

# LIVE & LEARN

Excelsior College Magazine

Vol. 11, No.2, Fall/Winter 2009



SOLEDAD  
O'BRIEN

COMMENCEMENT KEYNOTE 2009

# LIVE&LEARN

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Commencement photos:  
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and Island Photography

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## CALENDAR

### 2009-10 HOLIDAYS

(College closed)

**November 11**

Veteran's Day

**November 26-27**

Thanksgiving Day & Day After

**December 25**

Christmas Day

**January 1**

New Year's Day

**January 18**

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

**February 15**

Presidents Day

**May 31**

Memorial Day

**July 5**

Independence Day (observed)

### COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

July 9, 2010

**Important Deadlines** for degree completion can be found on p.17 and at [www.excelsior.edu/deadlines](http://www.excelsior.edu/deadlines)

Your questions and comments regarding *Live & Learn* are welcome. Please direct them to the Publications Office: 7 Columbia Circle, Albany, New York 12203-5159 phone: 518-464-8555 email: [pubteam@excelsior.edu](mailto:pubteam@excelsior.edu)

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For general information about Excelsior College, call **888-647-2388**.

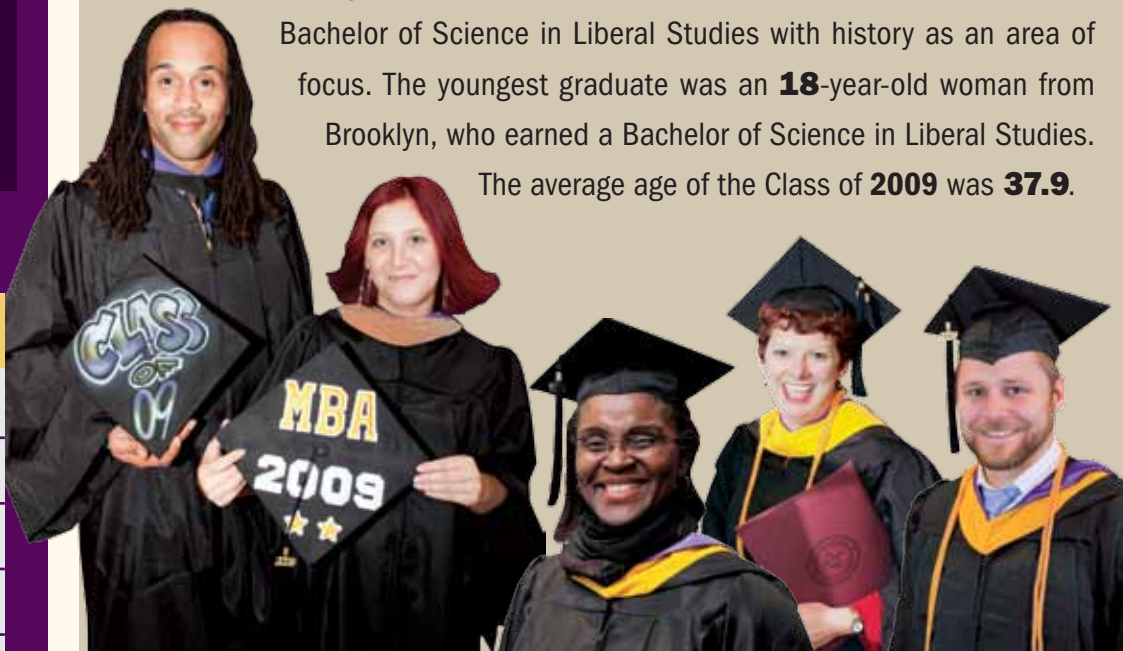
**[www.excelsior.edu](http://www.excelsior.edu)**

## THE 2009 GRADUATING CLASS:

All **50** states were represented plus the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and **14** other nations. Out of a total of **5,671** graduates **50.3%** were male and **49.7%** were female. **30%** of graduates self-reported as being members of minority groups. **33%** of the graduates were members of the U.S. military. **602** of this year's graduates were from New York State. The oldest graduate was a **71**-year-old man from Florida, who earned a

Bachelor of Science in Liberal Studies with history as an area of focus. The youngest graduate was an **18**-year-old woman from Brooklyn, who earned a Bachelor of Science in Liberal Studies.

The average age of the Class of **2009** was **37.9**.



## SOCIAL NETWORKING

Social networking connects people to others with similar interests and experiences. Excelsior College is present on the most popular sites, because it's important to us to meet our prospective students, enrolled students, and alumni—where they are.

**Facebook:** Photos and student discussions · Alumni community · Excelsior College community · Hispanic community · military and veteran community

**MySpace:** Friends of Excelsior College—highlights of our most popular programs

**LinkedIn:** Members can ask questions and view college events

**YouTube:** View recent videos

**Twitter:** View recent news, events, and daily quotes

**You Tube**

**f** Find us on  
**Facebook**

**myspace.com**  
a place for friends

**Linked in.**

**twitter**

All Excelsior social networking sites can be reached at  
**[www.excelsior.edu/community](http://www.excelsior.edu/community)**

**On the Cover:** Soledad O'Brien, Emmy-award winning anchor and special correspondent for CNN Worldwide, was the keynote speaker and an honorary degree recipient at Commencement 2009.



A photograph of an Excelsior College commencement ceremony. A speaker in a black graduation cap and gown stands at a wooden podium with the Excelsior College logo. The podium is flanked by several international flags, including those of Israel, Italy, Japan, Canada, South Africa, and Malaysia. Other graduates in gowns are seated on either side of the speaker, some clapping. In the foreground, the backs of many graduates wearing black caps are visible. The background is a large screen displaying the college's name and logo.

# EXCELSIOR COLLEGE COMMENCEMENT

What really got me excited and made me fall in love with Excelsior College was its fundamental philosophy: ‘What you know is more important than where or how you learned it.’”

PATRICK NSEREKO, GRADUATE SPEAKER

Spectacular weather, and the biggest turnout ever, made Commencement 2009 an unforgettable event. From the moment the processional began with the first notes of “Pomp and Circumstance” to the final notes of “America the Beautiful,” the spirit of accomplishment and pride was stunning.

More than 300 graduates traveled across the country (and the world!) to walk across the stage of the Empire State Plaza Convention Center in Albany, New York. Thousands more watched Commencement via streaming video at [excelsior.edu/webcast](http://excelsior.edu/webcast).

Board of Trustees Chair Richard Yep and Excelsior President John F. Ebersole greeted those gathered—graduates, families, and friends—and welcomed them to this annual celebration of achievement.

This year’s keynote speaker and an honorary degree recipient, CNN’s Emmy-award winning anchor and special correspondent, Soledad O’Brien, set a good humored tone; she entertained and inspired with surprising stories of personal experience with both racism and reverse racism. Her success in overcoming obstacles made O’Brien’s keynote address especially meaningful for Excelsior College graduates.

The daughter of an interracial marriage, O’Brien learned early about challenges. After one job interview, she recalled,

“The news director sat me down and said to me, ‘Listen, we really like you. But here’s our problem. You’re not black enough.’” In another interview, she didn’t get the job because she refused to change her name from Soledad to something less unique. After each rejection, she would call her mother. “I can’t fit the mold of what people want,” she would say. Her mother would answer, “It’s not yours to change. They will have to change for you. Persevere. Just keep going. And they will figure it out around you.”

She soon found out her mother was right. As part of the CNN news teams, which earned that network a George Foster Peabody Award for coverage of Hurricane Katrina, O’Brien saw firsthand, “We can no longer think of our world in terms of ‘us’ and ‘them,’” she said. “There’s no ‘us’ and ‘them.’ The ‘them’ in New Orleans were black and white, Asian and Latino—that’s us! And, she concluded, “Make your voice heard, make your path known, make your story known, so that people can value what you have done—and how hard it was—and how you persevered anyway.”



By sitting here you have already proved you can do it...You live as an example to others. You can do it. If you think the door will be open for you, think again—it won't. You're going to have to pave your own path.”

SOLEDAD O'BRIEN







President Williams...  
in the future, when  
researchers consider  
the history of distance  
learning, your biography  
will be prominent...”

*L to r: Trustee Chair Richard Yep, Trustee Gloria R. Gelmann, honorary degree recipient and first president of Excelsior College C. Wayne Williams, and Trustee John R. Wetsch.*

Honorary degree recipient and first Excelsior College president, C. Wayne Williams, received a warm welcome from all in attendance—those who knew him and those who knew of him. His honorary degree certificate reads: “President Williams...in the future, when researchers consider the history of distance learning, your biography will be prominent...As a friend and benefactor of the College, your continuing support and encouragement of Excelsior’s mission are emblematic of a life devoted to education as the great equalizer.”

The 2009 graduate speaker, Patrick Nsereko, a refugee from Uganda, spoke of his first experiences in America, where he shined shoes at a Boston hotel. Using his scarce resources, he was finally able to complete the education he first started in Africa. “What really got me excited and made me fall in love with Excelsior College,” Nsereko explained, “was its fundamental philosophy: ‘What you know is more important than where or how you learned it.’ I was provoked by an innate desire and passion to fulfill this purpose...and seven years

later, here I am, the same person, but now an alumnus of Excelsior College.”

Soon it was time to “walk.” As each graduate crossed the stage to receive a warm handshake (and often, a hug) from President Ebersole, the audience provided a constant background of enthusiastic (and often, thunderous) applause. The ceremony concluded with Excelsior’s own Tracy Solarek performing a heartfelt rendition of “America the Beautiful.”

During the lively reception that followed, members of the Board of Trustees, President Ebersole, and Soledad O’Brien formed a long greeting line to congratulate and acknowledge the individual accomplishments of the graduates—one last time—before Commencement 2009 came to a close. ■



CEMENT



...In recognition of your distinguished leadership, considerable fortitude, and unwavering support of Excelsior College...”

President Ebersole awarded the President's Medal to Ms. Deborah Hackman, CEO of the Georgia Nurses Association and the Georgia Nurses Foundation, for her staunch advocacy for the nursing profession and her major commitment to the mission of Excelsior College.

## Greeting Our VA Scholarship Grads

**T**he Excelsior College School of Nursing has a special collaborative partnership with the Veterans Healthcare Administration to promote retention and reduce attrition rates of enrolled VA scholarship participants.

Nursing students who wish to apply for a VA scholarship must be enrolled with Excelsior College and have worked for the VA for a minimum of one year.

Two VA scholarship awardees attended Commencement 2009 and were greeted by Excelsior staff. Pictured below from left to right are Deb Hodge, senior academic advisor; Diane Wild Smith, senior academic advisor and primary advisor for the VA scholarship students; Robin Ruffin-Hooker, BS nursing grad and current VA Scholarship student in the MS nursing program; Nadine Glenning, VA scholarship graduate from MS nursing program; Mary Lee Pollard, associate dean, School of Nursing; and Helene Wallingford, program director of the Associate in Science nursing degree program.



To learn more about applying for a VA scholarship, contact Diane Wild-Smith or Deb Hodge toll free at 888-647-2388, ext. 1316.

## Congratulations 2009 Project LEARN Grads

**T**en employees from Albany Medical Center (AMC) in Albany, New York, graduated from the Project LEARN program this year—eight with Bachelor of Science nursing degrees and two with Master of Science nursing degrees.

In attendance (from l to r) were Cynthia Dollard, BS nursing; Cindy Novak, MS nursing; Susan McClintock, BS nursing; and Joyce Swanson, BS nursing. All enrolled in 2004 and steadily worked to complete their degrees, taking online courses through Excelsior College.

Additionally, Summit Health—Chambersburg Hospital in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, has what they've titled the “Fast Track Program” for Excelsior associate degree nursing students, consisting of LPNs who are being paid by the hospital to go to school full-time and finish their degrees in one year. The project began in September 2007, and the first group, a total of 15, graduated between September 2008 and April 2009. One of the students, Kyla Jones (not pictured), also made the trip to Albany for the Commencement ceremony.

Project LEARN (Learning, Experience, Assessment, Resources, and Networking) teams are formed when hospitals, teaching institutions, and health care agencies partner with the College to provide access to the most current and respected learning resources for associate, baccalaureate, and master's degree nursing students.

