (ASCP) urged the students earning advanced degrees to answer the door and accept unknown challenges. In her address to the traditional-age graduates who earned associate and bachelor’s degrees, Nicole Lacoste Folks ’91, JD, MCP emphasized the importance of traveling. And country music radio host Andie Summers challenged the adult undergraduate students to serve others. 🙌



◀ **PICTURED:** Nursing faculty member Sandra Nolan, Ph.D., R.N., BC-AHN, with 2023 graduate Muminato Koroma.







## Mighty Mac Cadets

Before receiving their undergraduate degrees, Rita McDowell and Carson McNally attended a special ceremony with their family, friends and members of the Immaculata community.

McDowell and McNally are the first two Immaculata students to complete the Army Reserve Officer Training Corps program and be commissioned as U.S. Army Second Lieutenants. To mark the significance of the occasion, the two new graduates opted to hold their swearing in ceremony into the Pennsylvania Army National Guard on their commencement day. They were sworn in by George Schwartz, Ed.D., an assistant professor at Immaculata and a retired brigadier general from the Pennsylvania Army National Guard.

Schwartz addressed the cadets and their guests and noted the students' challenging journeys that included taking 18 credits in military science classes, early morning physical training sessions at West Chester University, weekends spent on field training exercises and a rigorous six-week summer camp at Fort Knox in Kentucky. "Not everyone who starts ROTC makes the cut," he stated.

▶ **SCAN HERE** to read more about these two students.



▲ **PICTURED:** Rita McDowell and Carson McNally's graduation day was especially significant as they were also sworn into the Pennsylvania National Guard and commissioned as officers beforehand.



▲ **PICTURED:** Cecelia Oswald, director of Immaculata's Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, who earned her Ed.D., with Immaculata President Barbara Lettiere.



# WHAT'S NEW AT IU?



▲ SCAN THE CODE  
to read more campus news.

## DUFFY'S CUT

The Duffy's Cut Museum at Immaculata University temporarily displayed human remains of some of the Irish railroad workers found at the Duffy's Cut excavation site. These bones, which had never been on display before, were then sent for scientific testing.



## PENN STATE/IU NURSING INFORMATICS

Through an innovative partnership with Penn State Great Valley, Immaculata University is offering an M.S.N. in Nursing Informatics. The new program combines Penn State's graduate certificate in analytics for managers with IU's M.S.N., providing two credentials that integrate nursing science, computer science and information science to manage and communicate data and wisdom in nursing practice. The new program is designed for those who earned a B.S.N. or another undergraduate degree. Immaculata's M.S.N. students who meet admissions standards can apply for free and are guaranteed acceptance into Penn State's certificate program.



## CUE & CURTAIN PERFORMANCE: "NEWSIES"

Immaculata University's Cue and Curtain Theater group presented "Newsies" as its spring production. The musical is based on the Disney film. Set in turn-of-the-century New York City, "Newsies" is the rousing tale of Jack Kelly, a charismatic newsboy and leader of a band of teenaged "newsies." Kelly Gebhardt, D.M.A., an adjunct professor of music at Immaculata, directed the production.

## FASHION SHOW FUNDRAISER

Immaculata University's Annual Fashion Show is a fundraiser to provide prom dresses for high school students with limited incomes. While showcasing a variety of beautiful dresses provided by David's Bridal and Elizabeth Johns Bridal Boutique, the show also featured African-style dresses provided by Francien Richardson, Psy.D., professor of psychology at Immaculata and a native of Liberia. Members of Immaculata's African American Cultural Society assisted in modeling these dresses.





## STUDENT LEADERSHIP AWARDS

Congratulations to the students who received awards that recognized their leadership skills, displayed both on and off campus.

**BOTTOM ROW, L to R:** Madison Palma, Bridget McDonough, Meghan McKelvie

**TOP ROW, L to R:** Ellie Loose, Payton Conard, Theresa Arata, Nick Livolsi



## BUSINESS AND APPLIED TECH LAB DEDICATION

Two new student labs opened this past academic year. The Applied Technology Lab is designed to support cybersecurity, information systems and data analytics majors and includes software such as Python, VMware (for other operating systems, including various versions of Linux), Postgres and SQLite databases, Wireshark (for network analysis), and standard office software. The Business Lab has an active stock ticker running across the wall that helps simulate a financial space and sets the real-world business environment. Monitors stream financial news and there is business-specific software, including FactSet, a financial information and research resource.

## NURSING STUDENT FOOD DRIVE

Senior nursing students in the community nursing course conducted a food drive during the spring semester to help the Food Bank of Chester County. The drive yielded 424 pounds of food and \$3,248.



## UNIFIED SPORTS/SPECIAL OLYMPICS EVENT

Immaculata's Department of Health, Nutrition and Exercise Sciences partnered with the Special Olympics of Chester County to begin a Unified Sports program on campus. Special Olympics Unified Sports® creates an opportunity for people without intellectual disabilities to join in the sports experience by playing on a team with athletes with intellectual disabilities. Immaculata kicked off the program with Special Olympics' athletes and Immaculata student-volunteers joining together to learn basketball fundamentals. The campus community will have future opportunities to be involved in Unified Sports.



# Staying Connected

IMMACULATA UNIVERSITY REUNION 2023



Class of 1998

This year's Reunion, held April 29, 2023, marked special celebrations for class years ending in "3" and "8."

The class of 1973 became Golden Macs and had 45 classmates return to campus for the festivities. Anticipated inclement weather caused the last-minute movement of most events from the Celebration Tent to the Great Hall, which served as the perfect venue on a rainy day. Almost 170 alumni from class years 1961 through 2019 were on hand to reminisce and rekindle friendships.

The Alumni Association Board of Governors assisted with developing new activities, which included an afternoon IU trivia game and a cornhole tournament in the evening. Congratulations to trivia winners Lori De Rea Kolb '05, '09 M.A. and Jacqueline Vasinda '06. The evening cornhole tournament was quite competitive and fun to watch. Congratulations to champions Sister Rose Mulligan, IHM '89 and Amy Pontzer Jones '90, and second place team Lori De Rea Kolb '05, '09 M.A. and Daniel Burns '14.

Those who joined us experienced a full day and all seemed to have a great time. Save the date for next year's Reunion, which will be held April 27, 2024, when we will honor classes ending in "4" and "9." 📅



Reunion Brunch



Class of 1968





Class of 1988



Alumni Cornhole Tournament



Reunion Brunch



Reunion Brunch



Father Kyle Adamczyk '12 and Barbara Lettiere '72



Class of 1963



Reunion Brunch



50th Anniversary Dinner



Class of 1983



Class of 1973



# NIA IMANI BAILEY:

## Treating and Advocating for Young Women with Breast Cancer

By Lydia Szyjka '09 M.A.

