President’s View

Since I announced my decision to step down from the presidency at Hilbert College, effective May 2006, I have heard numerous concerns about the preservation of the mission of the college. Questions arise, similar to: “What will happen because of the absence of sisters on campus?” “How will the Catholic Franciscan spirit and the philosophy of Mother Colette Hilbert be maintained?”

The limited number of sisters on staff is not a new phenomenon. In fact, as the years of Hilbert’s existence increased, the number of women religious on campus decreased. In 1974 when I assumed the presidency, there were 13 sisters on campus in administrative, faculty or staff positions; in 1985, there were six; and when Hilbert advanced to a four-year college there were only three sisters serving at Hilbert as there are today. Yet, the mission of the college has been preserved and, in most recent years, has been made more evident in word and action.

The highest priority among the Presidential Search Committee is that the candidate “model leadership that is reflective of Franciscan values.” Through the Hilbert Franciscan Pilgrimage Program, a segment of personnel has been educated so that they can understand and represent well the time-honored ideals of St. Francis of Assisi. They are supported by Hilbert trustees and other personnel who will, as they do today, profess and live out Catholic Franciscan values.

Hilbert has prospered to this day because of dedicated women and men who govern and staff the college. They have been fortified by the prayers of many, especially the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph. I believe that the God who has seen us through almost half a century will walk beside us on the rest of our journey.

Sister Edmunette Paczesny, Ph.D., FSSJ
President
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Getting the Big Picture

It’s all a matter of perspective, at least a global perspective for students in Hilbert College’s new political science major. As greater emphasis is placed on learning in light of globalization, the major has political science students delving into political systems, policies, origins and other aspects of governments domestically and from around the world.

Hilbert’s new interdisciplinary bachelor’s degree “encourages students to learn about political science using different modes of inquiry while staying consistent with the college’s liberal learning focus that emphasizes global citizenship and an international perspective,” said Gordon Snow, Ph.D., chairperson of law and government, the department under which the degree is being offered.

Started last fall, the major includes concentrations in global cultures, international relations, planning and pre-law.

Since the liberal studies major began six years ago, Hilbert has significantly increased its number and breadth of political science courses with the addition of two full-time professors who have extensive backgrounds in specialized areas like international and global politics, political trials and elections. At the same time, Snow has been working on field-related projects with Hilbert’s Institute for Law and Justice.

This spring political science and students from other majors have access to Hilbert’s new cross-disciplinary global information systems lab where they will be able to analyze, or computer map, data geographically, such as population densities or crime hotspots.

Great Gains

Enrollment has hit an all-time high at Hilbert College, continuing the college’s upward trend for the fourth consecutive year and marking a dramatic 42 percent increase in full-time students since 2000.

Bolstered by new transfer students making up 43 percent of the entering class, as of Oct. 11 a total of 1,109 were enrolled at the college in the fall. The figure includes a 4 percent increase in full-time students and a 5.3 percent jump in returning students.

To accommodate its continued growth, Hilbert is creating additional instructional and faculty workspace with a new academic building, Paczesny Hall, slated to open next summer. This major undertaking will be complemented by the 400-seat William E. Swan Auditorium.

Hilbert President Sister Edmunette Paczesny anticipates the $6 million capital project and other recent campus improvements will “enhance the college’s environment in a way that will be a major draw for prospective students and parents as they tour the campus. The impact these facility upgrades will have on enrollment will be especially evident in the years ahead.”

Although part-time numbers decreased by 9.7 percent compared to Fall 2004, it’s been mitigated by more part-time students registering for more than one class and an increase in full-time students.

The decline in part-time numbers, emphasized the Rev. Dr. Bernard Olszewski, vice president for academic affairs, is largely a sign of today’s economy and a trend many colleges are encountering.

“Given the state of the economy in Western New York and nationally, it’s not surprising to see part-time numbers drop while full-time totals increase. As an example, a decline in employer reimbursements, federal funding and other financial resources for part-time students have negatively affected the ability of many to pursue a college education on a part-time basis.”
New Life for Old Cell Phones

With an estimated 500 million outdated used cellular phones now out of action across the country, a Hilbert College student organization’s fund-raiser will help put old models into the hands of those who otherwise would be without this modern service.

The Hilbert Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) chapter has teamed up with the American Cellular Donation Organization (ACDO) and the Call to Protect program to run a used cell phone drive. Phones may be donated at drop-off locations in all buildings on Hilbert’s campus. Donations may also be made by contacting Phyllis Dewey, Hilbert SADD Club advisor, at 716-926-8930, or e-mail pdewey@hilbert.edu.