*Best wishes to all of our Project LEARN grads!*





## GRADUATE AWARD WINNERS



### THE CATHERINE CRAIG-ERHARDT MEMORIAL AWARD

Price E. Martin Jr. **A**

Bachelor of Science in Liberal Studies



### THE MARVIN CURLING MEMORIAL AWARD

Steven Ray Ahrendts **B**

Bachelor of Science in  
Nuclear Engineering Technology



### THE LeROY V. GOOD MEMORIAL AWARD

Stephen J. Connolley **C**

Associate in Science

### THE ARTHUR J. GREGG AWARD

Kevin C. Brylski **D**

Bachelor of Science in Liberal Studies



### THE ROBERT E. KINSINGER AWARD

Shiram Herrera

Associate in Science in Nursing

### THE CHARLES W. LAFFIN JR. MEMORIAL AWARD

Chikako C. Siebers

Bachelor of Science in  
Management Information Systems

### THE ROBERT P. MAHONEY AWARD

Shannon C. McMillan **E**

Bachelor of Science in Liberal Studies



### THE RUTH V. MATHENEY MEMORIAL AWARD

Erica Richman **F**

Associate in Science in Nursing

### THE MILDRED L. MONTAG MEMORIAL AWARD

Carol Lynn Esposito

Master of Science in Nursing



### THE EWALD B. NYQUIST AWARD

Michael Grieco

Bachelor of Science in General Business

### THE JEAN M. SMITH AWARD

Trent A. Keffer **G**

Bachelor of Science in General Business



### THE 2009 STUDENT SUPPORT AWARD

Joshua and Elizabeth Spafard

nominated by

Karen M. Spafard

Bachelor of Science

Read more about the accomplishments of our  
award winners on the College's Web site:  
[www.excelsior.edu/graduateawards](http://www.excelsior.edu/graduateawards)

Excelsior College gave me the  
opportunity to move forward...  
Just remain focused and  
continue to move forward—  
fight one battle at a time until  
the war is won.”

SAMUEL T. WATKINS JR.

## ALUMNI AWARD WINNERS

*from left to right*

### THE C. WAYNE WILLIAMS AWARD

Samuel T. Watkins Jr., MS

Bachelor of Science in Liberal Studies '99

### THE CARRIE B. LENBURG AWARD

Lorraine B. Sanders, DNSc, FNP-BC, PMHNP-BC, CNM

Associate in Applied Science in Nursing '83

Bachelor of Science in Nursing '85

“Excelsior was my academic  
launching pad...it was the best  
decision I ever made.”

### THE ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Anthony E. Munroe, EdD, MPH, MBA, FACHE

Bachelor of Science in Liberal Studies '96

“It was because of Excelsior College  
and its guidance that I obtained my  
master's degrees and doctorate.”

Read more about the accomplishments of our  
award winners on the College's Web site:  
[www.excelsior.edu/alumniawardwinners](http://www.excelsior.edu/alumniawardwinners)



# Virtually Everywhere—and Right Here in the Capital Region

## LOCAL GRADUATES AT COMMENCEMENT

### Paul Elliott

Paul Elliott, 36, of Schenectady, knew he would hit the financial “glass ceiling” in his manufacturing career if he didn’t finish his college degree. It took several years, but he did it—completing his Bachelor of Science with a technology concentration in spring 2009. Married, and the father of a 19-year-old daughter and 12-year-old son, he was working as a third shift supervisor in steam turbine machining at GE in 2005.



One year before graduating, he moved up to a numerical programmer control position. “It started out as a personal goal, and it was strongly encouraged [by GE] that I finish what I started,” said Mr. Elliott. “Having a strong support network was very helpful in getting through the tough times. There were moments I wanted to quit because the pressure of work, home, and school was too much to handle. My family was very encouraging and understanding.” For the future and potential job advancement, he said, the bachelor’s degree “is the ticket that gets your resume looked at.”

He and his wife were both pursuing higher education at the same time, and their children were also in school, so the kitchen table was their collective homework spot. “For the last year, I was the one taking classes, but the whole family went to school,” he said. Elliot celebrated his achievement with a party, receiving a “long awaited four-wheeler” as a graduation present. He also loves to play drums, and says, “It was a great way to unwind after a test!”



### Patti Jo Ferraro

Patti Jo Ferraro, 48, of Colonie, completed her Master of Science nursing degree at Excelsior, with the “moral and academic support” of two nursing colleagues at Albany Medical Center, who were also in the program. She finished her degree in much the same way as Elliott (left), working full time and taking classes online while juggling a family with four kids, who are now 22, 19, 17, and 13. “It was a lot of work,” she said, in an interview at Commencement with *The Daily Gazette* of Schenectady, “but I’ve always wanted an advanced degree. My family understood it was important to me.”



Ferraro, who now works at Saratoga Hospital, says her Excelsior experience was “bittersweet.” During her first months of enrollment, her mother-in-law was diagnosed with stage four ovarian cancer. The illness and treatments continued for the next 15 months, during which time Ferraro continued to take classes while actively participating in her mother-in-law’s care. “Sadly, she passed in March 2008.” Soon after, in July, her own mother was diagnosed with cancer. During that fall, while bringing her mother to all of her appointments and most of her treatments, Ferraro was still able to work and complete her 120 clinical hours for her capstone.

“I was so happy in December when I left my weekend capstone,” said Ferraro, “because not only was I done with school, my mom had completed all of her treatments. Once again, I thought I was home free.” Then tragically, in February, she found out her mother had metastatic disease; she passed away three months later. “When I walked across the stage in July, I knew my mother and my mother-in-law were watching over me, because they knew how hard I worked, and I did it despite all the roadblocks that were put in my way. I am proud to say that I completed all of my coursework and finished with a 4.0.” In retrospect, Ferraro says she liked the structure of the online program, “because otherwise, I would have had to drop out of a traditional program. With all of my competing priorities, I was able to squeeze my schoolwork in when I had the chance.”

**All in the Family:** Thirteen Excelsior employees earned degrees this year. They are (l to r) Julie Crocker, BS; Chuck Snead, MBA; Christie Dingman, MBA; Mary Pat Sharer, BS; Amber Luft, AS; Valerie DiCioccio, BS; Wendy Fasoldt, AS; Roberto Morales, MA/LS. Missing from the picture are Jose DeShields, AS; Mark Hart, MA/LS; Cathy Meyers, AS; Justin Stevens, BS; and Renay Williams, MA/LS.



## Four Grads Present at Second Master Minds' Symposium

These distinguished graduates of the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program were honored for their theses, which evidenced excellence in writing and critical thinking. Nominated by the thesis readers and the MA/LS staff, the four were identified as standouts among a field of 53 graduates from the program this year. Presenting to faculty, staff, family, and friends were Natalie Hallenbeck of Niskayuna, New York; Vickie Pritchett of Houston, Texas; Liz Raver of Yorktown Heights, New York; and Renay Williams of Averill Park, New York.

"I was very impressed with the Master Minds' presentation," reported Hallenbeck, who wrote a creative thesis, "An Investigation into Effective Teaching Practices for Children of Low Socioeconomic Status." A first-grade teacher in Schoharie, New York, she took advantage of Excelsior's partnership with the New York State United Teachers (NYSUT) union to complete her degree. "Although I was terrified to speak, it proved to be one of my fondest experiences in my formal education. It was such an honor...I remember standing up at the podium and looking out at the audience thinking that this is what I have worked so hard for."

Pritchett, who tapped into her personal history and her interest in literature to write, "Captives among Native Americans: Assimilation, Adoption, and Marriage in Historical Narratives and Later Literature," noted, "The Master Minds' event was not only a great honor to those of us invited to present; it was also a way for us to recognize the genuine interest that others take in our projects and the underlayment that buoys each of us in our pursuit of learning and credentials throughout our respective educational treks."

Liz Raver's traditional thesis focused on "Gender Differences in Learning Mathematics." The subject of a fall 2008 *Live & Learn* article which discussed her hands-on research experience dissecting human brains with her thesis mentor, Raver explained, "Being able to present my thesis was highly satisfying...kind of like the icing on the cake, in a

very positive way." Currently, a developmental mathematics instructor at Housatonic Community College, she said, "I think that having a Master Minds' event encourages MA/LS students to take their thesis seriously as something that can make a difference in the world, whether that difference be from a creative viewpoint or from a more traditional research perspective."

The flexibility of the program is one of its hallmarks. Hallenbeck said that she was able to tailor her thesis to her classroom interests. "I work very closely with children who are of a low socioeconomic status and who struggle to read. I wanted to see what I could do as an educator to better meet the needs of these students. I chose to explore why children of low socioeconomic status seem to struggle so much with literacy. I also examine the most effective teacher practices for instructing reading."

Renay Williams mirrored Hallenbeck's sentiments about being able to pursue her personal interests within the framework of the master's thesis. "I chose my creative thesis topic, 'Leadership Misalignment in the Nonprofit Sector: The Lifelong Learning of Women,' based on my belief in lifelong learning and interest in women's leadership," she explained. A military academic advisor for Excelsior's Center for Military Education, she added, "The nonprofit sector interested me the most because I wanted to know what compelled a large percentage of women to work in the nonprofit sector when a small percentage of women hold top leadership positions."

A two-time Excelsior graduate, Pritchett also earned a bachelor's degree from the College in 1996. She explained, "Excelsior College has helped lift several high and heavy hurdles for me." First a high school teacher and now a college instructor, she added, "It has given me not only an excellent learning opportunity but also the logistical means to gain the basic credentials I need to pursue the profession I love." ■



L to r: Vickie Pritchett, Natalie Hallenbeck, Liz Raver, Renay Williams



## THIRTY-ONE INDUCTED INTO HONOR SOCIETY

### School of Business and Technology Receives Alpha Nu Sigma Charter

Thirty-one students were inducted into the College's Alpha Nu Sigma Honor Society at a ceremony on July 9, at The Desmond Hotel, held in conjunction with Excelsior's 2009 Commencement. Pictured above (left) keynote speaker, Dr. William Burchill, immediate past president of the American Nuclear Society, presented the honor society charter to Dr. Jane LeClair (right), associate dean of the School of Business and Technology.

"Excelsior has many distinctions," noted Burchill at this first induction ceremony. "It was particularly interesting when Excelsior approached the American Nuclear Society and sought to establish an ANS student section. We scratched our heads, literally, and said, 'Does this work?' or 'How does this work?' Because Excelsior is literally the only American Nuclear Society student chapter at a distance learning institution."

Indeed, Excelsior is one of only 18 institutions of higher education that has received the charter into Alpha Nu Sigma, an honor society that recognizes high scholarship, integrity, and potential achievement in applied nuclear science and nuclear engineering among outstanding students. Only those institutions of higher learning which have a student section of the American Nuclear Society may be granted a charter for a local chapter of the Alpha Nu Sigma Society.



(l to r) David Stanley, graduate; Dr. Jane LeClair, associate dean; Sheila Brey, student; Dr. William Burchill, immediate past president of ANS; Glenn Campbell, graduate; Dr. Richard Coe, faculty, Nuclear Engineering Technology

David Stanley, of Knoxville, Tennessee, was one of the students inducted into the society. The 2009 graduate and a reactor operator trainer and shift supervisor at one of the Oak Ridge National Laboratory's research reactors, said that the College's ANS charter coupled with its Alpha Sigma Nu Honor Society would elevate Excelsior's program in the nuclear field. After attending the induction ceremony, he noted, "To meet such distinguished men and women in the nuclear field was very exciting."

As part of the induction event, Burchill spoke on "The Nuclear Renaissance's #1 Challenge: Getting the Workforce." His research shows that 550 nuclear engineers are needed each year, and although a greater number earn nuclear engineering degrees each year, not all enter the power industry. For example, almost half of bachelor's degree graduates go on to graduate school. "The number of needed graduates we're forecasting, just in the United States, far exceeds the number graduating," Burchill surmised.

Excelsior's nuclear engineering program dovetails nicely with filling this gap in the expanding power industry workforce, Burchill observed. "Excelsior is definitely in the business of providing people for the workforce. And the workforce is literally the #1 challenge to sustaining the nuclear renaissance—the return of interest actually taking place worldwide in expanding our use of nuclear power." In fact, the number of students enrolling in Excelsior's Bachelor of Science degree in nuclear technology is up substantially since its founding in 1984. Currently, 700 are enrolled in the program, according to Associate Dean LeClair.