In previous decades, if you were diagnosed with breast cancer, it was often a death sentence, says Immaculata University graduate Nia Imani Bailey '14, DPA, M.A.Ed., RT(T). According to WebMD, the overall five-year relative survival rate for breast cancer was 90% in 2022. This means 90 out of 100 women are alive five years after being diagnosed. During the 1950s, the five-year survival rate was only 60%. Although great progress has been made, approximately 43,700 women still die from the disease every year—and 1,000 of them are younger than 40.

► **PICTURED:** Nia Imani Bailey with her friend Jaclynn Smith.







► **PICTURED:** Nia Imani Bailey interviews Lynne Mitchell, a breast cancer survivor in her 40s, who is featured in the documentary.



◀ **SCAN THE CODE**  
to watch an overview of  
"A Letter to My Sisters"  
from Nia Imani Bailey.

Bailey wrote and directed a film for this younger population, "A Letter To My Sisters: A Breast Cancer Documentary For Young Women."

As a radiation therapist at Christiana Care for eight years, Bailey has witnessed the devastating effects of breast cancer in younger women. The youngest female patient that she treated was 24 years old. Bailey explains that this patient had metastatic breast cancer that spread to her brain and lungs. She died about a month after being diagnosed.

There would be others who did not survive, including a 33-year-old patient, Jaclynn Smith, who became a close friend of Bailey's. Smith was diagnosed with an advanced form of breast cancer that also spread to her brain.

"I don't think I realized that she was going to pass away," Bailey admits. "But it wasn't until she died that I said I need to create something that educates women." As a result, she started working on her documentary.

"A Letter To My Sisters: A Breast Cancer Documentary For Young Women" is a 50-minute testament to breast cancer awareness. It chronicles the journey of three young, female patients of various ethnicities and predispositions for breast cancer whom Bailey treated. These three survivors are in their 20s, 30s and 40s, much younger than the average age of a breast cancer patient (62).

Bailey explained that "young" means younger than the recommended mammogram age of 40, when most health insurance plans typically cover this life-saving procedure. However, Bailey cautions women not to wait for a mammogram if they notice something suspicious.

"That's the whole point, knowing your body," Bailey said. "The sooner that you catch it, the better." She also wants women to advocate for themselves when it comes to their health. She has heard many stories of women who noticed or felt a lump, but their medical provider shrugged it off or said it was just a cyst or said the patient was too young to have breast cancer. "Say to the doctor, 'Hey, I know my body. I'm with me every day,'" she advised.

Even though Bailey encourages women to speak up for themselves, she realizes that confidence is something that many women need to work on. When she came to Immaculata from a small high school, she appreciated the opportunities to build relationships with her professors, which made it easier to speak up in class or take a differing opinion on a topic. Being able to engage in her classes helped build self-confidence that spread to other aspects of her life. It is this confidence that women need to develop when advocating for their health and treatment plan.

Bailey knew she wanted a career in medicine but wasn't interested in nursing. Once she enrolled in Immaculata's allied health program with a concentration in radiologic science, she instantly knew she made the right decision. The program allows students to attend Immaculata for three years while completing the allied health curriculum. Then, in the students' senior year, they attend one of Immaculata's partner institutions for the clinical training they need to complete their bachelor's degree. In Bailey's case, she matriculated to Thomas Jefferson University to study radiation therapy. Going from a small Catholic university to a much larger institution, Bailey felt prepared and confident. She then continued her education, earning a Master

of Education from La Salle University and a doctorate in public administration from West Chester University.

"In college, you're becoming the adult. You're away from your parents and you're finding your way, and I think Immaculata definitely helps put you on the right path to where you want to be."

For Bailey, finding the right path includes continuing to tell the stories of Janique, Brenda and Lynne and the countless others who are diagnosed with breast cancer every year. After premiering the documentary in October 2022, Bailey has screened the film at locations in Delaware and Philadelphia. "A Letter To My Sisters: A Breast Cancer Documentary For Young Women" has already accomplished its goal of reaching young women. Now, Bailey wants officials to see her documentary so that they can help revise policies.

One way to help is to change the recommended mammogram age, since insurance companies strictly adhere to that guideline. Currently, if a woman in her 30s wants a mammogram, she has to "jump through hoops" to get it approved through her health insurance or pay for it out-of-pocket. "I would hope that when officials see the documentary, they say, 'Hum, 40? ... maybe 40 shouldn't be the recommended age. Maybe it should be 30, or maybe we don't even need a recommendation,'" she muses.

Even if one person is helped by the film, it's all worth the effort. 🏠

# The 2023 Immaculata University ALUMNI AWARDS



**MELANIE DUDLEY '14**  
*Scientia Floret Virtute Award*

Melanie Dudley earned a Bachelor of Arts in History from Immaculata. She then attended Villanova University where she received a Master of Arts in History and a certificate in nonprofit management in 2016.

For the past three years, she has served as the assistant director/program manager of the Eleanor H. McCullen Center for Law, Religion and Public Policy at Villanova University. During her time at Villanova as a student and employee, Dudley remains active in and supportive of her faith. She co-founded the Catholic Student Association (CSA), a student organization dedicated to providing fellowship and formation opportunities for Catholic students. In addition, she was a member of several prayer groups on campus and continues to serve routinely as a lector at daily Mass on campus. For her service and contributions to the graduate student community, Dudley received the Graduate Studies Service Award.

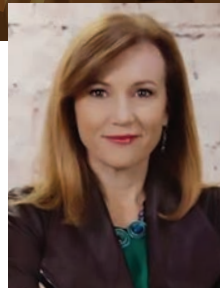
Beyond Villanova, she participates in numerous Catholic young adult groups throughout the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and helped to launch the Philadelphia chapter of Young Catholic Professionals (YCP), a national organization dedicated to inspiring young Catholics in their 20s and 30s to integrate their faith into their daily work. She was also appointed to a new Archdiocesan advisory committee for young adults.

As a native of Wilmington, Delaware, Dudley is an active parishioner of Saint Mary Magdalen and is a member of the St. Thomas More Society of the Catholic Diocese of Wilmington, an organization dedicated to honoring St. Thomas More as a model of virtue and ethical leadership for those working in the legal profession.

Dudley noted that her service in young adult ministry correlates to Immaculata's core values of faith, community, knowledge, virtue and service. To show her appreciation, she is a financial contributor to her alma mater.

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*The Scientia Floret Virtute Award recognizes recent alumni who have graduated within the last 10 years and who have made outstanding contributions to their profession, community or service to Immaculata University while upholding the mission and values of Immaculata University.*



**THERESA PAYTON '89**  
*Mother M. Camilla Maloney Award*

As the first female to serve as White House chief information officer, Theresa Major Payton '89 is a visionary, industry disruptor and a veteran cybercrime fighter who founded Fortalice Solutions. As president

and CEO, she has led Fortalice to become a leading national security company. Cybercrime Magazine listed it among the Global 500 Best Cybersecurity Companies.