Reusable donated phones will be refurbished and sold by ACDO to an affiliate company with proceeds from the sale to go to the Hilbert SADD chapter. Repaired cell phones are typically sent to emerging markets and developing countries where a donated phone can be a valuable communication channel.

Nonworking phones will be recycled and disposed of according to EPA guidelines, which prevents the phones from ending up in landfills where they can be hazardous to the environment.

Old cell phones also will be donated to Call to Protect, a national campaign that matches victims of domestic abuse with emergency-use cell phones that are loaded with air time and emergency numbers. Similar to ACDO, the phones are refurbished for a new user.

Welcome Home

With their tours of duty completed in Iraq, three Hilbert College criminal justice majors and a 2004 graduate received a resounding welcome home in December. Faculty and staff gathered for students Nicholas Coniglio and Christopher Manns, who were deployed for nearly a year along with ‘04 alumnus Jonathon Monaco as members of the India Company of the 3rd Battalion, 25th Marines. Also honored was Hilbert student Amy Weiser, who served in 2003, and Mark Miller, brother of Hilbert Professor Yvonne Downes.

Sports and Spirituality

“When you connect spirituality to what you are doing on the field, then you give 100 percent in every play and give it your all,” former Buffalo Bills quarterback Frank Reich told a group of college and high school student-athletes at a fall semester presentation at Hilbert College. Reich, who many consider one of the best backup quarterbacks in NFL history, spoke on the spiritual aspects of sports as keynote speaker at a one-day program on “The Triformed Athlete: The Mental, Physical and Spiritual Components” held in November.
During the past four decades, Sister Edmunette Paczesny has been revered at Hilbert as a leader, teacher, mentor, and educational advocate. Now, as she prepares for the end of her 30-plus years of distinction as college president, Sister Edmunette reflects on her time at Hilbert and looks at what lies ahead.

by Grace A. Lazzara

She never dreamed she would be a college president. Of course, she’d always thought highly of educators and admired her teachers since she was a young girl. And she’d earned a master’s degree and doctorate in the field of education. But things were different in the ‘60s, especially for women religious.

“Obedience was extremely important as a young sister,” remembers Sister Edmunette Paczesny, Ph.D., “and one didn’t discuss one’s career.”

When Sister Edmunette became a member of the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph (FSSJ), the founding congregation of Immaculata College which later became Hilbert College, the Milwaukee, Wis. native knew she would be assigned a role her superiors deemed appropriate.

That Sister Edmunette this year steps down as Hilbert’s president—one of the longest-serving college presidents in the country—is, she believes, a result of God’s blessing and her response to it. Certainly, Hilbert and its students, faculty and staff have been touched by the same blessing, if the college’s transformation during her tenure is any...
indication. And if institutions of higher education might be imagined to dream, perhaps Hilbert itself never dreamed it would be what it is today. Ultimately, Sister Edmunette’s and Hilbert’s dreams and history have been inextricably entwined.

Their inseparable history begins in 1962 when Sister Edmunette was named an instructor of psychology and philosophy at Immaculata College. The student body of the five-year-old college numbered around 25 women religious pursuing associate’s degrees in arts and applied science. The campus consisted of a wing in the FSSJ

1966 Land for college is deeded by FSSJ.

1966 First federal grant totaling $1.5 million is acquired, making it possible to build Bogel Hall and McGrath Library.

1967 College changes its name from Immaculata to Hilbert College.
Motherhouse. Because she had secretarial skills, Sister Edmunette also served as secretary to the college’s founder and president, Sister Edwina Bogel.

Over time, Sister Edmunette became the college’s registrar, then chair of the liberal arts department, then the college’s academic dean. Throughout that period, she assisted Sister Edwina in her duties as president.

Growing in sync
As Sister Edmunette grew in her career, the college grew as well. It broadened its curriculum to include degrees outside of teacher training, expanded enrollment to include lay women as well as men and built an academic building and library. It also changed its name to Hilbert College. In 1974, when Sister Edwina could no longer fulfill her responsibilities, the congregation named Sister Edmunette acting president. The decision was not without debate.

“The ring road brought everything closer together,” points out Sister Edmunette.

With the help of leadership in her congregation and from Hilbert trustees with business and administration know-how, Sister Edmunette and Hilbert embarked on a period of transformation much more extensive than the college had previously experienced.

“I was scared, because (being president) was something I never aspired to. I thought I wasn’t experienced enough, that others could have been chosen. This is where the power of prayer—mine and the other sisters’—formed the support to handle those things.”