"The message that you've heard here is that your accomplishments are going to be a calling card to a growing industry," advised Dr. Richard Coe, a member of Excelsior's nuclear technology faculty, in his closing remarks. His advice to the honor society inductees: "Don't stop. Learning should be a lifelong skill." ■



## Forty-Eight New Members Inducted Into Excelsior's Tau Kappa Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International, Honor Society of Nursing

In a ceremony held on July 9 at The Desmond Hotel in Albany, New York, 48 Tau Kappa inductees were welcomed by Dr. Patricia Edwards, chapter secretary, and Dr. Suzanne Yarbrough, chapter president, who also introduced the event's keynote speaker, Dr. Debbie D. Hatmaker.

Currently serving as president of the American Nurses Credentialing Center and first vice president of the American Nurses Association, Dr. Hatmaker is also the director of the Excelsior College School of Nursing's Southern Performance Assessment Center and chief programs officer at the Georgia Nurses Association.

Hatmaker's address, "Leading Through Adversity to Excellence," illustrated how leadership is learned "on the job." She highlighted the many contributions of some of the great icons of nursing excellence:

Florence Nightingale, who defied the stereotypes of her time to become the precursor of evidence-based practice;

Clara Barton, a Civil War volunteer, who helped wounded soldiers on the battlefield and went on to create the American Red Cross;

Loretta Ford, who expanded the scope of nursing practice, initiating the movement toward the nurse practitioner role in health care;

Luther Christman, founder and dean of the Rush University College of Nursing, who was the first man in nursing to be inducted into the American Nurses Association Hall of Fame;

Vernice Ferguson, an African American nurse and distinguished nursing leader, who held the highest nursing administration position in the Department of Veterans Affairs for more than twelve years; and

Gladys Moreaux, a nursing activist, who taught at the American University in Beirut, Lebanon, in the aftermath of that country's civil war. She established the first hospital in the Middle East to achieve the designation of Magnet hospital of nursing excellence, an achievement that Hatmaker said was especially impressive to her, because to this day, there are no Magnet hospitals in her own state of Georgia.



Through my mother's support and encouragement, I've learned the value of giving back and living out loud."

LAURIE NAGELSMITH



Hatmaker encouraged the inductees to be leaders in their own right and to contribute to a new generation of leadership in nursing.

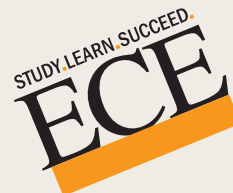
Dr. Bridget Nettleton, dean of Excelsior's School of Nursing, then presented the chapter's Recognition Award and a research grant to Laurie Nagelsmith, assistant dean, School of Nursing, who's currently working on her doctorate in educational psychology and methodology at the University at Albany. In accepting her awards, Nagelsmith gave special thanks to her mother, saying, "Through her support and encouragement, I've learned the value of giving back and living out loud."

The induction event concluded with the installation of new chapter officers for the coming year and a request to all for a renewed commitment to the nursing profession. ■



2009 Tau Kappa inductees gather for a group picture.

# Excelsior College Examinations— 2009 AWARD WINNERS



## Larry Grandorff, of Tenino, Washington,

began working on his Associate in Applied Science nursing degree after returning from a deployment to Kuwait and Iraq and resuming his civilian job as an emergency department technician. He made the decision (“with my wife’s gentle encouragement!”) to pursue a degree in nursing. “I found that I really enjoyed working in the health care environment, and becoming an RN would greatly increase my potential income as well as advance my career in the military,” says Grandorff. At that time, he was a Special Forces medical sergeant. As an RN, he could become a reserve officer in the Army Nurse Corps. Both he and his wife came to the same conclusion: “We wouldn’t be able to continue to homeschool our young boys (13, 11, and 7) if I went to school in a traditional setting, and I didn’t feel that I could realistically both work and attend college. We finally decided that a nontraditional degree program was the only way...In a sense, we all became homeschooled.” Grandorff enrolled with Excelsior College “because they had a well-established relationship with the military and a widely accepted nursing program.” After passing the state boards, he began working as an RN at an Army Hospital in Washington state. In 2007, he accepted an appointment in the Army Reserve as a 2nd Lieutenant and turned to Excelsior College again to further his education. He has begun work on a Bachelor of Science nursing degree and says, “I intend to finish with my BS nursing in February 2010. By partnering with Excelsior College, I have been able to achieve goals that at one time were only dreams.”

## Kathaleen Junge, of Omaha, Nebraska,

originally heard about Excelsior College from a friend (and nurse) with whom she worked in an emergency room. The friend mentioned that he had friends who received their RNs through Excelsior College after separating from the Air Force. When Kathaleen made the decision to separate from the military, she signed up for Excelsior’s associate degree nursing program. A little nervous at first about distance learning, her fears were soon put to rest. Of Excelsior, Kathaleen says, “Every time I had questions, I interacted with professional, knowledgeable, and friendly people who resolved the issue quickly the first time. Also, in the past, I was forced to pull out of classes in the middle of a semester because of my military obligations, which wasted time and money. With Excelsior, I never had that problem. At some deployed locations, I was able to take my tests in a military testing center, so I could continue with my schooling.” In essence, says Kathaleen, “Excelsior made it possible to juggle family, career, and education so I can better myself and provide for my family. I am looking forward to finishing up my degree within the next year and continuing to work in the medical profession as a nurse. Eventually, I would like to complete my master’s in nursing education.”

Excelsior College Examinations Awards are presented by the Excelsior College Assessment Unit for demonstrated excellence in Excelsior College Examinations—recognizing achievement of the highest standard score on a group of the College’s exams taken during the previous calendar year.

## College Receives Grant from Lumina Foundation for Education

**E**xcelisior College has received a \$58,500 grant from Lumina Foundation for Education to convene a national forum

to discuss and recommend approaches to multi-state regulation of distance and online higher education programs. The Presidents’ Forum, a collaboration of more than 150 institutions offering distance higher education, associations, and other stakeholder policy bodies covering all sectors of not-for-profit and for-profit higher learning will meet for this purpose in October in Washington, DC.

In the United States, regulation of higher education is a function of the states, and the states play a pivotal role in assuring consumer protection and establishing standards for licensure of higher education programs. As regulations can vary significantly from state to state, the challenges to educational institutions to understand and meet those requirements is tremendous.



## Presidents’ Forum

According to Excelsior College President John F. Ebersole, the issue of multi-state regulation of higher education programs has become both complex and burdensome. “The growth of online learning has appropriately led to an increase in concern for protecting the public interest from illegitimate programs,” says Ebersole. “Yet, this response means legitimate institutions are increasingly being challenged by multiple jurisdictions to address a patchwork of individual state regulations, even if the only ‘presence’ an institution has in a given state is a single student enrolled in its online program.”

The October 13 meeting of the Presidents’ Forum will engage key constituents in the consideration of a white paper on the issue of multi-state higher education regulation. The goals of this session include the development of models for interstate reciprocity. ■



# Grant Funds Partnership in Teamwork and Training

**D**espite the health care crises making daily headlines, pressure ulcers remain far from the spotlight. And yet, 1.3 to 3 million patients in U.S. hospitals and long-term health care facilities develop pressure ulcers every year. Their treatment costs the health care system over \$1 billion annually. But what can be done about it?

“Teamwork is the key to successful pressure ulcer prevention and treatment,” says Excelsior’s Dean of Health Sciences Dr. Deborah Sopczyk. “Our new program is all about teamwork—from project conception to implementation.” Two funders, twelve New York State health care facilities, and several Excelsior staff have come together to address this serious problem.

Untreated, pressure ulcers, commonly referred to as bedsores, can become life-threatening. Excelsior College, in partnership with facilities in Saratoga and Cayuga Counties, initiated an innovative online training concept for prevention and treatment. Grants from the New York State Department of Health and Fred L. Emerson Foundation are making it possible to turn this promising concept into a reality.

The Saratoga Partners for the Prevention of Pressure Ulcers, a coalition of eight health care facilities, approached Excelsior in the summer of 2008 to help develop an online training program, which would be available anytime, anywhere, and would address the needs of all health care providers, ranging from certified nursing assistants to registered nurses. That same summer, four Cayuga County facilities also expressed interest in an online approach to pressure ulcer training.

Excelsior worked with these two groups to devise a comprehensive program consisting of three focus areas: prevention and treatment of pressure ulcers, clinical decision making, and management training. The clinical decision-making component will help frontline staff develop the essential problem-solving skills needed to address the basic care needs of their patients. Management training will be geared toward RNs and LPNs, fine tuning their leadership and team-building capabilities.

The training will be workplace-friendly—provided in 30-minute increments—with each segment concluding with an assessment. Staff will be able to use worksite computers to learn a skill and then immediately put this skill into practice.



Our new program is all about teamwork—from project conception to implementation.”

Curriculum development is currently underway. Faculty in Excelsior’s School of Health Sciences are working closely with staff from Saratoga and Cayuga County facilities to ensure that the perspective of frontline caregivers is incorporated into each module. The School of Health Sciences and the Center for Professional Development will then transform the content into media-rich, interactive, online modules. The program is expected to be completed within 12 to 18 months.

As a result of grant funding, approximately 1,800 Cayuga and Saratoga County health care workers will participate in the program—free of charge—developing skills in pressure ulcer treatment and prevention. At the end of the grant period, the program will be of value to a wide range of professionals and health care organizations. ■

# Liberal Arts

## Making the Liberal Arts Connection: Miles Away, Worlds Apart

**T**hose of you serving in the military and those who are veterans, share a visible and positive presence among the larger Excelsior College community. In fact, thirty-eight percent of our 2009 graduates were either current or former servicemembers, with the Bachelor of Science in Liberal Studies (BSL) being one of the most popular degree programs.

### What is the unique connection between you, our military students, and the liberal arts?

**Flexibility:** A liberal arts degree, specifically a BSL, maximizes your college and military credits, thus putting the degree within reach. The BSL showcases your academic strengths through depth areas and/or an Area of Focus (AOF) in a single discipline, all within the context of liberal arts. You have the option of declaring a major, or, depending on your rating or specialty, you may choose from several disciplines.

**Course convenience:** You may be on a ship or in a remote location (with limited Internet access) while taking our courses, which are offered both via CD-ROM and online. Due to the structure of our courses, completion under deployment situations is more convenient and student-centered. Also, you can enhance your liberal arts degree with a Homeland Security Certificate. All of the criminal justice courses you take for this certificate may also be applied toward your degree.

**Transferability:** Since Excelsior College is a member of the Servicemembers Opportunity College (SOC) network, you have the added assurance of credit/course transfer among participating colleges. Transfer from one of Excelsior's associate degree programs to one of its baccalaureate degree programs is a seamless process, with advisement beginning upon completion of your first degree.

**Collaborative student service and advisement:** You will work with the Center for Military Education (CME) advisors for specific military questions, assistance with required military documents, and questions about enrollment or military tuition assistance.

School of Liberal Arts academic advisors will approve courses and exams from Excelsior and other colleges to meet your degree requirements. You will receive status reports and academic evaluation summaries from your advisor as you make progress toward your degree.

**Miles away and worlds apart:** Whether you are close to retirement and interested in obtaining your degree prior to separating from the military, or you're thinking about a bachelor's degree that will best utilize your existing credits—you will appreciate the value of Excelsior's liberal arts degrees. In our military-friendly environment, you'll obtain not only a degree but a well-rounded education upon which to build your future.