In addition, Payton advises Fortune 500 boards, CEOs, and technology executives on securing digital transformations and combating emerging cyber threats. During her career, she has been honored with the FBI Director's Award, Cyber Security Experts' 100 Most Influential People in Cyber Security, and Cybersecurity Crusader of the Year.

As a leading expert, Payton starred in a reality TV show, "Hunted," and is a sought-after media commentator, with appearances on the "Today" show, "Good Morning America," "CBS News," CNN, NBC News, Fox News, and the BBC. As a prolific author, she helps countless organizations and individuals understand the complexities of digital crimes and how to stay safe in a rapidly changing digital landscape with her books "Manipulated: Inside the Cyberwar to Hijack Elections and Distort the Truth" and "Privacy in the Age of Big Data."

Payton graduated from Immaculata University with a double major in economics and business administration with a certificate in computers. She credits Immaculata for reinforcing everything she needed to become successful: practice your faith, be ethical, follow through on promises and don't let others speak for you or over you. To show her dedication to her alma mater, Payton served on the Board of Trustees, consults on cybersecurity issues facing the University, and contributes financially. This past year, she initiated a partnership with Immaculata and Fortalice to offer classes for cybersecurity majors.

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*The Mother M. Camilla Maloney Award is presented to those who demonstrate leadership and vision to sustain the future of Immaculata through service—including volunteerism, counsel and philanthropic support—to carry on the mission and vision of Mother Camilla, foundress of Immaculata University.*





**KATHLEEN MULHERN CLARK '70\***  
*Alumni Medal*

Kathleen Clark, who died in 2022, spent 48 years at Immaculata both as a student and a teacher, representing almost three-quarters of her life. She loved everything about her schooling, teaching and the

amazing friendships that lasted a lifetime. Although she retired in 2017, she frequented campus for special events and participated in the University's centennial celebration in 2021, which coincided with her 50-year reunion celebration.

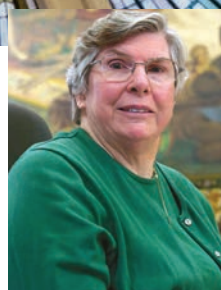
With a deep love and devotion to Immaculata, Clark volunteered for the Alumni Association, including serving on the Board of Governors and as a class representative and reunion organizer from 1970 to 2000. She was also a member of the Alumnae Recruitment Committee and volunteered for the annual telethon.

French was always Clark's passion. She graduated from Immaculata with a Bachelor of Arts in French and earned her master's degree in French from Villanova University.

As a member of Immaculata's faculty, Clark taught French and served as the department chair from 1997 to 2008. In this role, she hired new employees, scheduled classes, coordinated study abroad opportunities for French students and moderated the student Modern Foreign Language Association and Pi Delta Phi, the National French Honor Society. In addition, Clark also held numerous official campus responsibilities, including being a member of the viability study for Immaculata's move from being a women's college to a co-ed institution. Outside of Immaculata, Clark was an expert on French and Francophone studies and was a member of several professional associations. Throughout her career, she received several awards and honors.

Clark raised her family in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania, where they were members of St. Ann's Parish.

*The Alumni Medal honors alumni and is presented in recognition of outstanding volunteer service and support to Immaculata University.*



**PATRICIA MCADAMS '65, Ph.D.\***  
*Amethyst Award*

Throughout her life, Patricia McAdams, who died in 2022, exhibited a Christ-centered lifestyle. When faced with challenges in her life, she would often turn to prayer, and her determination showed. She never complained about nor

questioned the 2008 car accident in which she lost both of her legs.

McAdams entered the congregation of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM) in 1960 and said her final vows in 1963. She graduated from Immaculata University with a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics in 1965. Two years later, she earned a master's degree in mathematics from the University of Notre Dame. She returned to Pennsylvania to teach math at Immaculata before being one of only three women to graduate from the doctoral program in computer engineering at the University of Missouri in 1977. During her career, she taught at Catholic high schools throughout the region and utilized her technology skills to help computerize the Diocese of Harrisburg.

Using this experience, she returned to Notre Dame to teach computer science. McAdams eventually oversaw information technology for the administration offices at Notre Dame. In her spare time, McAdams' love of women's basketball provided an outlet for all her energy as she became the head of fan engagement for the women's basketball team at Notre Dame.

McAdams spent over 30 years as an IHM Sister before leaving the order. She continued to support the IHM Sisters and former colleagues. Jo Anne McAdams '84, '87 M.A., '96 Ed.D., Patricia McAdams' sister-in-law, wrote, "During her life, both as a religious Sister and as a lay person, Patricia continued to live the values she learned as a child, and she demonstrated the vows that she had professed in her everyday life."

*PHOTO CREDIT: Notre Dame Athletics*

*The Amethyst Award honors alumni in recognition of their outstanding contribution to or achievement in a church, community or professional activity.*



For information on Awards Reception tickets or sponsorships, visit [immaculata.edu/awards](https://www.immaculata.edu/awards).

*\*Awarded Posthumously*





▲ PICTURED L to R: George Schwartz '17 Ed.D., Justin Cusick '12 and Zena Tracey '12, '15 M.A.

# CLASS NOTES



▲ PICTURED: Alumni gathering at the VIP Maxis event.

**Class Notes** are edited for space, clarity and style. Please keep your entry about personal and professional accomplishments to 50 words or fewer. If submitting a photo via email, it must be at least 300 dpi for print quality. Photos may be published as space and quality permit. The magazine may also print alumni news gathered through a media monitoring company.

Submit a Class Note:  
[immaculata.edu/alumni-update](http://immaculata.edu/alumni-update)

## 1962

**Clare Kirwan Briody** shares, “For the last two years, many in the Class of ’62 have joined a Zoom call with their classmates. The call happens every four months. If interested in joining us, please send your cell number and email address to [clarebriody@gmail.com](mailto:clarebriody@gmail.com) or [nhshp@me.com](mailto:nhshp@me.com). Thanks!”

## 1963

**Mary Anne Gearing** shared, “We had a great time in our 60th Reunion! **Teenie O’Connell Grady, Yvonne Falcon Kuemmerle, Lorraine Ferrari Tracy, Anne Marie M. Guicheteau, Anita Franzini Mazzone, Marie Santoro Lisi, Peggy** and **Tom Hogan** all attended. I’ll send out a memo soon. Meanwhile thank you for your support. You don’t have to wait until our 65th year to find out all the good things happening at IU. Visit while you’re in the area.”

**Kathleen Cox Richardson** has been working as a writer and editor for Long Hauler Publishing and has also published two books as well as short pieces for magazines and anthologies.

## 1967

Please send IU your news. There is a link to submit news in every Highlights from the Hill email and in the Alumni section of the University website. Hope you are all enjoying your summers and happy 78th birthday to each of you. Please celebrate as each birthday becomes more special.