“Some trustees thought I was too young,” says Sister Edmunette, who was at the time just 41. Another sister was briefly assigned the presidency, but her physical condition prevented her from remaining in the position. After looking among the other sisters, the congregation assigned Sister Edmunette permanently to the role. That decision was not without serious contemplation, within Sister Edmunette herself.

The physical manifestations of this transformation are in ample evidence today. Where once a road led through the middle of Hilbert, a ring road now encircles the entire campus. “The ring road brought everything closer together,” points out Sister Edmunette.

Addition facilities have subsequently opened—the Campus Center;
residence hall; maintenance building; Hafner Recreation Center; Franciscan Hall, a 20,000-square foot administrative and student services building; and student apartments. "What’s most exciting is when former students come back and say they can’t believe the changes to the campus,” Sister Edmunette says.

Change by degrees
The change that made the greatest impact, and of which Sister Edmunette is most proud, is when Hilbert became an accredited four-year institution. “Hilbert had been outstanding,” she says, “but we saw our graduates moving on to four-year institutions when we thought we could continue to educate them.”

Because of the number of colleges already in the Western New York region, the State Education Department was reluctant to create another baccalaureate institution. “They didn’t think we’d attract the number of students needed or the faculty,” recalls Sister Edmunette, “but we provided them with sufficient data to prove our case.”

Since that momentous move, Hilbert has increased its number of bachelor’s degree programs from five to 13. Academic innovations during Edmunette’s tenure have included a forensics training lab, the Center for Disability and Rehabilitation Studies and the Institute for Law and Justice. Enrollment has significantly increased to some 1,100 students. In fact, the past three years have seen record-setting enrollment.

Today’s Hilbert provides Sister Edmunette a great sense of accomplishment, which she typically shares with colleagues. “When people say Hilbert has become recognized and acknowledged in the area for its intellectual and relational atmosphere, it’s important they understand I haven’t done it alone.”

That leaders achieve with the help of others may be a truism, but Sister Edmunette has also achieved on her own. Last spring she marked her 50th anniversary in the FSSJ, and has chaired several of its committees and served in the congregation’s general administration. She’s a director of the Western New York Consortium of Higher Education and a member of a number of other prestigious associations in the higher education field. She also was named a 2003 Distinguished Scholars Award recipient by the Marquette University Graduate School, and received a citation for academic leadership and involvement in community activities from the National Conference for Community and Justice.

Sister Edmunette credits her parents with providing her certain skills that have served her well over the years. “Both my parents related very well to people, and I acquired that skill from their example.”

She also credits her siblings, who live in Wisconsin where Sister Edmunette grew up. “My parents needed assistance as they aged. Those left behind took care of them and allowed me to concentrate on what I was doing. That was a gift,” she says.

Her vocation, imbued as it is with the Franciscan

1974-75 Sister Edmunette is named acting president and inaugurated following year.
1979 Hafner Recreation Center opens.
1985 Enhancement of technology picks up in the 1980s.
1992 Hilbert begins offering bachelor-level degrees.
values of respect and tolerance, also clearly affects how she conducts her career. “It has caused me to look at the importance of my relationship to God and people. I always try to think of how something will affect people rather than believing it’s black or white. The person is important. That’s what my religious life has led me to focus on.”

Keeping the faith
Overseeing Hilbert’s evolution has been complex. “We’ve had so many things we’ve wanted to do with our programs, staff, buildings, and more,” she says. “Getting the funds has been challenging, especially in this region with 16 other colleges. We’re all asking.”

The community reaction, however, has made the effort worth the sweat. “We have been fortunate with the community response. They see the success of our programs and that our graduates are doing well. They see that we’ve used our money well, that we’re prudent,” Sister Edmunette says.

Even in demanding times, Sister Edmunette asserts she never wanted to throw in the towel. In those times, she says, “I knew I wasn’t here alone. I knew enough people supported my decisions because I was doing what was best for the college.”

Again, she credits God’s grace. “I can’t neglect the fact that I’ve been blessed. And God has helped me to choose the right people here.”

Her self-confessed love for Hilbert’s students is a primary reason she has stayed committed to the college for so many years. The emotion seems to be returned in abundance, perhaps due to her unpretentious demeanor. “Students can tease me, and I can tease them,” says Sister Edmunette, laughing. “My door is always open.