By Martha T. Garing, Senior Advisor, School of Business and  
Rachel Stolicky, Senior Advisor, School of Liberal Arts



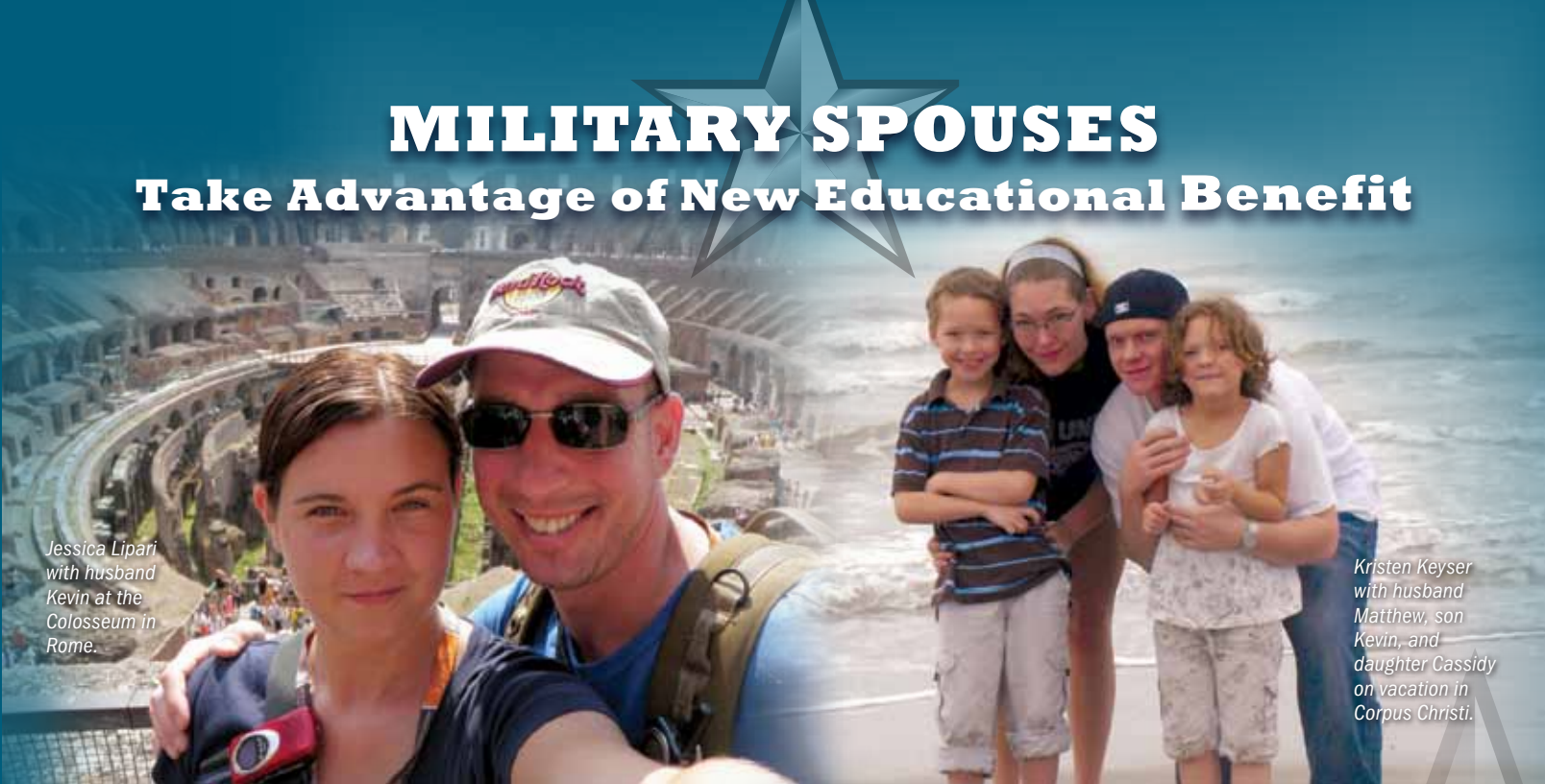
# “Thirty-eight percent of our 2009 graduates were from the military.”

2009 grads (l to r): Woodrow Jones, Laura Sinclair, Randolph Wilson, and Shannon McMillan



# MILITARY SPOUSES

## Take Advantage of New Educational Benefit



Jessica Lipari  
with husband  
Kevin at the  
Colosseum in  
Rome.



Kristen Keyser  
with husband  
Matthew, son  
Kevin, and  
daughter Cassidy  
on vacation in  
Corpus Christi.

**T**he MyCAA (Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts) program is off to great start at Excelsior's Center for Professional Development (CPD). The MyCAA, a new benefits program, introduced in June 2009, by the Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Military Community & Family Policy (DUSD/MC&FP), allows spouses of active duty or reserve military to apply for up to \$6000 in financial assistance for education, training, and licensing or certification programs. In the first eight weeks of the program, fifteen spouses had already registered, taking a total of twenty-one CPD courses/programs.

The generous educational benefit allows many of the students to work toward fulfilling long-term career goals. Jessica Lipari is a newlywed living in USAG Bamberg, Germany, with her husband, Kevin, a platoon sergeant for the 173rd Airborne. She's using the time to get the necessary training for a new career. "My career was in the construction industry as an estimator," said Ms. Lipari. "I was working mainly for new home builders, and at the end of my career I was running estimating departments." While the pay was good, the hours were long, so Lipari started to think about pursuing a new career. Always involved in organizing events in high school, and now at the base as a volunteer in marketing and special events, she's enrolled in the Event Management and Wedding Planning CPD courses. "I thought it would be a great time to get the schooling I would need to open up my own event and wedding planning business," she said.

Kristen Keyser, Fort Hood, Texas, is another military spouse taking advantage of the program. She is currently enrolled in the Medical Billing and Coding course and plans

to continue on to the Medical Transcription course. With two children, now seven and eight years old, Ms. Keyser would like to start working outside the home and build a career. She found out about the program when her husband, Matthew, an Army E4P, was at the Education Center at Fort Hood, looking to see how he could enroll in classes. Matthew also got some information about MyCAA. "He brought it home, and I immediately jumped on the opportunity," said Keyser. "I had everything done and taken care of and ready to go within days."

For many spouses, this is the best opportunity that's been made available to take courses. But with many colleges and universities offering programs, why did these students choose Excelsior? "Ultimately, Excelsior College had the four certification classes that fit into my goal of going back to school," said Lipari. "It was online, and you can work at your own pace, so I can balance life with school." The MyCAA benefit will cover four courses with some additional out-of-pocket expenses to complete two additional courses, if needed. "I will complete my courses and have a well-prepared business plan, so I can hit the ground running when I get back," said Lipari. Keyser's reaction is similar; "Excelsior just seemed to be the best fit for me, and I was right in thinking that. It's worked out wonderfully, and I have no complaints."

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By Susan Kryczka, Executive Director, Center for Professional Development

For more information on how to use military spouse benefits or other military and veteran tuition assistance programs for CPD courses, call toll free 888-647-2388 ext. 118211.

# Excelsior College is Prepared for VETERANS

Veterans, you have served your country, now your next mission is to complete your education.

On August 1, 2009, the Post 9/11 GI Bill went into effect and opened up the opportunity for many veterans to complete their higher education aspirations. Excelsior has veteran supports in place to assist you through the application process, enrollment procedures, and qualification for financial aid. We're standing by to guide you through the process.

As part of the College's preparation, Excelsior's Center for Military Education welcomed a new addition, Judy Reed, director of Veterans Services and Outreach. Reed has extensive experience working with veterans, military personnel, and military spouses through her work with the Navy College Office in Norfolk, Virginia, both as a site manager and education counselor. She was responsible for delivering educational programs to military members as they prepared to separate from the service and briefing veterans on the GI Bill/VA Benefit programs.

Excelsior College is known for its many special amenities for incoming veterans. Now there are even more including a veterans' page on the Excelsior Web site as well as social and academic communities for information and discussion in the form of a military/veterans Facebook page and blog at [www.facebook.com/excelsiorcollege](http://www.facebook.com/excelsiorcollege).

You can take advantage of Excelsior's Veterans' Success Program, an online course specifically designed to assist the College's veteran students. This course seeks to increase vets' success by providing orientation information, activities for personal growth and skill development, and perspectives on educational and career planning. By the close of the course, students will have a degree completion plan, a career goal, and earn three college credits.

For more information, please call toll free 888-647-2388 ext. 1352.



MSgt. Price E. Martin Jr.  
U.S. Marine Corps (ret.)  
BS in Liberal Studies '09

## Excelsior College is Ready to Process the Post - 9/11 GI Bill!



**T**his new Chapter 33 Veterans Benefit is available to all vets who served with at least 90 days of aggregate service on or after September 11, 2001, or were individuals discharged with a service-connected disability after 30 days. You must have received an honorable discharge to be eligible for the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

Unlike other VA programs, the student does not have to pay out of pocket for their courses, exams, and most fees. Veterans Administration reimburses the College for qualified expenses.

Qualified individuals will receive benefits ranging between 40 percent and 100 percent of the maximum amount payable, depending upon the length of their post 9/11 service.

### Covered college costs include:

- Tuition and fees not to exceed the maximum in-state tuition and fees at a public institution of higher learning are paid directly to the college by the program.
- A monthly housing allowance based upon the Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) for an E-5 with dependents at the location of an in-residence school. When using distance learning, at least one in-residence course per semester must be taken in person at an in-residence college, which is local to the student. Attendance must be at a rate greater than 50 percent to receive BAH.
- An annual books and supplies stipend of \$1,000 paid proportionately based on enrollment.
- A one-time rural benefit payment for eligible individuals.

The Department of Veterans Affairs is now accepting and processing VA form 22-1990 for the Post-9/11 GI Bill. Payments for Post-9/11 GI Bill began being processed on August 1, 2009. VA benefits can be complicated; our VA Counselor in the Financial Aid Office will answer your questions.

**Phone toll free:** 888-647-2388 ext. 1432

**Email:** [vafa@excelsior.edu](mailto:vafa@excelsior.edu)

**Fax:** 518-464-8777

**Mail:** Veterans Services and Outreach,  
Excelsior College, 7 Columbia Circle,  
Albany, NY 12203-5159

For information regarding resources for veterans, contact Judy Reed, director of Veteran Services and Outreach at 888-647-2388, ext. 118678, or email [jreed@excelsior.edu](mailto:jreed@excelsior.edu).



# TOP SCHOOL SERVING THOSE WHO SERVE



**T**he College has been named a top military-friendly school for 2010 by *G.I. Jobs* magazine, the premier publication for military transitioners. *G.I. Jobs* has a monthly circulation of 75,000, with outreach to military transition classes, veterans job assistance offices, VA and military hospitals, military education offices, individual subscribers, newsstands, military commands, and military base locations.

The *G.I. Jobs* recognition underscores Excelsior's long-standing commitment to serving members of the military as they pursue their education goals. It follows years of research, surveys, and data analysis, and places Excelsior among the top 15 percent of colleges, universities, and trade schools serving the military nationwide.

The surveys evaluated 7,000 institutions on their efforts to recruit and retain military and veteran students, recruitment results, academic accreditations, and other factors.



“Thanks to the College and its staff, **so many doors have opened for me** for advancement in the military. I am now in grad school, and I owe it all to Excelsior.”

**RICHARD BERROUET, BS '09**—EARNED HIS DEGREE WHILE ON ACTIVE DUTY IN THE U.S. ARMY.

OPEN MORE DOORS. YOU HOLD THE KEY.

[www.excelsior.edu/giving](http://www.excelsior.edu/giving)

## IMPORTANT DEADLINES

Plan ahead to make sure you receive your degree at the time you want it.

Conferral Date	Deadline for receipt of transcripts/ official documents for initial evaluation	Deadline for receipt of transcripts/ official documents for updated evaluation	CPNE Completion Cut-off (Nursing only)	Final Changes
November 20, 2009	Sept 11	Sept 25	Oct 2	<b>Nov 6</b>
December 18, 2009	Oct 9	Oct 23	Oct 30	<b>Dec 4</b>
January 15, 2010	Nov 6	Nov 20	Nov 20	<b>Dec 30</b>
February 19, 2010	Dec 11	Dec 23	Dec 25	<b>Feb 5</b>
March 19, 2010	Jan 8	Jan 22	Jan 29	<b>Mar 5</b>
April 16, 2010	Feb 5	Feb 19	Feb 26	<b>Apr 2</b>
May 21, 2010	Mar 12	Mar 26	Apr 2	<b>May 7</b>
June 18, 2010	Apr 9	Apr 23	Apr 30	<b>Jun 4</b>

**COMMENCEMENT JULY 9, 2010**

Note: All additions/deletions/corrections to the final transcript must be submitted by the student, in writing, two (2) weeks prior to the conferral date.

# IN MEMORIAM

**T**he Excelsior College community mourns the loss of two special colleagues and friends—**Dr. Bernard Schumacher**, associate dean in the School of Business and Technology, and **Dr. Robert Long**, a longtime member of the School of Business and Technology faculty.

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**Dr. Bernard Schumacher** came to Excelsior College in January 2008. As associate dean, Dr. Schumacher founded and led the MBA Task Force, overseeing many exciting changes in the MBA program. He also directed the School's course development and delivery program through a period of tremendous growth and continuous improvement. In addition, he served as a business course instructor.

Before arriving at Excelsior, Dr. Schumacher served as assistant professor of business administration at Post University and as an adjunct professor at Pace University. He earned an MBA in finance at George Washington University and a PhD in business administration from Pace University. Dr. Schumacher was a Certified Financial Analyst and member of the board of directors of the Stamford, Connecticut, CFA Society, the Academy of Management, and the Academy of International Business.