Seven of us attended Reunion Day on April 29th. Despite the weather, we had our usual fun time. As always, IU provided us with good food, drink and ambiance. *Please consider attending an upcoming 2023 event: Carol Night is December 1, and the Christmas Tea is December 6.* This is a lovely afternoon, and we always have a good-sized group. We hope to see you there.

Until we are together again, let’s hang on to what we got! Love, The Quartet

**Mary Anne Burns Duffy**

[mbd917@comcast.net](mailto:mbd917@comcast.net)

**Rita Bensinger Hartleroad**

[harleroad@hotmail.com](mailto:harleroad@hotmail.com)

**Kathy Cooper Kulesza**

[kuleszak@comcast.net](mailto:kuleszak@comcast.net)

**Robie Wright Verostick**

[robieverostick@hotmail.com](mailto:robieverostick@hotmail.com)



# Thank you!

The Immaculata University community extends its sincere gratitude to the generous donors who contributed to The Immaculata Fund during Fiscal Year 2023 (gifts received between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023.)

*You make a difference in students' lives!*

## 1973

Special thanks to outgoing Alumni Association Board of Governors Immediate Past President **Eileen Monahan Chopnick** for her service.

**Margie O'Donnell Donohue** shares, "I would like to thank everyone who came to our 50th Reunion! We had a great turnout (45) to celebrate and rekindle memories. It was a lovely and memorable day! Special thanks to all who assisted me (I was in a wheelchair) and made my day so special!"

**Rosemarie Marcaccio Joseph** shares, "We have five grandchildren. We visited Portugal, Spain and France last summer to visit sacred sites."

## 1974

Congratulations to **Margaret Gill** for being re-elected to the Alumni Association Board of Governors, serving the 2023–2026 term.

**Kathleen James** (pictured below) recently completed serving a six-year term on the board of directors of the State Bank of India—California and was feted in India by the parent bank.



▼ **PICTURED L to R:** Janet Horn Marzullo, Roseanne Tramo Gale, Eileen Kelly Fabry, Joan Kane McCarthy, Susan Cericola Murphy and Marie Bonaccorsi Cunningham.



## 1975

**Roseanne Tramo Gale** shares that a group of '75 Immaculata girls traveled to Charleston, SC in April to celebrate their 70th birthdays. Happy birthday to **Janet Horn Marzullo, Roseanne Tramo Gale, Eileen Kelly Fabry, Joan Kane McCarthy, Susan Cericola Murphy** and **Marie Bonaccorsi Cunningham**.

## 1976

**Betsy Richards** shares, "Yay, I'm retired and able to pay attention to things I love to do, to fight health battles and help others by sharing and listening. Would love to meet with my old IU classmates for lunch or dinner to rekindle our friendships! It's been too long."



▲ **PICTURED:** Alumni gathering On the Road in Rehoboth Beach, DE.

## 1977

University Press of Kentucky plans to publish **Kathleen Spaltro's** book on Lionel Barrymore. The first biography devoted only to him, "Lionel Barrymore: Character and Endurance in Hollywood's Golden Age" will be published in fall 2024.

## 1979

**Jeannie Paslawsky** shares, "In October 2022, I was the recipient of part of a former Marine's liver (he was a living donor). He saved my life! Please thank God with me and pray for him and his family for the ages. This was truly THE GREATEST GIFT I have had. God is never late."

## 1982

**Alice O'Neill McLaughlin** and **Moya Kaporch Dittmeier '81** visited the sacred garden of the House of Mercy in Dublin, Ireland.



▲ **PICTURED:** Alice O'Neill McLaughlin '82 and Moya Kaporch Dittmeier '81.



## CLASS NOTES



▲ PICTURED: Alumni gathering On the Road in Lancaster, PA.

### 1983

Congratulations to **Regina Bazela Moroski** for being elected to the Alumni Association Board of Governors, serving the 2023–2026 term.

**Julianne Kleponis Yarwood** shares that she and other members of the Class of 1983 celebrated their 40th Reunion on April 29, 2023. In attendance were **Regina Bazela Moroski, Maria Cicippio Smeykal, Karen DeLucia Matweychuk, Patty Duffy Juliano, Roseanne Hooten White, Marty Orman Moran** and **Tara Quinn**. Joining them was Julianne's sister-in-law, **Gerri Bones Kleponis '00, '17 M.S.N.**

### 1985

Congratulations to **Denise Janssen Davidson** for being elected to the Alumni Association Board of Governors, serving the 2023–2026 term.

### 1988

**Diana Ciesielko Cutler** is certified as a personal trainer, older adult fitness instructor and a group fitness instructor through W.I.T.S. (World Instructor Training Schools). She just finished running a six-week group for her church: “Fabulous 40 & up - Caring for God's gift...your body.”

### 1990

Congratulations to **Maureen Heffernan Clark** for being elected to the Alumni Association Board of Governors, serving the 2023–2026 term.

Special thanks to outgoing Alumni Association Board of Governors delegate **Amy Pontzer Jones** for her service.

### 1996

**Bridget Haines-Frank** received her doctorate in education after successfully defending her dissertation in December. The degree was awarded in January 2023 by Trident University International. Bridget will attend commencement later this year in Long Beach, CA.



## BIRTHS

**Sara Pletcher Bluhm '08**, daughter **Johanna Shae** born January 2023.

**Katie Shurer Poole '12** and **Matt Poole '11**, son **Michael Alphonsus** born August 2022.

**Melanie Suarez-Sosa '11**, daughter **Jasmine Elena** born September 2022.

**Jon McCullough, III '12**, son **Jonathan Wesley** born June 2022.

▲ PICTURED: Sara Pletcher Bluhm's daughter **Johanna Shae**.

### 2005

**Nancy Groff** recently published a book, “Watt & Shand: East, West, Hame's Best,” a history of the Watt & Shand department store in Lancaster, PA, which was founded by her great-grandfather.

**Lorraine Sult** shares, “In January 2022, I relocated to Honolulu, Hawaii after accepting the position of Deputy Chief of the Civil Law Branch and Lead Labor and Employment Law Attorney for the 25th Infantry Division and U.S. Army Garrison–Hawaii.”

Congratulations to **Lorraine Sult** for being elected to the Alumni Association Board of Governors, serving the 2023–2026 term.



▲ PICTURED: Alumni gathering On the Road in Naples, FL.

### 2006

Congratulations to **Jacqueline Vasinda** for being elected to the Alumni Association Board of Governors, serving the 2023–2026 term.

### 2008

**Sara Wilson Meyer** married her long-time partner **Joseph Meyer, Esq.** in January 2022 at the Historic First & Central Church in Wilmington, Delaware, with a reception at the Hotel DuPont. **Laura Kennedy '09** and **Cate Holland Blystone '09** were members of the bridal party. Sara and Joe enjoyed a beautiful Hawaiian honeymoon and are looking forward to welcoming their first child this November 2023!