1996 Former Attorney General Janet Reno is commencement speaker.
1996 Construction starts on Franciscan Hall.
1996 Photo by Nancy J. Parisi
1997 Opening of Franciscan Hall and addition of ring road expands/improves campus.
1998-00 Men’s basketball team goes unbeaten for 16 straight home games.
2000 College celebrates Sister Edmunette’s 25th year as president.
Sometimes students will stop by to talk or sell me a ticket to something or thank me. Even when I’m sitting in the campus dining hall, students don’t hesitate to join me.”

Indeed, when she thinks about what she’ll miss most about her leadership role, Sister Edmunette is unequivocal. “I’ll miss engaging with people. The people here are a source of energy,” she marvels. “Even on a tough day, there’s always someone who will say something to turn a rainy day around.” What she might not miss? “I might not miss some of the burdens that accrue.”

Expressions and effects

Sister Edmunette’s estimation about her legacy to Hilbert also centers on the human factor. “I hope what remains is the respect for people and their abilities, no matter who they are. People here hold doors for others; they say, ‘please’ and ‘thank you.’ I’m not a preacher, but I hope that people caught that from me by example. I also believe that when people have talent and ability, that one should delegate to them so they can use their skills. You need to encourage them.”

Sister Edmunette’s fondest memory is not, strictly speaking, a memory. It’s the ongoing demonstrations of affection and gratitude that have come her way since announcing she would step down in May. “The love expressed by people I didn’t know I touched or who were touched by faculty and staff of Hilbert has been overwhelming.”

Though Sister Edmunette’s and Hilbert’s conjoined story will inevitably end, she will continue to have an effect through current projects for which she has been the catalyst. Coming years will see the opening of Paczesny Hall, a new academic center; the William E. Swan Auditorium; and a complete renovation of the college’s existing academic building. “The campus will look radically different,” Sister Edmunette says.

For Sister Edmunette herself, life after Hilbert is an unknown—but in a positive way. She will undertake a “discernment process,” which involves speaking with her superiors, fellow sisters and others, and prayer to help make a decision on a direction to take. She’d like to continue to engage with Hilbert, possibly in fund raising. She also is considering reading to the blind or teaching reading to adults.

“These are thoughts I have,” she says with delight obvious in her soft voice, “but look where God has put me.”

Grace Lazzara is a freelance writer and public relations consultant residing in Buffalo, N.Y.
I remember clearly the first time I met Sister Edmunette Paczesny. It was 1978 and I had applied to Hilbert College for an adjunct faculty position in economics. Since this was my first time on campus, I was taking things in, trying to determine whether I would fit in the college’s environment. That meeting with Sister Edmunette made an immediate and lasting impression. I was struck by her welcoming personality and warm nature. As I left her office in Bogel Hall, I recall thinking that I really wanted the position because Hilbert suddenly felt like a great place to be.

After all these years of change and growth, one thing has not changed at Hilbert: whoever walks into Sister Edmunette’s office will find the same person who greeted me 28 years ago. In leadership language, a person demonstrating this consistency of character is described as “authentic.”

Sister Edmunette is a person of great faith, and she’s proud of that faith and lives it in everything she does. Whenever I had questions or concerns about how some issues might affect Hilbert’s future, I would discuss them with Sister Edmunette. Time after time I was reassured by Sister’s calm and rational explanations, and her rock-solid faith inspired confidence that things would work out.

A primary prerequisite to being an effective leader is being a positive role model. Sister Edmunette is a visible example to all, on a daily basis, of what it means to be Franciscan. She is recognized as a person of uncompromising character, and she is as trusted a person as I have known. This high level of trust has enabled Sister Edmunette to create an environment at Hilbert that is truly exceptional. My wife, Ann, and I will be forever grateful that our two sons were able to live, learn and earn college degrees in such a positive and supportive environment.

Over the years, Sister Edmunette made a point to attend virtually every function to which my family invited her, from religious celebrations for our children to baptisms for our grandchildren. As one of the busiest and most conscientious persons I have known, she always seemed to find the energy necessary to reach out, to make others feel important. Despite her many commitments, she does this with ease and grace.

Sister Edmunette’s legacy will be that she used her extraordinary gifts to build an institution that values people and offers an opportunity to discover one’s potential and to help others discover their potential. Hilbert stands on the shoulders of giants, none bigger than Sister Edmunette. From all of us associated with Hilbert and our families, whose lives you have influenced in such profound ways - thank you Sister Edmunette and Peace and All Good.

Patrick Heraty is a professor of business administration at Hilbert College.