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**Dr. Robert Long** joined the Excelsior community in the late 1990s as a charter member and chair of the Nuclear Engineering Technology Industrial Advisory Committee. He was appointed to the faculty in 2003, serving as chair for several years. Dr. Long was instrumental in the School's successful ABET accreditation renewal efforts, a champion of continuous quality improvement, and the driving force behind many of the standard practices instituted in the School to accomplish it.

Dr. Long earned his MS and PhD in nuclear engineering from Purdue University. His long career in the nuclear field included thirteen years as professor and chair of the Chemical and Nuclear Engineering Department at the University of New Mexico, followed by an eighteen-year tenure with General Public Utilities (GPU) in New Jersey. At GPU, Dr. Long held several positions in the nuclear power plant safety and training area, and was actively involved in the events and recovery following the Three Mile Island Nuclear Plant incident in 1979. A true leader in the nuclear industry, Dr. Long also served as a consultant to various corporations and government agencies and held various offices in the American Nuclear Society at the local and national levels, including national president.

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Both Dr. Schumacher and Dr. Long were truly committed to the mission of Excelsior College and to assuring the delivery of quality programs and student services to our adult students. Although we will miss them both, all of us at the College and especially in the School of Business and Technology will continue to be inspired by their leadership and spirit. ■



*Dr. Bernard Schumacher*



*Dr. Robert Long*



# Excelsior Participates in McDonald's 2009 Peakfest

McDonald's bi-annual conference in Orlando, Florida, hosted more than 10,000

**E**xcelstor College was one of the invitation-only exhibitors at this national event, which began on July 13 and lasted until July 23. Over the 10-day period, three regional waves of attendees participated, and the Excelsior team had the opportunity to speak with thousands of McDonald's store managers and other personnel about the College's educational alliance with McDonald's USA. This unique alliance enables employees to earn a college degree from Excelsior by applying their McDonald's Hamburger University Training, Learning and Development credits, and to receive substantial discounts on fees and tuition.

Excelsior's presence at this conference was a tremendous opportunity to expand the College's exposure within the McDonald's community. "Throughout the duration of the event, I conversed with owner-operators, training managers, supervisors, corporate HR managers, and the leadership at Hamburger University—individuals who will play a key role in furthering our efforts to penetrate the potential of this alliance," said André Adams, Excelsior College business development specialist.

McDonald's USA is the only restaurant organization to be awarded college credit recommendations from the American Council on Education (ACE) for its Training, Learning and Development programs. And Excelsior College has matched Hamburger University coursework to degree requirements for over ten programs. The average restaurant manager has completed the equivalent of approximately 21 credit hours of college-level work through these courses. Excelsior has tailored degree maps, which show how Hamburger University credits apply to select College degree programs including business and hospitality management.

The McDonald's Corporation is committed to the professional development of all employees with a particular interest in restaurant managers. Hamburger University will be creating and implementing new management training tracks, while expanding its current training programs, to support both

*Business development specialist André Adams speaks with a McDonald's employee at Peakfest.*

short-term and long-term strategic initiatives. There will be an accelerated effort to incorporate professional development tracks, which will provide the competitive advantage necessary to see these goals come to fruition. Excelsior College is poised to help McDonald's advance this initiative with efficient and affordable paths to degree completion. ■



Do you want to advance your career? Obtain a college degree? Change jobs? Before you can act on your career aspirations, you should first get the facts.

# Fact or Fiction

## THE TRUTH ABOUT CAREER MYTHS

**M**any people have misconceptions about aspects of the career planning process that can delay or impede their ability to reach their goals. Often, these preconceived notions are based on false perceptions or limited awareness about career options, educational requirements, job-hunting strategies, and/or market demands. Don't let lack of information or faulty assumptions derail your career path! Challenge any debilitating beliefs, dispel any half-truths you may be harboring, and be on your way to achieving your personal and professional milestones.

*To help separate fact from fiction, here are ten common career myths to be aware of as well as some resources to expand your knowledge.*

**1. Myth: There is one right job for me; I just need to find it.**

**Reality:** The truth is there are many jobs and career fields that can potentially be "right" for you and satisfy your career goals. Because you have various interests and abilities, there are numerous occupations that will suit your skills and personality. Attempting to seek the one perfect job will limit you. Assess your interests, abilities, and values. Use career assessment tools to help define what you are looking for in a job or career. These tools can provide career direction and

ideas for a number of occupations that meet your criteria (see Related Resources). Explore your options thoroughly and consider advantages and disadvantages of each. Keep an open mind and maintain career awareness. As you gain experience and grow professionally, the type of work you want to pursue may change over time. Remember there is often more than one "right" road to reach your destination.

**2. Myth: I should choose my career based upon market demand and jobs that are currently "hot."**

**Reality:** The job market is constantly fluctuating. A "hot" job today may not be in demand tomorrow. Economic conditions, technological advances, and the labor supply can significantly affect employment opportunities. Job outlook trends can be useful as one facet of career selection but should not be the primary consideration. Statistics show most people will have an average of five to seven jobs and as many as three different careers in their lifetime. Your career choices will be most rewarding if they are firmly rooted in your interests, skills, and values, not dictated by market demand.

**3. Myth: My college major/degree will determine my lifelong career.**

**Reality:** Some degree programs such as nursing or accounting have prescribed courses and training that are intended to prepare you for specific career tracks. There are also other majors and degrees such as those in the liberal arts, which train you for a broad variety of careers.

Whatever your focus, your undergraduate degree is just one of the stepping-stones to your future goals. Work experience, volunteer positions, networking contacts, and positive personal attributes also enhance your employability. Often, graduates find themselves working in satisfying jobs that are not directly related to the degree they earned. Why? Interests and skills develop over time, which in turn affect one's career trajectory. For example, if your transferable skills include communication, interpersonal, analytical, and teamwork, you can apply them to virtually any occupation (see Related Resources). Studies show that many employers are hungrily seeking these highly valued skill sets. The bottom line? Your college degree, coupled with your portfolio of skills, experience, and willingness to learn, will collaboratively galvanize your career mobility.

**4. Myth: Planning my career is a one time exercise.**

**Reality:** Career planning is an ongoing process. As you gain work experience and enhance your knowledge and skills, you will most likely refine your career direction several times during your life. You may need to re-examine your goals, and revise your plan to take advantage of new opportunities. Workplace changes are a constant. Many jobs that exist today may be reconfigured or become obsolete in the future. For some occupational fields, there are jobs that do not even exist yet.





## CAREER CORNER

by Maribeth Gunner Pulliam, MS Ed

New jobs are created every year. Be prepared for change, continuously review possibilities, and carefully consider different directions as you travel your career path.

### 5. Myth: *It's too late to change careers.*

**Reality:** Nonsense! You can shift careers at any time if it is something you truly want. No doubt this type of change is a challenge, but it's worthwhile if it results in a more satisfying career. When you think about the amount of time you spend working, you want to be sure it is something you enjoy. Take an inventory of your talents and abilities. Identify the skills that are easily transferable to any field, including leadership and interpersonal communication (see Related Resources). Changing careers may require that you gain new knowledge and skills. If you need to re-tool by pursuing an advanced degree, do research and seek out your options. An Excelsior College degree may be just the perfect fit. Perhaps you need to enhance your current qualifications. Want to improve your oral communication skills? Take a public speaking course. If cost is an issue, look for low cost community resources via your local library or adult education programs. Any career change will present a learning curve, but if you have the motivation to master the necessary skills and the conviction to pursue your goals, then you will surely navigate a successful career transition.

### 6. Myth: *There is no way to "test drive" a new job or career.*

**Reality:** Wrong. There are many ways to learn about jobs and career fields without actually working in them. Taking the time to research is the key. There are various resources that you can

investigate. Use the Internet. The *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (OOH) is a bountiful online resource created by the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS), which provides detailed information about hundreds of occupations including the nature of the work, training requirements, salary range, and outlook through the next decade. For visual learners, there are Web sites that offer videos depicting a typical day for various jobs/career tracks. You can even view Web sites that post insider views of selected organizations. Another more personal way to gain firsthand information is by conducting an informational interview with someone in your desired field. This is not a job interview, but rather an in-person interview you initiate to learn more about the vocation (see Related Resources). To obtain experience in a specific area, try volunteering a few hours a week in the field.

### 7. Myth: *Graduate schools require you to have specific undergraduate majors for admission.*

**Reality:** Graduate programs have varied requirements for applications, but the majority of graduate schools do not require a specific degree or major for admission. Some schools may require specific prerequisite courses, which you can obtain at the undergraduate level. If you are considering a graduate degree, it is a good idea to do some preliminary investigation to learn more about the program's criteria. It's also important to remember there are other factors that contribute to admission criteria such as your career goals, GPA, admission test scores, personal essay, and letters of recommendation. If a graduate degree is key to your personal or professional advancement, it is never too early to investigate a school's requirements. Get a head start on the process and seek the information you need to begin your graduate school journey (see Related Resources).

### 8. Myth: *A resume should only be one page long.*

**Reality:** Not always true. If you are a new graduate or an entry-level job seeker, one page is ideal. However, if you have extensive experience, a two-page resume is perfectly acceptable. Your resume is the marketing tool that will introduce you and your professional qualifications. You may need two pages to include all pertinent information. It doesn't make sense to limit your resume to one page if you will be excluding potentially important information in the process. Having said that, do be sure the most important and relevant information is reflected on the first page. Regardless if it is

one or two pages, the basic rules still apply; your resume should be well written, concise, complete, visually appealing, and customized to the desired employer. There should never be any spelling or grammatical errors.

### 9. Myth: *Cover letters are not essential and are rarely read by employers.*

**Reality:** On the contrary, cover letters are a professional expectation. They identify what job you are seeking and how you are uniquely qualified. They allow you to highlight a few notable items listed on your resume that you want to bring to the employer's attention. A cover letter also provides the opportunity to address a specific person—one who has the authority to assess your credentials and identify you as a viable candidate. Most importantly, cover letters illustrate your writing abilities to employers. They must always be well written, with no spelling or grammatical errors. They should be succinct. One page is sufficient. A cover letter is your first impression with the employer, so give it your best effort.

### 10. Myth: *Job hunting in a tough economy is not a worthwhile endeavor.*

**Reality:** You will never get that coveted job if you wait for the economy to rebound. Higher unemployment rates, downsizing, and a slow economic recovery are daunting but not debilitating. During a sluggish economy, it is best to move forward at a quicker pace. Get out of your comfort zone and position yourself so you are in the right place at the right time. Create a personal brand and market it. Use your network to identify potential contacts for job leads. Become savvy with social networking and use online tools such as LinkedIn. Focus on building experience. Sharpen your skills and be ready to articulate to an employer how you can make an immediate contribution. When job searching, keep an open mind and cast a wide net. Research various employers. Even though the media may report negative news about larger, higher profile organizations, there may still be many small and mid-size companies that are hiring. Be sure you have a top-notch resume and practice your interviewing skills. Always follow up interviews with personal thank-you notes to reconfirm interest. You will have to dig a little deeper and work harder to navigate your job hunt in a tough economy, but with persistence and a positive attitude, your efforts can produce results.

*Career Corner continued on next page*

## CAREER CORNER

### Related Resources

**Occupational Outlook Handbook,  
U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of  
Labor Statistics**

<http://www.bls.gov/oco/>

**Career and Cluster Videos for  
Occupational Fields, CareerInfoNet**

[http://www.careerinfo.net/org/videos\\_by\\_cluster.asp?id=27,&nodeid=28](http://www.careerinfo.net/org/videos_by_cluster.asp?id=27,&nodeid=28)

**Informational Interviewing Tutorial,  
QuintCareers**

[http://www.quintcareers.com/informational\\_interviewing.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/informational_interviewing.html)

**Vault.com Company and Industry Reviews**

<http://www.vault.com/wps/portal/na/companies>

**Online Career Assessment Tools,  
Quintcareers**

[http://www.quintcareers.com/online\\_assessment\\_review.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/online_assessment_review.html)

**Transferable Skills Survey, University  
of Minnesota**

[http://www.d.umn.edu/kmc/career\\_transfer\\_survey.html](http://www.d.umn.edu/kmc/career_transfer_survey.html)

**Resume and Cover Letter Guide, Jobstar**

<http://jobstar.org/tools/resume/index.php>

**"Skills Employers Seek," M. Gunner  
Pulliam, Excelsior College, 2008**

[https://www.excelsior.edu/Excelsior\\_College/My\\_Excelsior\\_College/Publications/Skills\\_Employers\\_Seek\\_16.pdf](https://www.excelsior.edu/Excelsior_College/My_Excelsior_College/Publications/Skills_Employers_Seek_16.pdf) (**login required**)

**"Is Graduate School in Your Plans?"**

**M. Gunner Pulliam, 2005.**

[https://www.excelsior.edu/Excelsior\\_College/My\\_Excelsior\\_College/Publications/Is\\_Graduate\\_School\\_in\\_Your\\_Plans.pdf](https://www.excelsior.edu/Excelsior_College/My_Excelsior_College/Publications/Is_Graduate_School_in_Your_Plans.pdf) (**login required**)

Enrolled students and alumni can access the most current version of the links for this article, as well as many additional career-related links, on the Excelsior College Web site. Go to **www.excelsior.edu/career**; for graduates, click on the Alumni Connection.