**Melissa Cifaloglio Micheletti** shares, “I am currently in my 15th year teaching family and consumer sciences at Woodstown High School. Experienced an assistant principal interim position in 2021. Enjoying life with husband, Mike, and children, Michael (6 years old) and Grace Marita (4 years old).”

### 2013

**Sarah Falkson** published “Waggles Learns About Social Changes: Guiding Children in a Post-Pandemic World,” a book to help children process changes after COVID and encourage respect and kindness.



## MARRIAGES

**Sara Wilson '08** married **Joseph Meyer** in January 2022

**Keri Ketchmark '16** married **William Carr, III '16** in October 2022

▲ PICTURED: **Keri Ketchmark '16** and **William Carr, III '16**



## NANCY BURKE '68, '00 Ed.D.

# From Lab to Classroom to Alumni Board

By Lydia Szyjka '09 M.A.



When Nancy Girvin Burke '68, '00 Ed.D. graduated from Immaculata University as an undergraduate biology major with a minor in chemistry, she didn't realize that her career would shift away from the lab and toward education. Trained as a biomedical technologist, she retired three years ago having taught or administered at every level from prekindergarten to college, including Immaculata and several other higher education institutions.

Studying biology/chemistry, Burke seemingly spent all her time in the science lab. After encouragement from her professor Sister Celine, Burke applied to graduate school and was accepted into and enrolled in the microbiology program at St. Joseph's College in Connecticut. As a grad student she served as a teaching assistant to the college's science personnel, and after accumulating credits toward a Master of Science in Biology, she returned home to central Pennsylvania to work in a lab at Holy Spirit Hospital in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania.

While at Holy Spirit Hospital, Burke met her husband, who also worked in the lab, and completed her master's degree in biology from Shippensburg University with concentrations in microbiology and human physiology. After the couple started a family, it became difficult for them to work at the same lab with the same hours, so she decided to leave Holy Spirit after seven years and use her graduate teaching experience to teach science classes.

Burke began her professional education career at Central Penn College, teaching courses in laboratory technology, medical terminology,

anatomy and physiology. She eventually moved into an administrative position at the college. After teaching at Central Penn for 16 years, Burke was contacted by the principal of Bishop McDevitt High School in Harrisburg and asked if she wanted to launch and teach a high school anatomy class. She initially turned down the offer, thinking she did not have the skills to teach high school students. The next year, they called her again.

"Just give us two years," Burke remembered the principal telling her. "Well, two years turned into 10."

After her career shift toward education, she felt the need to earn her doctorate and returned to Immaculata to pursue her Ed.D. in Educational Leadership. Earning her doctorate degree in 2000, Burke took a position as assistant principal/director of studies at Trinity High School in Camp Hill. After spending five years in that position, she served as principal for the next five years.

"Then I tried to retire," she stated. Two years after retiring, Burke's husband died. It was during this time that her parish priest at St. Catherine Laboure asked if she would fill in as principal at the elementary school until he could find a permanent replacement. Finding that she was not really ready to retire, she accepted the position.

"I went from college to high school to elementary school; I was working my way down the ladder," she said with a laugh.

She admitted that she wasn't used to working with younger children. "They're huggers, but they were so adorable," she said. She chuckled at the things that the students said to her. She remembered when one boy, who was brought to the principal's office for a minor infraction, put his hand to his forehead and told her, "I'm dead to my friends." After mainly teaching college and high school students, Burke enjoyed her experience with the elementary school students.

When she tried to retire again, the superintendent of Catholic schools for the Diocese of Harrisburg called, asking if she could come back to Bishop McDevitt High School for six months. She returned as administrator pro tempore. Finally, in 2020, Burke permanently retired.

However, just because she's retired doesn't mean that she is not busy. With her extra free time, she decided to volunteer on the Immaculata Alumni Association's Board of Governors. This year, she helped plan the annual reunion event while celebrating her 55th class reunion. In July, she takes over as the chair of the Board of Governors. Her goals as chair include working with the campus community to engage current alumni in activities and events, recruiting younger alumni and increasing mentorship programs.

Burke is grateful for the opportunity to give back to Immaculata. Reflecting on the degrees that she earned from the University, she realizes that the faculty provided her with an education that allowed her to launch two different but very successful careers. 🏡



# ALUMNI STANDOUT



PHOTO CREDIT: Pageant Images

Congratulations to **Jasmine Daniels '18**, who was named Miss Pennsylvania USA 2023. She will compete in the Miss USA pageant at the Grand Sierra Resort in Reno, Nevada in late 2023. Daniels graduated from Immaculata with a degree in fashion merchandising and a minor in marketing.



▲ PICTURED: Faculty Emeriti Luncheon

*Join us for*  
**REUNION**  
**2024**

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**APRIL 27, 2024**

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This is a big year for all classes ending in “4” or “9.”

The Class of **1974** will become Golden Macs

The Class of **1999** will become Silver Macs

*ALL alumni are invited to join in the fun of this annual celebration!*

For More Information:  
[bit.ly/iuevents](https://bit.ly/iuevents)

## 2014

Special thanks to outgoing Alumni Association Board of Governors delegate **Daniel Burns** for his service.

## 2017

**George Schwartz** shares, “**Zena Tracey '12, '15 M.A.** and I were representing Immaculata at the annual New Jersey Emergency Preparedness Association Conference in Atlantic City and met up with IU trustee, **Justin Cusick '12**, who was also exhibiting at the conference.”

Special thanks to **Michael Sturdivant, Jr.** for participating in the spring 2023 Accepted Students Day Alumni Panel.

## 2018

Congratulations to **Wendy Dunlap Bratina, Ed.D.** for being elected to the Alumni Association Board of Governors, serving the 2023–2026 term.

Congratulations to **Jasmine Daniels** on being named Miss Pennsylvania USA for 2023.

Special thanks to **Mary Kate Walsh** for participating in the spring 2023 Accepted Students Day Alumni Panel.

**Joe Capuano and Nicole Catania '19** share, “We got engaged on March 30, 2022, in beautiful Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, and our wedding is planned in 2024!”

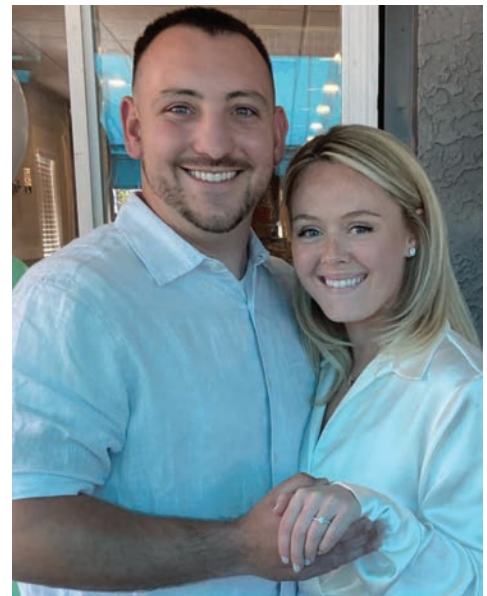
## 2019

Congratulations to **Daniel Ericsson** for being the 2022 recipient of the David P. Farrell Core Values Award from his employer, Veritas Medical Solutions. The award is presented to an employee who lives out the company’s core values of vision, excellence, respect, integrity, teamwork, achieve and serve.