2003 Hilbert’s first study abroad program is offered to students.
2003 Apartment-style student housing complex opens.
2004 Center for Disability and Rehabilitation Studies established.
2005 New fitness center, expansion opens in Hafner Recreation Center.
2005 Site work and construction begins on Paczesny Hall and William E. Swan Auditorium.
2005 Sister Edmunette marks her 50th jubilee in the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph.
2006 Sister Edmunette steps down as president.
New Volleyball Coach

Charlie Brittain has been named Hilbert College’s new head men’s volleyball coach and will also serve as assistant coach for the women’s volleyball program under first-year head coach Tim Clauss.

Brittain comes to Hilbert after spending the last three years as assistant men’s volleyball coach at Medaille College in Buffalo, N.Y. Previously he was an assistant coach with the boys’ varsity team at Kenmore West High School.

Brittain graduated from Medaille with a bachelor’s degree in sports management and a minor in media communications. He was a two-year captain for the Medaille Mavericks and received Male Athlete of the Year honors his junior year. The former North Eastern Collegiate Volleyball Association (NECVA) honorable mention selection went on to earn a master’s degree in sports administration from Canisius College.

“Charlie has an excellent background as a Division III student-athlete and coach,” said Richard Walsh, director of athletics. “He understands what it takes to run a solid program. Under his leadership, I’m confident our men’s volleyball program will be competitive in the near future”.

The Hawks resumed play in January in the highly competitive NECVA as a member of the Western Division.

Golden Season

An early season win by the Hilbert College women’s soccer team marked the 50th career victory for head coach James Ruggiero. He finished up his seventh coaching season at Hilbert with 55 wins. Ruggiero’s impressive record makes him the Hawks all-time leader in wins since the college joined the NCAA Division III in 1992.

Who’s Who Picks

Seven Hilbert College student-athletes have been selected for the 2005-06 Who’s Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges.

Joining the class of 2005-06 from across the country are Joseph Ferrara ‘06, men’s baseball; Allen Leight, men’s basketball; Adam Moody, men’s cross country; Karen Kalwicki ‘06, women’s soccer and softball; Jeannette Testa ‘06, women’s soccer; Cheri White ‘06, women’s basketball; and Autumn Lee-Jeffries ‘06, women’s basketball.

Who’s Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges is one of the most renowned honors programs in the nation. It recognizes students who combine a strong academic background with leadership skills evidenced in extracurricular involvement in campus and community activities.
March

1  Professional Success Program  
   6-9 p.m., Franciscan Hall  
   Info: 926-8927, radle@hilbert.edu

2  Spring Job Fair  
   9 AM-Noon, Franciscan Hall  
   Info: 926-8927, radle@hilbert.edu

May

7  Baccalaureate Mass & Brunch  
   11 AM-1 PM  
   Info: 926-8789, pbaubonis@hilbert.edu

Internet Job Search Seminar
Feb. 21 & March 23 – 1-2 PM  
April 19 – 3-4 PM

Graduate School Workshop
Feb. 22 – 3-4 PM  
March 21 – 2-3 PM  
April 20 – 1-2 PM

Resume & Cover Letter Writing Workshop
Feb. 23 – 1-2 PM  
March 22 – 3-4 PM  
April 18 – 2-3 PM

Interviewing Skills Workshop
Feb. 24 – 1-2 PM  
March 20 – 2-3 PM  
April 17 – 3-4 PM

Send us your news & photos!

Traveled across the country? Published a book? Been promoted? Let us know what’s new with you (awards, marriage, births, promotions/job changes, change of address, advanced degrees, etc.). Just fill out this form and mail it with your photo, if available, to: Hilbert College, Office of Alumni Relations, 5200 South Park Ave., Hamburg, NY 14075 or fax it to (716) 558-6381. You can also e-mail your latest news to alumni@hilbert.edu.

Please print or type:
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MICHAEL DEGNAN, PH.D., academic dean, will present a paper on “Missed Opportunities: The Failure of American Interpretive Strategies in Rome,” at a conference in July on the “Transatlanticism in American Literature” at Oxford University in England.

Two awards for the Office of Student Activities were earned from the National Association for Campus Activities Mid Atlantic Region. Third place was received in the School Member Publicity-Professionally Designed, One-Color Poster category for Hilbert’s 2004 Fall Fest poster, which was created by JASON ENSER, director of student activities. The 2005 Quad party 8 poster placed third in the School Member Publicity-Professionally Designed, Multicolor Poster category.

MARTIN FLOSS, PH.D., director of the Institute for Law and Justice/professor of criminal justice, has been elected to a two-year term as president of the Criminal Justice Educators Association of New York State.