**Questions or comments about this article?**  
Contact Maribeth Gunner Pulliam, Career  
Resources Coordinator/Senior Academic Advisor  
in the School of Liberal Arts.

## TECHNICALLY SPEAKING

# 24/7/365 TechSupport, Video Tutorials, and the EC Student Experience

**E**ach month, our Technical Support team surveys students who have contacted us for assistance; this feedback has led to several changes in the support and services that we provide. It started with the hours of support. We adjusted our schedule to fit yours. Technical Support is available on a continuous basis, with analysts ready to assist you **24/7/365**. Another change was the self-help options available through our Web site. The Help Pages offer guidance on properly configuring your computer, installing recommended software, and using the online services. The newest addition to this area comes in the form of **video tutorials**. These step-by-step demonstrations will show you how to create an online account, navigate through your academic information, access student services, use the Virtual Library, and even test out a sample course! To view the tutorials, go to **www.excelsior.edu/videotutorials**.

The video tutorials are also referenced in the **EC Student Experience**, a new orientation course available to all students throughout their tenure at the College. The link for this course can be found in the My Online Courses and Learning Aids section of your *MyEC* page.

## EC Student Experience

**CCS 100: EC Student Experience.** The purpose of this course is to orient you to Excelsior College. There is no charge for tuition. CCS 100 is non-credit bearing and is **required for undergraduate students**. It is to your advantage to complete the course as early as possible to ensure your knowledge of the resources, services, and offices available to help you succeed. You will always have access to this course during your time at the College, so you can take advantage of this valuable resource anytime. (Students required to take an alternate orientation course are notified.) For access to CCS 100, please log in to *MyEC* and click on My Online Courses and Learning Aids.

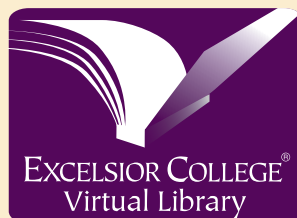


# Organizing Information with Online Tools

**W**ith all of the information available to us today, it can sometimes feel like we are drowning in it! Other times, it may feel impossible to keep up with all of the content available in your discipline or area of interest.

The ECVL librarians are here to help! There is a new Web site in the ECVL that contains links to free, online tools to help you organize and manage information more effectively and efficiently. Enrolled students, faculty, and staff can go to [www.excelsior.edu/libraryOrganizingInfo](http://www.excelsior.edu/libraryOrganizingInfo) (requires login with your MyEC username and password) and get started organizing today!

And if you need assistance—contact the ECVL librarians. They're always happy to help!



[www.excelsior.edu/library](http://www.excelsior.edu/library)

## RECOMMENDED FREE TOOLS

### Zotero.org

A free Firefox extension that easily captures citation information online and allows you to collect, manage, and cite all of your sources in your Web browser itself! It's ideal for managing your references and automatically generating bibliographies.

### Connotea.org

A free social bookmarking tool that allows users to tag, organize, manage, and discover resources online. This tool is Web-based, so it can be accessed from any computer with an Internet connection and does not require a software download.

### Delicious.com

Another free social bookmarking tool, this one with an emphasis on the power of the community. Search popular tags to find what others are viewing most frequently.

### 100 Powerful Web Tools to Organize your Thoughts and Ideas

-by Alisa Miller

[www.online-college-blog.com/index.php/uncategorized/100-powerful-web-tools-to-organize-your-thoughts-and-ideas/](http://www.online-college-blog.com/index.php/uncategorized/100-powerful-web-tools-to-organize-your-thoughts-and-ideas/)

Check out this article posted on the *Online College Blog* that provides links to many other tools including note-taking, bookmarking, mind mapping, wikis, highlighters, to-do lists, calendars, time trackers, and more!

## RESOURCES

- Automatically generating bibliographies and citing sources
- Managing your references and documents
- Informally tracking and sharing Web sites
- Brainstorming ideas and organizing your thoughts
- Generating lists and managing priorities
- Collaborating with colleagues and peers



# Living & Giving

**I**n a note to the Office of Institutional Advancement, Lt. Gen. Joseph Laposata (USA ret.) recently wrote, “Let me share a few thoughts concerning our establishment of an endowment fund at Excelsior College. Anita and I had other endowments, including one at our alma mater, before I joined the Excelsior College Board of Trustees. Endowments are our preferred mode of support to an organization because they permit us to specify exactly how we want our gift to be used. Additionally, well-managed endowments generate funds, which enable giving over the long term.

“Having served 33 years in the Army, I have a special affection for military families. Consequently, when Anita and I established our endowment, we arranged for our funds to be used exclusively for financial aid to military spouses. They do a super job in maintaining the family under conditions of separation and assignment in remote locations. Our endowment is a ‘pay-back’ for their dedication to their families, the military and our nation.

“With Excelsior’s broad presence on military installations and their military friendly programs, we thought it appropriate to use the College’s endowment program to provide long-term financial assistance to military spouses. Here are a few other reasons why we chose Excelsior College to manage our ‘military spouses’ endowment:

- Excelsior’s program permitted us to invest in people—not financial institutions or building funds. We believe that educating and training motivated men and women is a prudent investment for their future and the future of our nation.
- Excelsior’s unique mission in adult distance education is well known for its superiority among its peers. The College has deep roots in adult learning and is nationally recognized.
- The College has a proven track record of exemplary performance and the management of endowments. Simply put, we trust that the financial managers at the College will effectively manage our gift.



*Lt. Gen. Joseph Laposata and his wife Anita created an endowment fund to provide long-term assistance to military spouses. “The reward of endowment-giving comes from the satisfaction of knowing that you are helping others.”*

- The College was easy to work with in establishing the details of our endowment agreement. While we knew what we wanted, the thoughtful advice of the Excelsior staff made our agreement even better.
- Endowment funds contribute to the College’s financial stability and its ability to make financial aid available to deserving students. We are hopeful that our example will encourage others to follow suit and enhance the College’s ability to expand student financial assistance.
- The reward of endowment-giving comes from the satisfaction of knowing that you are helping others. In our case, that means assisting those who have the ability and motivation to excel but lack the financial means to secure the education needed to exploit their talent.

“Endowment givers enable upward mobility. The size of the gift to the Excelsior College Endowment Fund is irrelevant. It is the act of giving that is important. Never doubt that there is a growing pool of potential recipients anxiously awaiting an enabler’s inconspicuous act of charity. In these times of economic downturn, we must do our utmost to grow the fund.” ■

By Lt. Gen. Joseph Laposata

**You can join the Laposatas by establishing your own endowment fund.** Funds can be built over time with a commitment to giving annually. To find out more, please contact the Office of Institutional Advancement; call **518-464-8543**, or email **mstryker@excelsior.edu**.





# GIVING AT MANY LEVELS

## Grad Supports Program that Launched Her Career

**Betty Wei knows from experience the importance that support plays in the pursuit of a nursing degree. Wei was working in California as a licensed practical nurse (LPN) when she enrolled in Excelsior (then Regents) College. “It was just great for me,” she says. “I could work full time and study at home while enrolled in the external degree nursing program.”**

When she completed her associate degree in 1983 and was ready to take the nursing board exam, she was expecting her first child. “It was a busy time, but I was well prepared,” she recalls. “In just two months I took the exam, gave birth to my son, and received my RN license!”

The impact of that experience was not forgotten. This fall, Wei made a gift of \$5,000 to support Excelsior’s new Associate Degree in Nursing Scholarship Fund. Launched in the spring of 2009, the scholarship fund supports nurses who may be struggling financially to earn their degree.

“I was always grateful for what Excelsior did for me and the difference it made in my life,” says Wei. “By making this gift, I hope I can help make a difference in the lives of many others.”

Money raised through the scholarship fund is distributed to individuals who are in need of support. There are many aspiring RNs who simply cannot access educational opportunities due to financial challenges. Funds from Excelsior College’s Associate Degree in Nursing Scholarship Fund are flexible and can be used to pay for examinations and fees—even preparatory expenses for the Clinical Performance in Nursing Exam (CPNE®).

Today, Wei lives in Coudersport, Pennsylvania, where she is the office manager and an RN in her husband’s ophthalmology practice. It is perhaps the same instincts that drew her to the helping profession of nursing that inspired her to take on a number of volunteer roles while raising her family. Indeed, giving for Wei occurs on many levels. As is true with many Excelsior alumni, Wei is active in her community. For example, she has served on the local school board and was hospital auxiliary president. She also volunteered regularly with the local library and served as president of the state advocacy group, Pennsylvania Citizens for Better Libraries. In addition, she was a member of the Governor’s Advisory Council on Library Development for Pennsylvania. And, if that wasn’t enough, she was even a “soccer mom,” serving as treasurer of the local soccer club.

**By making this gift, I hope I can help make a difference in the lives of many others.”**



Now that her family is grown, Wei continues to work full time and volunteers her time and talents. She is treasurer of the Potter County chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and a member of the Building and Grounds Committee at the Charles Cole Memorial Hospital in Coudersport. Also at the hospital, she chairs the Community Art Showcase, a program where she recruits artists and coordinates shows at the hospital’s Irwin Medical Arts Center.

“It has been very gratifying working with our local talent to bring a little aesthetic enjoyment to patients, family, and staff,” she says.

Wei has opened many doors with not only her professional skill as a nurse, but also in her numerous volunteer roles. Her gift to the Associate Degree in Nursing Scholarship Program is just one of many ways this alumna has touched the lives of countless others. ■

# Welcome and Farewell

**A**t the July meeting of the Alumni Association, new and returning members were welcomed to the Alumni Advisory Board (AAB) and two long-standing members completed their terms.

Welcome back to **Jack Bailey**, AS '95, BS '98 and **Sara J. Waldorf**, BA '03

**Jack Bailey** was re-elected to the board and will serve as president through 2010. He is the business development manager for MPRI, an L-3 Communications company in Radcliff, Kentucky. A retired Army officer with 23 years of military experience, he earned a master's degree in human resource development from Webster University and is a doctoral student at Spalding University, Louisville. Bailey earned a Professional in Human Resources (PHR) certification in 2004, and graduated from the Army Management Staff College in 2005 and from the Executive Development Program in Government Innovation with Harvard University (JFK School of Government) in 2007. He owns his own management consulting firm, Bailey and Associates, and is a Six Sigma practitioner. An adjunct instructor in business for University of Phoenix, he is a member of Delta Pi Epsilon and Phi Delta Kappa. Bailey is also a member of the Society for Human Resources Management.

**Sara J. Waldorf** has also been re-elected to the board and will continue to serve as its secretary. She graduated *summa cum laude* in 2003 with a bachelor's degree in literature in English. Waldorf received the 2003 Robert P. Mahoney Award, which recognizes a student who completes a degree in the face of significant challenges and

who demonstrates a dedication to community and volunteer service. She completed her degree entirely through credit-by-exam and independent study. Waldorf is the assistant manager for Dale's Foods in Warren, Minnesota, and is also a freelance writer/editor, currently working on her first novel.

Welcome to **Dr. Wayne A. Oppel**, BS '91, and **Ana Maria Tapia**, BS '06

Since earning a bachelor's degree from Excelsior, **Dr. Wayne Oppel** has completed two master's degrees from Webster University, a doctorate in strategic leadership from Regent University, and a doctorate of organizational management from Capella University. He served for 24 years in the U.S. Navy, during which he earned the Navy Achievement Medal twice and the Joint Service Commendation Medal. He retired as Master Chief Petty Officer in 1992. In 2008, Oppel received the College's C. Wayne Williams Award in recognition of outstanding public service and community involvement.