## 2022

**Andrew Ericsson** continues acting, most recently performing as Hugo in “Bye, Bye, Birdie” at the Laymen Playmen Theatre in Hatfield, PA.

Special thanks to **Grace Simmons** for participating in the spring 2023 Accepted Students Day Alumni Panel.



▲ PICTURED: Nicole Catania '19 & Joe Capuano '18

**i** For information on the Alumni Association, visit [immaculata.edu/alumni](https://immaculata.edu/alumni).



## FAMILY MEMBERS IN MEMORIAM

Thomas P. Fidance, husband of **Marie Salvatore Fidance '52**

**Doris Gavron Evanovich '58**, sister of **Laverne Gavron Bauer '59**

Timothy Flanagan, husband of **Carol Widua Flanagan '63**

Elizabeth Teeple, daughter of **Kathryn Peterson Teeple '68**

**Ethel "Missy" Norcini '71**, sister of **Marilyn Norcini '73** and **Marcia Grace Norcini '77**

Marlene Anthony, mother of **Mary Ann Anthony Kelly '81** and **Elizabeth Anthony Schostak '89**

Patricia Schmitt, mother of **Kerry Schmitt Scott '84**

Gordon Wilson Smith, father-in-law of **Kathleen Freney Smith '90**

Brian Steele, husband of **Colleen Cyzewski Steele '94**

Dorothy Cutshaw, mother of **Lois Ianovalle '99**

## ALUMNI IN MEMORIAM

Eva Adams Atkinson '46

Alice P. Boyle '49

Winifred McGonigal Green '50

Gertrude Donohue Magowan '51

Therese Sloat O'Connor '51

Joan Jardel McManus '52

Jeanne Burke Woody '54

Marianne Opps Essl '55

Patricia Anne Dougherty Bodo '58

Doris Gavron Evanovich '58

Mary Eileen Farrell McHugh '58

Frances Mahoney Bannister '59

Maureen Theresa Donohue '60

Carol Ann Olson McGill '60

Mary Matthews Ferrier '61

Joan Griffin Kadison '64

Carolyn Quigley Rathmann '64

Mary Elizabeth Mahoney '65

Margo Malarik Werner '65

Joan Archangelo Yue '68

Ethel "Missy" Norcini '71

Christine Ann Orrson '71

Donna M. Hare '72

Monica Marusinski '74

Maria Pistilli '74

Jane Gleason Wittmer '74

Catherine "Kathleen" Mondri '75

Karen Kelley Thomas '78

Dorothy Misetich '83

Theresa Loschiavo Price '84

Elizabeth Savill '89

Linda Littman Pruill '91

Karen Marie Kochan '96

Robert Shaw '00 Psy.D.

Andrea Graves '01

Barbara Polinsky '03

Maria Bevivino Bloodgood '08

Maureen Emig '08

Cheryl Ann Martell '18 M.S.N.



### ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER

Our electronic newsletter, Highlights from the Hill, keeps you up to date on alumni events & campus happenings. If you would like to receive the newsletter, please complete this online form: [immaculata.edu/alumni-update](https://www.immaculata.edu/alumni-update)

### SOCIAL MEDIA

Our social media channels provide timely updates on alumni information, activities, and events, contests, campus happenings and more. Interact with your friends and fellow alums by following Alumni Relations on social media.

@ImmaculataUniversityAlumni

@IU\_Alumni

### OFFICE OF CAREER & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We are delighted to serve all our alumni in their career needs. Whether it be re-entry into the workforce or career transitioning, we can help with resume writing and cover letters. Would you like to fill a position or find an intern? Consider an Immaculata student.

**SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT:**  
484-323-3506  
[careerdevelopment@immaculata.edu](mailto:careerdevelopment@immaculata.edu)

**OFFICE OF ALUMNI RELATIONS**  
[alumnidept@immaculata.edu](mailto:alumnidept@immaculata.edu)  
610-647-4400, x3135  
[immaculata.edu/alumni](https://www.immaculata.edu/alumni)



▲ PICTURED: Alumni gathering at the Everybody's Irish event in March.

## 2023 ALUMNI EVENTS

*Make plans to join us for these upcoming 2023 events:*

|                |   |                |
|----------------|---|----------------|
| <b>JUL 25</b>  | Mac Chat for Mountain Time Zone Alumni                              | Virtual        |
| <b>JUL 29</b>  | Immaculata Down the Shore   | Avalon, NJ     |
| <b>AUG 3</b>   | Mac Chat for Ohio River Valley & Michigan Alumni                    | Virtual        |
| <b>SEPT 19</b> | Natural Sciences, Applied Technology & Mathematics Alumni Reception | Immaculata, PA |
| <b>SEPT 26</b> | Nursing Alumni Reception  | Immaculata, PA |
| <b>OCT 6</b>   | The Immaculata University Awards Reception                          | Immaculata, PA |
| <b>OCT 17</b>  | The 47th Annual Immaculata University Golf Invitational             | Malvern, PA    |
| <b>NOV 9</b>   | The Immaculata University Charter Day of Giving & Online Auction    |                |
| <b>NOV 12</b>  | Mass of Remembrance   | Immaculata, PA |
| <b>NOV 29</b>  | Legacy Alumni Reception   | Immaculata, PA |
| <b>NOV 30</b>  | Education Alumni Reception  | Immaculata, PA |
| <b>DEC 1</b>   | 102nd Celebration of Carol Night                                    | Immaculata, PA |
| <b>DEC 5</b>   | The College of Graduate Studies 40th Anniversary Reception          | Immaculata, PA |
| <b>DEC 6</b>   | Golden Macs Christmas Tea   | Immaculata, PA |

Visit [immaculata.edu/alumni](https://www.immaculata.edu/alumni) for event details, which are posted as they become available, or call 484-323-3944. All dates are subject to change.



▲ PICTURED: Alumni Board of Governors Past Presidents Tea





**OCTOBER 6, 2023**  
*The Immaculata University*  
**AWARDS RECEPTION**  
 — & SILENT AUCTION —  
*The Great Hall, Immaculata University*

For information on Awards Reception tickets or sponsorships, visit [immaculata.edu/awards](http://immaculata.edu/awards).



**The 47th Annual Immaculata University Golf Invitational**  
**OCTOBER 17, 2023**  
*Applebrook Golf Club, Malvern, PA*

Visit [immaculata.edu/golf](http://immaculata.edu/golf) for ticket and sponsorship information.