WILLIAM HASLINGER, associate professor of economic crime investigation, gave presentations on identity theft to local employees of Bank of America.

HIMBERLY HLINE, PH.D., has been named Hilbert’s director of institutional research and planning/associate professor of social sciences.

The REV. DR. BERNARD OLSZEWSKI, vice president for academic affairs, had an article published on “Critical Intellectual Inquiry at Catholic Colleges” in the American Association of University Professors’ Academe journal.

HATHLEEN PARKER, admissions counselor, is serving on the 2005-06 New York State Transfer and Articulation Association Executive Board.

SCOTT PATRONIH, adjunct instructor of economic crime investigation, gave presentations on wireless information security to the American Society of Women Accountants and the Institute of Internal Auditors.

HATHLEEN ROSS has been promoted to the newly created position of assistant director of the Hilbert McGrath Library. She will also continue her duties as the library’s technical services coordinator, a position she has held since 1999.

DETECTIVE SGT. WILLIAM SCULLY, adjunct instructor of criminal justice, was named the Hamburg Police Benevolent Society’s Officer of the Month for October.

PAULA WITHERELL, public relations director, has received a bronze 2006 CASE District II Accolade Award in the Excellence in News Writing – General News Writing category.

You Can Make It Possible

With the Hilbert College Annual Fund, you have the opportunity to make great things happen and to help the college maintain its high level of excellence and growth. A simple way to make this possible is to give to this year’s annual fund.

Hilbert’s annual fund enables us to provide scholarships, improve academic programs, enrich campus life for students, encourage faculty development, and support many other areas where the need is greatest. These unrestricted contributions are put to use immediately.

All gifts to the Hilbert Annual Fund, regardless of size, are important and have a positive impact on the lives of our students. Your gift reflects a commitment to Hilbert and shows your desire to be a part of our continued success.

For your convenience, an annual fund envelope is included in this issue of Hilbert Connections. You may also make a gift by contacting Mark Bindig at 716-926-8791 or e-mail mbindig@hilbert.edu. We extend our sincerest appreciation if you’ve already made a gift to the annual fund.
A joyous New Year to all!

As 2006 begins it means a time of reflection on the past year and a look ahead at the future. 2005 was an exciting time for the Hilbert College Alumni Association as attendance at events continued to increase with many graduates returning to enjoy social and educational programs. The October Alumni Reconnection – An Evening with Sister Edmunette event was attended by more than 160 guests who came to honor President Sister Edmunette Paczesny and to participate in an evening of dinner, dancing and catching up with old friends. Everyone enjoyed sharing memories with Sister Edmunette, who made a point to thank everyone for their contributions to the Hilbert family.

Plans are underway for several new events in 2006, as well as many annual events, including but not limited to May’s alumni brunch honoring the Class of 2006. Check the alumni association Web site at www.hilbertcollegealumni.org for news, classmate updates and details on events.

This year will also bring a change to the alumni office. After more than five years as alumni relations director, I will be leaving the position in May to relocate with my husband to Florida. When I assumed the position as the first alumni relations director in 2000, the opportunity and challenge to build an alumni program at Hilbert and assist in the reactivation of the alumni association was very exciting for me. The past five-plus years have been rewarding and fun!

Being Hilbert’s alumni director has allowed me to become reacquainted with classmates long forgotten from the Class of 1981, meet many graduates from all decades of Hilbert’s long history, make new friends, and, most of all, work with an incredible group of hardworking and dedicated people who serve on the alumni association board of directors. Without them my tenure as alumni relations director would have been much more challenging and while there is still much work to be done, the groundwork has been laid for the future to continue to have Hilbert graduates “Come home to Hilbert.”

Hilbert and it has been an honor to have served as your alumni relations director. I know that I leave the alumni association in good hands under the direction of Nichole Becker ‘01, president, and the rest of the board. Please continue to give them your full support, your input on events, benefits and services you would like to see available, and become involved. Feel free to contact Nichole at alumnipresident@hilbert.edu.

Patricia A. Baubonis
Alumni Relations Director

To contact the Hilbert Office of Alumni Relations: e-mail pbaubonis@hilbert.edu

‘60s

LEDA (JOHNSON) ANSBRO, AA ‘68 won a National Endowment for the Humanities grant, which allowed her to study Cherokee Indians culture at Northeastern State University.

ELEANOR CANNITO, AA ‘68 is national account manager for B&G Foods Special Markets Division in Atlanta, Ga.