A native of Chile, **Ana Maria Tapia** is a bilingual, ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher who is continuing her academic career, pursuing a master of education in curriculum and instruction. She was one of the two student speakers at the 2007 Commencement, an honor she shared with her fellow AAB member and friend, Kate Butler.

Farewell to **Dr. Mary O'Connor**, BS '94 and **Dr. Susan Vitale**, BS '92

**Dr. Mary O'Connor** served on the AAB for eight years, including four years as its president. During her tenure, O'Connor tirelessly advocated on behalf of the College's alumni. A 1994 graduate of the bachelor of science in nursing program, she teaches nursing administration at George Mason University and nursing research at the College of Notre Dame of Baltimore. She also works in nursing administration as the Magnet project coordinator at Baltimore Washington Medical Center. She has published extensively on the subject of nursing leadership and has been a member of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing, Gamma Epsilon Chapter, since 1996. Her many awards and honors include the Sigma Theta Tau, International Honor Society for Nursing, Research Award. Dr. O'Connor will continue to work on behalf of the College as a member of the Board of Trustees.

**Dr. Susan Vitale** has concluded her second and final term on the AAB. She remains involved with the College as a faculty member for the School of Nursing. She is currently an assistant professor of nursing at Molloy College and works as a Nurse Practitioner in an outpatient clinic, which serves individuals with special developmental needs.



## Wanted: Energetic, Dedicated Graduates to Serve on Alumni Advisory Board

**C**onsider becoming a part of the leadership of your alumni association as it continues to help move Excelsior College "ever upward."

Members of the Alumni Advisory Board (AAB) serve a three-year term and are expected to attend Commencement and the annual meeting of the Alumni Association held the day after Commencement in July; participate in regular meetings, which are held telephonically and during Commencement (expenses covered by the College); serve on Board committees that select Alumni Award winners and Board nominees; and support the College with annual financial contributions (the amount is up to the individual).

If you would like to be considered, please complete and submit the Advisory Board Member Self-Nomination form, along with a letter explaining the reasons you would like to participate on the Advisory Board, and a copy of your updated resume. The deadline for nominations is December 31, 2009, for a seat on the Advisory Board beginning July 1 of the following year. More information and a link to the nomination form can be found at [www.excelsior.edu/aabnominate](http://www.excelsior.edu/aabnominate).



Standing, l to r: Jack Bailey, AS '95, BS '98, president; Danny Scott, AS '01, BS '02; Kate Butler, BS '07; Ronald Roan, AS '95; John Amidon, BS '99, vice president; and Marcy Stryker, director of development. Sitting, l to r: Sara Waldorf, BA '03, secretary; Mary O'Connor, BS '94 outgoing president; Catherine Coverston BS '87; Wayne Oppel, BS '91; Anna Maria Tapia, BS '06.



# Web Chats



## Career Resources and Upcoming Events

*With Excelsior's career Web chats, you can best prepare for the workplace challenges ahead. This year we've scheduled four Web chats to help you advance your career.*

Registration is simple. Send an email with your name, mailing address, the name of the chat you wish to attend, and a contact phone number to [alumni@excelsior.edu](mailto:alumni@excelsior.edu). Registration is limited and is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

### GEAR-UP FOR YOUR START-UP

#### Tools and Strategies for Starting Your Own Business

NOVEMBER 12, 2009, 8:00 - 9:00 P.M. ET

In its recent study, *The Entrepreneur Next Door*, the Kauffman Foundation indicates that entrepreneurship is as widespread in the United States as getting married or having a baby. Millions of adults are actively engaged in creating and starting their own businesses.

Have you considered starting your own business? Are you not sure how to get started? Let Excelsior College Alumni Career Services help you gear-up for your start-up. Our panel of experts will help turn your business idea into reality with information, guidance and resources about every aspect of

starting a business, including business structure basics, developing a business plan, conducting a market analysis, raising capital and managing finances, establishing your image, and much more!

### YOU: THE BRAND

#### The Importance of Career Branding

JANUARY 28, 2010, 8:00 - 9:00 P.M. ET

What makes one job seeker more attractive than others? The answer is "branding." Here's how you can learn to demonstrate your value and differentiate yourself from the competition. This interesting and interactive discussion will focus on how to build and use your career brand with maximum effectiveness. Well-known brands attract premium prices. When employers go looking, be sure you have a brand they'll want to select.

### YOU'VE GOT CONNECTIONS

#### Career Success through Online Networking

APRIL 18, 2010, 7:00 - 8:00 P.M. ET

Networking has taken on an entirely new meaning in the age of the Internet and global economies. While tapping into the hidden job market can be accomplished through traditional face-to-face networking, our panel of experts will guide you to outsmarting the competition. With tips for establishing and nurturing contacts in larger numbers and at a greater speed, you'll learn about some of the most effective online business and social networking sites. More importantly, find out how to use those sites effectively to connect with people in your community, your country, and all over the world.

### THIS ONE'S UP TO YOU

JUNE 2, 2010, 8:00 - 9:00 P.M. ET

- **Resume Makeover—How to Write a Dynamic Resume**
- **You're Hired!—Acing the Job Interview**
- **When Generations Collide in the Workplace—Understanding Generational Differences**

What will be the topic of our fourth Web chat? We're leaving it up to you. Email us your choice from these three options by December 31, 2009, to [alumni@excelsior.edu](mailto:alumni@excelsior.edu).

### If you're thinking about joining the Alumni Advisory Board,

**don't miss this opportunity to speak with two current members!** Hear about their experiences on the AAB and have your questions answered.

Join us for a teleconference on **Wednesday, December 2, 2009,** from 8:30 to 9:00 p.m. ET.

Email [alumni@excelsior.edu](mailto:alumni@excelsior.edu) to register.



# NOMINATE YOURSELF FOR AN **ALUMNI AWARD!**

**T**he Alumni Awards, which are presented in conjunction with Commencement, are based on academic, professional, personal, and community contributions that are representative of many of our graduates. These honors recognize outstanding graduates whose achievements inspire fellow graduates and students.

If you would like to be considered for any of the awards described below, please forward your resume, a brief biography, a letter indicating the award you feel qualified to receive accompanied by a statement explaining why, and the completed Alumni Award Self-Nomination form available at [www.excelsior.edu/alumniawards](http://www.excelsior.edu/alumniawards). The deadline is **December 31, 2009**.

**Alumni Achievement Award** recognizes outstanding academic, professional, personal, and community contributions that are representative of our graduates. The award is presented to a graduate whose achievements may serve as a role model to inspire other graduates and students.

**Carrie B. Lenburg Award** goes to an outstanding nursing graduate in recognition of the accomplishments and vision of Dr. Carrie Lenburg, coordinator of the College's Nursing Program from 1973 to 1990, in commemoration of her commitment to helping nurses attain their educational and professional goals. It is presented to a nurse who demonstrates a commitment to nursing education as well as academic and professional accomplishments in the nursing field.

**C. Wayne Williams Award** is named after the College's first president and is presented in recognition of outstanding public service and community involvement by a graduate.

More information is available at [www.excelsior.edu/alumniawards](http://www.excelsior.edu/alumniawards).



## TRAVEL IN STYLE



Let us send you a free luggage tag. Simply mail your business card to the Office of Alumni Affairs, 7 Columbia Circle, Albany, NY 12203 and we will mail you a coated tag made from your card.

Woodrow Jones displays his Excelsior pride at Commencement 2009.

Show your pride, too! Go to [www.excelsior.edu/merchandise](http://www.excelsior.edu/merchandise)



## Library Access for Alumni:

*No Card Required*

**A**lumni now have free, 24-hour access to a pilot of the Excelsior College Alumni Library under Phase Two of a two-year project.

Here you'll find resources hand-picked by the College librarians with the lifelong learning and community needs of alumni in mind, including journals, magazines, newspapers, full-text books, specialized references such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, handbooks, and professional development resources. Your use of the library, along with the feedback you provide, will determine its continued development and success. To access these resources and more, interested alumni (even those who previously participated during Phase One) need to register for this service. Follow these steps to sign up for the Alumni Library:

- First, go to your My Profile page at [www.excelsior.edu/myprofile](http://www.excelsior.edu/myprofile) (requires login with your MyEC username and password) and click "yes" to the library option to add library access.
- Then go directly to the Alumni Library at [www.excelsior.edu/alumnilibrary](http://www.excelsior.edu/alumnilibrary) and start browsing!

# MyEC

**DON'T BE LEFT IN THE DARK.  
STAY CONNECTED.**

Excelsior is expanding its alumni Web site and online services. Stay informed.

Update your contact information online today through MyEC.

Go to [www.excelsior.edu/myec](http://www.excelsior.edu/myec) and create a MyEC user account.



# HATS OFF!

What have our grads been doing?  
Read on to find out.

## ARKANSAS

**Col. Kirk E. VanPelt, BSL '08, Maumelle**—is the commander of Arkansas' largest National Guard unit, the famed 39th Infantry Brigade. VanPelt is the vice president of Sherwood AIC Inc., a systems integration company that specializes in industrial software and networking.

## COLORADO

**Robert B. Galin, BAL '08, Mancos**—has been appointed assistant professor of English and Communications for the University of New Mexico, Gallup Branch, starting in August 2009. He is also a member of the UNM-G's assessment development committee and a contributor to the activities of the New Mexico Council of Teachers of English.



## FLORIDA

**Lynda K. Tyson, AS '97, BSL '98, Pensacola**—earned a Master of Human Relations from the University of Oklahoma in 2000 and a PhD in Human Services with a specialization in Professional Counseling from Capella University in 2003. Ms. Tyson is owner and CEO of MM&T Mental Health & Behavior Services, LLC. In her earlier career in the military, then-Army Sgt. 1st Class Tyson was a recipient of the Roy Wilkins Meritorious Service Award, given to U.S. military members who distinguish themselves by contributing to military equal opportunity policies and programs, and the Military Outstanding Volunteerism Award for contributions defined as, but not limited to, volunteering help with people with disabilities, the elderly, abused children and adults, the homeless, and substance abusers.

## CONNECTICUT

**Sara E. Damiano, AS nursing '06, Vernon Rockville**—graduated from Excelsior in 2006. As a new RN, working in the hospital setting, she's risen from staff RN to charge nurse in one year. Only three years into her new career, she was awarded a Nightingale and has been promoted to per diem supervisor in charge of five different units, from pediatrics to adults, psych, detox, brain injury, and physical rehab. Ms. Damiano says, "I toot Excelsior's horn every chance I get."



## NEW YORK

**Richard L. Leveroni, BS '79, Schenectady**—received the 2009 SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Faculty Service. A professor in the Humanities and Social Sciences Department at Schenectady County Community College (SCCC), Dr. Leveroni is also a master's thesis advisor for Excelsior College; an educational consultant for the NYS Education Department; and an advocate for the Teacher Education program. He earned an MS from Columbia University and both an MS and PhD from the University at Albany.

## FLORIDA

**Donald P. Brundrett, BSL '09, Apollo Beach**—completed his bachelor's degree in April, at the age of 71.

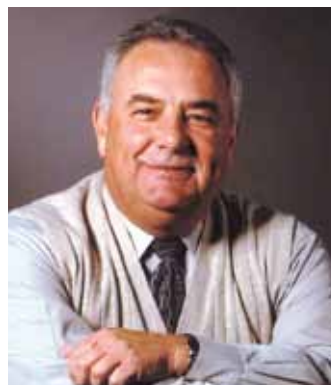
## LOUISIANA

**Sgt. Maj. Ronald W. Semerena, AAB '07, Rosepine**—assumed the role of Command Sgt. Major at Ft. Polk in March 2009.

## MARYLAND

**HM1 Jodie G. Bedard, AA nursing '08, Elkridge**—is now a licensed RN. He fulfilled many of the requirements for his nursing degree while deployed in Iraq, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Acting as medical advisor to an Iraqi army special forces battalion, he became,

by default, the only health care provider for more than 950 Iraqi soldiers and 7,000 local Iraqi civilians. Bedard also instructed the local population in preventive medicine techniques, which reduced local illness outbreaks by nearly 60 percent. The commander of the National Naval Medical Center wrote a letter on his behalf, which stated that Bedard's "professionalism, determination, and selfless devotion to duty directly impacted the morale and welfare of the local population to a point which ensured an excellent turnover transition of territory to Iraqi national forces from the coalition forces."