**Sponsorship Opportunities are available for The Immaculata University Awards Reception and The 47th Annual Immaculata University Golf Invitational.** Please contact Kathy Freney Smith '90 at [kfreneysmith@immaculata.edu](mailto:kfreneysmith@immaculata.edu) or 610-647-4400 x3207.



**ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AWARDS NOMINATIONS 2024 ALUMNI AWARDS**

All alumni are invited to submit a nomination for someone deserving of these prestigious awards. Read more about the awards and submit your nomination today by visiting: [bit.ly/iuawardnominations](https://bit.ly/iuawardnominations)

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**MAGAZINE.IMMACULATA.EDU**



IMMACULATA UNIVERSITY  
**LANTERNS of LOVE**

*An expression of honor, love and tradition...*

This holiday season you can honor, remember or acknowledge a loved one, classmate, alum, faculty member or an entire class with a "Lantern of Love" that will be displayed outdoors on Immaculata's campus from November 27 into the first week of January 2024.

Each lantern will be adorned with a tag listing the donor and honoree.

Lanterns of Love are available for \$100 each. Proceeds support Immaculata students.

**ORDERS MUST BE RECEIVED BY NOVEMBER 13, 2023.**



Visit [bit.ly/iulanterns](https://bit.ly/iulanterns) for additional details and to order your 2023 Lantern of Love.

For more information, contact **Kathy Freney Smith '90**, Assistant Director of The Immaculata Fund and Grants, at [kfreneysmith@immaculata.edu](mailto:kfreneysmith@immaculata.edu) or 610-647-4400 x3207

## LORI DE REA KOLB '05, '09 M.A.

## Educational Access Leads to Music Therapy Access

By Allison Duncan



PHOTO CREDIT: KRISTEN HOPE PHOTOGRAPHY

Lori De Rea Kolb '05, '09 M.A. calls music her “co-therapist,” an additional tool that works alongside her to help clients reduce stress, process painful emotions, practice social skills or ground themselves in the present. She uses a variety of creative therapeutic activities in her work with groups and individuals as a licensed counselor and music therapist.

Six years ago, De Rea Kolb shifted from in-person work to telemental health, primarily to be more available to her two sons. (She likes to joke, “I was doing Zoom before it was cool!”) Her remote work also provides other benefits, such as allowing her to volunteer as president of Immaculata’s Alumni Association and making her services more accessible to clients with barriers, such as a lack of transportation or living in a rural area with few local clinicians.

De Rea Kolb has enjoyed watching her clients grow and thrive and references a group of teenage girls from different socioeconomic groups and geographic areas who meet for online music therapy sessions focused on developing social skills. She often invites the group to share songs related to themes such as strength, resilience, happiness, friendship or love. During the sessions, the group listens to the songs on YouTube together and then discusses why they chose each song.

“It’s such a great opportunity for people to use music to communicate something about themselves and connect with people in a way that feels safe,” De Rea Kolb noted. The girls learn more about each other and practice listening to and accepting people who are different from them. De Rea Kolb helps shape the interactions in the group by affirming the positive responses she sees from each member. She also enjoys learning about new music from her teenage clients, letting them take on the role

of the expert. “That’s so powerful and important in therapeutic relationships,” she said.

In her work with individual clients, De Rea Kolb often asks about their preferred genre of music so that she can use that in relaxation exercises. “Somebody might find heavy metal rock music very cathartic!” she said. “It’s never a one-size-fits-all.”

De Rea Kolb leads clients in progressive muscle relaxation or guided imagery and music, prompting them to imagine being in nature and ground themselves in the scene through their senses. She helps clients practice mindfulness, focusing on the present moment rather than the

generosity, I was able to be as successful as I am,” she said.

As president of the Alumni Association Board of Governors, De Rea Kolb seeks to support alumni and help them stay connected to the Immaculata community, whether through attending events, making donations or both.

“I know it can be really hard,” De Rea Kolb says of staying connected to Immaculata, mentioning the stressors she and her classmates experience as they raise children and manage finances. “For different reasons, we come and go in our participation.... But I also know that the way that Immaculata touched people is very real.”

*“Because of other people’s generosity, I was able to be as successful as I am.”*

anxieties of the future or the regrets of the past. Making or listening to music requires us to focus and can facilitate mindfulness, she said.

De Rea Kolb appreciates how Immaculata formed and equipped her for her music therapy career. “I had so many positive relationships with my professors,” she said, mentioning Sister Jean Anthony, IHM, a music therapy professor who “was such a charismatic, energetic, beautiful person.” De Rea Kolb also formed a bond with music professor Sister Regina Foy, IHM. “After I left, I would write her letters and send her pictures of my kids.”

A recipient of the presidential scholarship, De Rea Kolb said this financial assistance for completing her undergraduate degree made it possible for her to continue to earn her master’s at Immaculata. “Because of other people’s

To her fellow alumni who see the positive impact their education has on them, De Rea Kolb says, “Just give a dollar.” College rankings often factor the alumni participation rate—that is, the percentage of alumni who give each year—into their calculations. “It’s about the percentage of participation, not the amount raised,” De Rea Kolb said. So every alum who makes even a small gift increases Immaculata’s standing in college rankings.

De Rea Kolb also recommends designating donations to a specific department or program at Immaculata. She says she has made \$20 gifts to the music therapy program. “I knew that they could buy a hand drum for that amount,” she said. “It made me feel like I knew a little bit more where things were going and the impact that I could make.” 🙌



# Faculty Farewell

The IU community bids a fond farewell to two retiring faculty members and to Sister Marie Cooper, who recently passed away.



**CELINA "LEE" SIWULA '92,  
'14 M.S.N., '20 Ed.D.**

*Assistant Professor and Director  
of Immaculata's Pre-licensure  
Bachelor of Science in Nursing*

I joined the faculty in 2016 because I wanted to help mold new generations of B.S.N.-prepared registered nurses. I want my students to always consider the whole patient: body, mind, spirit, culture, family, medical history and their beliefs. Patients are outside of their comfort zone when we nurses meet them. We need to be empathetic, honest and respectful.

Nursing school is not easy, but it is so worth it! I've learned that just like our patients, our students come with the same holistic needs. We, the nursing faculty, must be empathetic but strong as we encourage our students to move forward and become the nurses we know they can be!

I love coaching the seniors as they prepare for the nursing licensure exam, but I also love being a part of the student nurse experience as they grow into competent, holistic nurses! Our students not only have high licensure exam pass rates, but they are safe, quality nurses.

Although I will stay on as an adjunct in the Division of Nursing, it's time for me to spend time with my family and my growing grandchildren! A piece of my heart will always be in nursing and with Immaculata.