‘70s

CHARLES KLAUS, AA ‘75 has been elected to a second term as treasurer of the Hilbert Alumni Association.

CLAUDIA SODARO, AA ‘70 is a pianist and composer in Tarpon Springs, Fla.

DEBRA (HOBIN) ORMSBY, AA ‘72 gave the keynote address at the 57th commencement at Pine Valley Junior Senior High School in South Dayton, N.Y.

MARGARET (FAGANT) SCHWENK, AAS ‘76 served on the Mater Christi Award Gala Committee at Immaculata Academy in Hamburg, N.Y.

RICHARD WIPPERMAN, AA ‘74 retired in October from the Town of Cheektowaga Police Department in Cheektowaga, N.Y.

‘80s

ANTHONY MCBRIDE, AA ‘89 is supervisor of the Northern Probation Office of the Allegheny County Juvenile Court in Pennsylvania. He has a doctorate of education from Duquesne University.
DEAN NEAVERTH, AAS ’87 is owner of On the Fly Cellular in Orchard Park, N.Y.

ROBERT SAMUELSON, AA ’89 is a lieutenant in the Jamestown Police Department in Jamestown, N.Y.

JUDITH WILLERT, AA ’89 is volunteer coordinator at Niagara Lutheran Health System.

‘90s

LEE BALCERAK, BS ’99 is with the collateral department at M&T Bank in Buffalo, N.Y.

DAVID BELLISSIMO, AAS ’93 is owner/director of Wee-Folk Childcare, Inc., in Blasdell, N.Y. He is a magna cum laude graduate of Medaille College with a bachelor's degree in business administration.

BRENDA ELLIS, BS ’99 has been elected secretary of the Hilbert Alumni Association.

CHERYL FEELY, AA ’91 is a billing/insurance specialist in the Cancer Center of Strong Memorial Hospital in Rochester, N.Y.

TRACEY (PORTER) HIBBERT, AAS ’92 is a sales/service coordinator at Precision Photo-Fab, Inc., in Buffalo, N.Y. She has a bachelor's degree in business administration from Medaille College.

CAROL JENSEN, BA ’98 is clinical coordinator at DePaul Community Services in Buffalo, N.Y. She serves on the Hilbert Psychology Program Advisory Board.

STELLA S. JOHNSTON, AAS ’94 is employed in the NYS Unified Court System and is chief clerk in Salamanca City Court in Salamanca, N.Y.

PATRICK KEEM, BS ’94 is director of administration at Claddaugh Commission in Buffalo, N.Y. He also is a local dealer for Katahdin Cedar Log Homes and traveled to Wells, Maine, with other dealers to build a cedar log home on the ABC-TV show “Extreme Makeover: Home Edition.” He was honored by The Southtowns Citizen newspaper in December 2005 as Citizen of the Week for his service to the community.

COLLEN (NEAR) KUMIEGA, BS ’94 has joined the Hilbert faculty as a full-time instructor in the human services department.

LISA (RICHMOND) LANGENFELD, BS ’99 is a New York State parole officer.

MICHAEL LANGENFELD, BA ’99 is teaching English in Kyoto, Japan.

JANET LOPRESTO, BS ’98 is manager of the customer response center at National Fuel Gas in Buffalo, N.Y. She and her husband have been honored for their volunteer service to the Girl Scout Council of Buffalo and Erie County.

DANIELLE (PISA) LISKOW, AA ’97 is with the Fornes Agency in Springville, N.Y.

KEVIN MORRIS, BS ’96 is a senior imaging solutions specialist at Sound Technologies, Inc., in Carlsbad, Calif. He has an MBA from Mercer University, Stetson School of Business.

LISA (SZALKOWSKI) RESSMAN, BS ’99 is president of the 2005-06 board of directors of the Buffalo Chapter of the America Society of Women Accountants.

ANDREA (NICOSIA) ROBIDEAU, BS ’99 is pursuing a master's degree in elementary education at Niagara University. She was recently inducted into Kappa Delta Pi, Alpha Alpha Beta Chapter.

ERIC SCHNEIDER, BS ’98 is a senior reconciliation specialist at Ingram Micro in Buffalo, N.Y.

THEODORE VANDEUSEN, AAS ’90 was recognized by the Parent-Child Connection of Hamburg, N.Y., for his “contribution and dedication to the creation of parenting enrichment opportunities in Hamburg.” He recently joined the Southtowns Coalition of Community Services as a representative of the Parent-Child Connection.

JOSEPH WILSON, BS ’99 is a school counselor at Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga BOCES in Ithaca, N.Y. He has a master's degree in counselor education from St. Bonaventure University.