## CALIFORNIA

**Charlie Chapin, BSL '96, Stockton**—is the owner/producer of Moonshadow Productions, a company that offers qualitative research, video biographies, and various multimedia services. It has won 57 national awards since its inception. Mr. Chapin has spent the last 16 years producing documentaries, corporate and educational videos aimed at improving the quality of life in our communities. During the last three years, he has turned his attention to the worldwide methamphetamine pandemic, and a 102-minute, educational DVD titled, *Choose Life Or Choose Meth* was the result. The documentary is aimed at preventing first-time methamphetamine use. Of his experience with Excelsior College, Chapin says, "Excelsior will forever hold a special place in my heart—it was a springboard for a new future for me."



## FLORIDA

**Kenisha Thompson, BSL '07, Tallahassee**—completed a Master of Science in Instructional Systems with a major in Performance Improvement and Human Resource Development from Florida State University. She is currently president and CEO of Keni Consulting, LLC. Ms. Thompson plans to pursue doctoral studies in training and performance improvement.

## Eileen Ehudin Beard, BSL '01, Silver Spring

—has been appointed senior practice advisor by the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM). In her new position, she will provide technical support to ACNM members regarding clinical and practice issues. Of her appointment, Ms. Beard says, "I have spent most of my career providing health care for women and their families. Being able to share my experience and expertise with my colleagues is a special honor for me. Working as a senior practice advisor for ACNM brings my life full circle."

## MICHIGAN

**Bryan Christiansen, AS '86, BMK '96, Linden**—earned an MBA from Capella University in 2003 and a PhD from University of Phoenix in 2008. He opened his own company, Covene LLC, and is based in Istanbul, Turkey.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

**Elizabeth Loran, BS nursing '97, Pauline**—received the "Faculty of the Year—Student" award based on nominations submitted by current Spartanburg Community College students. A member of the SCC faculty since January 2006, Ms. Loran is licensed by the State Board of Nursing as a Registered Nurse and is also a Nurse Practitioner, holding a Certificate in Critical Care from State University of New York, Syracuse. She holds a master's degree in nursing from the University of Phoenix.



## VIRGINIA

**Stephen Lee Morgan, BA '89, Falls Church**—a former member of the Alumni Advisory Board, holds the rank of major in the Virginia Defense Force. He recently joined the VDF, which supports the Virginia National Guard, and assists various Virginia state agencies in aspects of the homeland security mission.

Morgan recently completed the FEMA Institute's professional development series, which awards a diploma to individuals completing the series' specified curriculum. He also progressed in the SGAUS Academy's Military Emergency Management Specialist (MEMS) program, from the basic to the more advanced senior level, and was awarded the Sr. MEMS Badge in recognition of this accomplishment as of February 2009.



## NORTH CAROLINA

**Lt. Col. Charles A. Aycock (ret.), BS '82, Holden Beach**—was inducted into the U.S. Army Special Forces (Green Berets) Regimental Hall of Fame at Fort Bragg in February 2009. Along with his induction, he was designated a Distinguished Member of the Special Forces Regiment. Last spring, Lt. Col. Aycock was inducted into the U.S. Army Officer Candidate School (formerly the Infantry OCS) Hall of Fame, an honor usually reserved for full colonels and general officers who are federal OCS graduates.

## TENNESSEE

**James Terrence Karney, BS '90, Oak Ridge**—has written a book titled, *Mastering Digital Wedding Photography* (named Book of the Year by *Shutterbug* magazine). The book serves as a practical guide to the art, craft, and business of wedding photography in the digital realm. Mr. Karney has over 30 years experience as an award-winning professional photographer and teacher. He has worked as a photojournalist, medical photographer, studio photographer, and served four years as a U.S. Marine Corps photographer. His work has appeared in *PC Magazine*, *Windows Magazine*, *Computer Shopper*, and *Internet World*. In addition to his bachelor's degree from Excelsior, Karney is a graduate of the U.S. Navy Photographic School and holds a Master of Science in Computer Technology from Nova Southeastern University.

## TEXAS

**John Michael Amidon, BAG '99, Austin**—has been appointed to the position of regional vice president-elect (RVP-Elect) for the Texas-Oklahoma Region of the Association of Government Accountants (AGA). The appointment is a three-year term with the first year as RVP-Elect, the second year as RVP, and the third years as Immediate Past RVP. The regional vice presidents are the chief elected officers for the association's regional operations and represent their respective regions as members of the national board of directors, serving as a focal point for promoting the interests of regional membership.



## MISSOURI

**Lynn Fredericks, AS nursing '09, Lake Waukomis**—is accustomed to stressful situations as a former DMORT (Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team) member. She also encountered some atypical events along the way to completing her CPNE®, including heavy turbulence on her flight to the testing center compounded by a minor fire at the site. However Fredericks passed the required exam and went on to also pass the NCLEX-RN®. Fredericks says, "I would like to express how impressed I am with the staff of Excelsior College...Everyone I dealt with was extremely nice and competent. Because this was such a good experience, I am planning on continuing on with Excelsior to earn my BS nursing and MS nursing."

## FLORIDA AND NEW YORK



William (Bill) Carreira



Francis (Fred) Condino

**William (Bill) Carreira, AS '77 and BS '88, Sarasota, FL and Francis (Fred) Condino, BA '94, Watertown, NY** discovered many parallels in their lives, circumstances that contributed to the two becoming business partners. Each started as an hourly machine operator in a manufacturing company, and now the two are partners in a consulting business specializing in the aerospace industry.

The two first met in 1981 when Condino hired Carreira as a manufacturing superintendent. Their paths crossed again about 10 years later when Carreira, who was working in Ohio and wanted to return to New York, sent a resume to the Carrier Corporation, where Condino worked. A coworker pointed out the similarities in their resumes to Condino, noting, "Someone's plagiarized your resume, Fred."

Carreira was the first to complete his two Excelsior (then Regents) degrees, and then encouraged Condino to do the same. "A higher education degree is worth its weight in gold," Condino said. "The intangibles it gives you are hard to define." According to him, Excelsior is the best resource for people who are busy, especially serious people. And the serious-minded Carreira and

Condino know a thing or two about being busy. Their company now employs 16 consultants and has expertise in cost reductions, productivity improvements, plant layouts, foreign plant startups, and team building. Carreira is especially well known in the area of "lean manufacturing" and has written a best-selling book, *Lean Manufacturing That Works*, which is being translated into a number of languages.

## NEW YORK

**Nathaniel Dancykier, BSL '09, Monsey**—volunteered, in August 2008, as an intern at the Cranio-Facial Dental Clinic at NYU Hospital in New York. During his four weeks at the clinic, he worked with children with craniofacial deformities, particularly those with cleft lips and palates.



In April 2009, Dancykier traveled to Panama to learn firsthand about dental care in a third-world country. During his journey, he went from school to school lecturing and providing children's clinics, with a focus on dental hygiene. With his South American background (his father is from Argentina), Dancykier was able to connect with the kids "at an amazing level." He received guidance on the trip from many top professionals, most of them dentists.

Dancykier plans a third trip to Panama, where he will visit the smaller cities and lecture to the children on dental health. He says, "I have been in contact with many health organizations, in particular Christian Medical Missions Inc., which also has volunteers in the area." He hopes to continue to cultivate his relationship with these communities and similar ones around the world.

Send news of your accomplishments and activities so that we can take our hats off to you in future issues of *Live & Learn*.

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## IDAHO

**Robbie L. Robinson, BSL '09, Boise**—is a civilian employee at Fort Drum, who served in the Army for 33 years, fought and was injured in Vietnam. While in the Army, Robinson found out he had dyslexia, and says, "I used to think I wasn't college material, because it would take me so long to learn things. But when doctors determined I was dyslexic, going to school became a lot easier and more fun."

When Robinson retired from the Army in 2004, he had many dreams he still wanted to pursue, including one that had been growing in him since he was a child—to be a photographer. Not only does Robinson now run his own photography business (called Can Do Photography, named after his belief that people can do anything they make up their mind to do), he is also a Training Support Center photographer at Ft. Drum. Recently, along with ABC, NBC, and CNN, he covered a visit by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, who came to Ft. Drum to talk with the soldiers about their new mission—to Afghanistan.

Robinson is currently writing his autobiography, and a novel, and he is hoping to start on his master's degree in the near future. He also saves time for his many other interests including sculpting with clay, painting, working with bronze, and studying art history. He wants to go to Iraq or Afghanistan to capture soldiers' stories on camera. In an interview with the *Fort Drum Blizzard*, Robinson recalled his own injuries in Vietnam and said, "I know how soldiers feel—I've been one of them. Each soldier has a story to tell, and I'd like to capture it with photography. I traded my rifle for a camera, and I still keep shooting."



**Sgt. Maj. Gary W. Coleman Jr., AAT '06, El Paso**—was appointed command sergeant major for the Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas, in 2007. He was assigned as a battalion command sergeant major at Fort Hood, Texas.

**Richard R. Jackson, BSL '06, Austin**—is now teaching in an Accelerated Academic Recovery Center just outside of Austin, Texas, which offers at-risk kids the opportunity to graduate high school instead of dropping out. Mr. Jackson, whose "one great unfulfilled dream of my life was to teach at the high school level," says, "If it had not been for the flexibility of taking classes online and at other institutions I would not be living this dream. Only Excelsior offered me those options. I have referred so many other people to Excelsior; my diploma hangs on my wall in my classroom. I tell my students that 'where there is a will there is a way.' Dreams never die, they just get covered over by the dust of life—blow them off and clean them up and they can always come true."



## WASHINGTON

**Matthew D. Cates, BS '06, McChord AFB**—earned a Master of Fine Arts degree in creative writing from National University in California.

**Sgt. Jennifer Turnipseed, BGB '08, Killeen**—writes of a soldier's road to self-discovery in her new book *To Serve My Country*. Not only is Sgt. Turnipseed a soldier, she is also a soldier's wife, a mother, and a daughter. Throughout her book she tries to show readers all the different facets of her life. She began writing *To Serve My Country* prior to being deployed for a mission in Iraq, for which she volunteered. While still in Iraq, she wrote of her



## VIRGINIA

**BG James H. Doty, BS '90, Alexandria**—was promoted to the rank of brigadier general of the U.S. Army Reserves in July 2009. BG Doty commands the 420th Engineer Brigade, a command of 5,000 soldiers in 19 states. He has served as the director of Force Management and has been a force manager on active duty assignments across the world for more than a decade. Only (approximately) one percent of army colonels attain the rank of brigadier general during their careers. Doty also holds two master's degrees, one in the humanities from California State University and one in strategic studies from the U.S. Army War College.

experiences with the intent that readers of all ages and walks of life could better understand the time so many soldiers have spent over there. Turnipseed says she "puts her life, her thoughts, her challenges, and her pride" on display for all to see.

## VIRGINIA

**Alfred M. Albers, BSL '92, Virginia Beach**—recently had his second novel published by Infinity Publishing, Inc. Titled *House of Tarot Cards*, the story is a sequel to his first book, *Of Ghosts and Magic*. In this new story, America's foremost magician, John Michaels, risks his life to help solve a psychic's murder.

**Don J. Everhart, BSL '00, Lorton**—currently works as a consultant in the Washington, DC, area. Of his Excelsior experience, Mr. Everhart says, "I earned my bachelor's degree at Excelsior while serving in the U.S. Army. Because of the flexibility of the College, I was able to achieve this important milestone in my life. I later completed a master's degree in education.

Thanks! I wouldn't be where I am today without the opportunity you provided!"

**CSM Nathan J. Hunt, BSL '02, Fort Lee**—is serving as the Regimental Sergeant Major, U.S. Army Quartermaster Center and School. Command Sergeant Major Hunt has held numerous positions throughout his career, which include squad leader, platoon sergeant, first sergeant, and battalion command sergeant major. Until now, he was assigned as the 82nd Sustainment Brigade Command Sergeant Major. CSM Hunt is currently working on his master's degree with Central Michigan University.

**Susan M. Mirkes, BSL '93, Dulles**—finished an MPA in 1994 at Harvard-Kennedy School. For almost seven years, she has worked with Legacy INS, which is now the Department of Homeland Security. She was an asylum officer for two years and a Fraud Detection National Security (FDNS) officer for more than four years. Currently, Ms. Mirkes is an Immigration Officer at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, India.

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