**RITA COLANZI, Ph.D.**

*Associate Professor of English*

The Immaculata students who took literature courses taught by long-time English faculty member Rita Colanzi didn't just read the stories—they experienced them as well. For example, her Renaissance literature class attended a Renaissance Fair, and Romantic literature students enjoyed afternoon tea. Victorian literature students examined the Pre-Raphaelite art collection at the Delaware Art Museum and students in modern drama saw a play at a local theater. Her food memoir class went to the National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C. to see Julia Child's kitchen. Food in film and literature students visited the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site after reading his book on the differences between what the slaves were forced to eat and what the owners enjoyed.

Colanzi enjoyed teaching a range of classes, developing curriculum for new courses and expressing her creative freedom during her 13 years at Immaculata.

"I will miss being a part of the Immaculata community," she said.



**SISTER MARIE COOPER, IHM '69**

*Professor Emerita of  
Mathematics/Physics*

Sister Marie Cooper, IHM passed away on June 13, 2023, in Camilla Hall.

She was a professor of physics in the Math Department and served as the director of sponsored research during her 17 years at Immaculata University. As a professor emerita, she tutored students in the math center. Starting her teaching career at several Catholic schools in the region, Sister Marie transitioned to teaching physics to college students at Villanova University and at her alma maters, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Rutgers University and eventually Immaculata.

"Sister Marie Cooper, IHM, possessed and shared immeasurable talents and gifts. Her response to others was one of simplicity, grace and gentleness," stated Sister M. Carroll Isselmann, IHM. "When thinking of Sister Marie, one must recall the words of David Hawkins, 'A universal characteristic of genius is humility.'"



# Why didn't I think of that?

**BY WILLIAM CARR, D.M.A.**  
*Steinway artist, Professor of Music and Piano Music Department, Immaculata University*

As the first resident scholar/artist-in-residence for the Malvern Preparatory School for the 2023–2024 academic year, I will have the opportunity to teach and inspire younger students about the importance of using creativity to solve problems, reach more effective decisions and understand its lateral implications across diverse disciplines. When individuals perceive the importance of creative thinking, their conceptual framework is broadened, and deferring judgments becomes part of a natural process for reaching wider possibilities for solutions. I have found that most educational institutions, including Immaculata, place a high priority on defining standards through assessment, evaluation and summation, while the intrinsic focus of today's students, because of technology, is rooted in a paradigm of process, facilitation and modeling. There is a disconnect with current students.

With my musical performance education at the Juilliard School in piano performance and with my additional graduate degree studies at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, I became a business and creativity consultant to over 30 multinational corporations both in the U.S. and abroad, and to the graduate schools of business at Columbia University, Dartmouth College and at the Aresty Institute (Wharton School) of the University of Pennsylvania. Through my research at Wharton, I learned that there are over 100 models and theories of creativity, both convergent and divergent. All, to some degree, have direct application to business and leadership.

Many years ago, I created "Informances," where audiences could appreciate creativity through a musical performance because they would be experiencing (seeing and hearing) the creative process "in motion." Then discussions emerged

for lateral implications for management of people, marketing and strategic planning in business. So, an artist/musician could serve as a catalyst for greater understanding of creative thinking, creative systems theories and new possibilities for corporate strategic policy implementations. For example, during my time as a consultant for Procter and Gamble, I observed the creation of the Pringles potato chips. Synectics, the company that worked on the design, was a divergent model of creative problem-solving, which states that all answers to problems can be found in "nature." To illustrate the point, when the research and development unit at Procter and Gamble attempted to package the potato chips in a can, they crumbled. Synectics said, "You need to observe leaves on a hill" to learn that moisture enables the deepest leaf on the hill to retain its shape.

As I enter my 31st year as a professor of music and piano at Immaculata, I am excited to return to my alma mater, Malvern Prep School, to work with younger children who are developing their talents and gifts and also with the exceptional faculty at the school. I am also privileged to be partnering with the Curtis Institute of Music as part of the performance presentations at Malvern for the students and faculty. After each performance, I will be explaining the music to the listeners through the lens of the creative process and how lateral perceptions of performance practices might be used for creative thinking in other disciplines. For example, my Juilliard professor would often relate piano practicing to baseball pitching (insight restructuring) with the importance of not only practicing for finger development but for wrist flexibility. I would often need to read articles about sports mechanics for piano practice while at Juilliard.

One of the goals of the artist-in-residence program is to ignite the imagination of young students through musical performance excellence and creativity. When students and faculty who are trained to think analytically, logically, linearly, vertically and propositionally discover conceptual, lateral, divergent, creative and cyclical approaches to thinking, the morphological dimensions for solutions become not only a focus but a reality. No longer are students simply satisfied with answers. Instead they gain a deeper understanding of how process leads to new possibilities for comprehension and learning. In today's technological environment and as societies become more global, understanding cross-cultural perspectives to the creative process might become the difference between survival and failure in a world of intense global competition.

For today's students who will eventually become the future leaders, their need to understand creative problem-solving and decision-making will be crucial for realizing accommodation processes both between and within societies and for appreciating the deeper dimensions of the innovation process. 🙌



My opening presentation to the students at Malvern Prep School will be **August 28, 2023**, in the Duffy Center for the Arts, and my opening piano performance (solo) will be **October 12, 2023**, in the Duffy Center for the Arts.



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**ON THE ROAD**

Please join fellow Immaculata University alumni at these upcoming events as Immaculata hits the road!

**JUL 19**

The Capital Grille -  
 Tysons Corner  
 McLean, VA

**JUL 27**

The Griswold Inn  
 Essex, CT

**AUG 1**

Immaculata University  
 Immaculata, PA

**AUG 8**

Brandywine Brewing Co.  
 Tavern and Grill  
 Greenville, DE

**AUG 17**

The Capital  
 Grille - Paramus  
 Paramus, NJ

**AUG 23**

Chatham Bars Inn  
 Chatham, MA

**SEPT 14**

Harvest Seasonal Grill  
 Harrisburg, PA

**SEPT 20**

Tamaqua Station  
 Restaurant  
 Tamaqua, PA

**SEPT 22**

Seasons 52 -  
 North Bethesda  
 North Bethesda, MD

**SEPT 27**

The Capital Grille  
 Stamford, CT

**OCT 5**

The Farmer's Daughter  
 Blue Bell, PA

**OCT 10**

Fleming's  
 Prime Steakhouse  
 Providence, RI

**NOV 6**

Lambertville  
 Station Restaurant  
 Lambertville, NJ

**NOV 14**

The Capital Grille  
 Parsippany, NJ

**DEC 4**

The Hotel Bethlehem  
 Bethlehem, PA

**DEC 11**

Harvest at  
 The Hotel Hershey  
 Hershey, PA

REGISTER AT [immaculata.edu/ontheroad](http://immaculata.edu/ontheroad) | For more information, contact Betty Ginty at [eginty@immaculata.edu](mailto:eginty@immaculata.edu) or **484-323-3944**.

*\* All dates are subject to change.*



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