‘00s

AMY BARTZ, BS ’01 has been elected vice president of the Hilbert Alumni Association.

TERRY BASS, BS ’03 is with Sargent & Collins in Williamsville, N.Y.

NICHOLE BECKER, BS ’01 has been elected president of the Hilbert Alumni Association.

ROSEMARY BLAKE, AAS ’00 is a legal assistant at Paul William Beltz in Buffalo, N.Y.

KIMBERLY BONK, BS ’04 is operations manager at Waring Financial Group in Hamburg, N.Y. She is pursuing a master's degree in professional leadership at St. Bonaventure University.

CHRISTOPHER BOOKER, BS ’04 is a New York State Park Police officer in Allegany State Park.

KELLY (DONOVAN) BREHM, BA ’02 is with Living Opportunities of DePaul in Buffalo, N.Y. She’s attending the University at Buffalo for a master's degree in social work.
TRACY CARROW, BS '02 is a hospital electronics sales representative at Curbell, Inc., in Orchard Park, N.Y.

ANDREA CROCE, BS '05 is human resources assistant at Loew's in East Amherst, N.Y.

COLLEEN DEGENER, BA '05 is pursuing a master's degree in mental health at Medaille College.

STEPHANIE DUBEL, BS '05 is a paralegal at Colling and Maxwell in Buffalo, N.Y.

COURTNEY EBLING, BA '05 is pursuing a master's degree in counseling psychology at St. Bonaventure University.

NICOLE ERNST, BA '04 is pursuing a master's degree in social work at the University at Buffalo.

DAVID FISHER, BS '04 is an accounting associate at Fisher-Price in East Aurora, N.Y.

MARITZA (ARMSTRONG) FOX, BS '05 is a higher education counselor at the Seneca Nation of Indians Cattaraugus Reservation.

KRISTEN (BURGESS) GEORGE, BS '00 is a residential accountant for the Benchmark Group in Buffalo, N.Y.

JENNIFER (SUFFOLETTO) GIARDINA, BS '03 is office manager at PVS Process Equipment, Inc., in Buffalo, N.Y.

DANIELLE (EDWARDS) GONG, BS '03 is a senior operations clerk at M&T Bank in Buffalo, N.Y.

NILA GRIFFIS, BS '03 is account coordinator at Quiller & Blake Advertising in Buffalo, N.Y.

LINDA HERRMANN, BS '03 is a supervisor of finance at Empire State District, UPS in Syracuse, N.Y.

VICKI HILL, BS '01 is a banking officer and cash management sales representative at M&T Bank in Buffalo, N.Y.

TRISHA HUSUL, BS '02 is a paralegal at Community Blue in Buffalo, N.Y.

RACHEL JOHNSTON, BA '05 is pursuing a master's degree in counseling at Canisius College.

DONALD KADRYNA, BS '03 is a central control officer at the Erie County Youth Detention Center.

MARGARET KELLY, BS '05 and Sandra Augustine, chairperson of the economic crime investigation department, co-presented on “Recruiting and Keeping Volunteers and Interns,” at a seminar on Improving Your Victim Services and Crime Prevention Programs.

JOANNE KISSEL, BS '02 is a management trainee at Enterprise Car Rental in Denver, Col.

RYAN (MCCRAITH) KINYON, BS '02 is a claims representative with Travelers Insurance Co., in Buffalo, N.Y.

JUSTIN KRUSE, AA '05 was recognized by President Bush with the President's Volunteer Service Award from the Council on Service and Civic Participation. Kruse is continuing his studies in criminal justice at Hilbert.

CRYSTAL KRZYZANIUK, BS '05 is a paralegal at Schroeder, Joseph & Associates in Buffalo, N.Y.

JULIE (FARRELL) KURDZIEL, BA '00 is an undergraduate academic advisor at the Rochester Institute of Technology College of Engineering in Rochester, N.Y.

LORETTA LABBY, BA '04 is pursuing a master's degree in mental health at Medaille College.

PAUL LANKES, BS '02 is a manager at NCO Financial in Charlotte, N.C.

RONALD LEAZOTT, BS '03 is a correctional officer in the New York State Department of Corrections.

JESSICA MACRI, BS '05 was named the 2005 Maid of the Mist at this year's Maid of the Mist festival in Niagara Falls. She's also an assistant women's soccer coach at Hilbert.

VALERIE MARCHESON, BA '05 is pursuing a master's degree in counseling at St. Bonaventure University.

MICHELLE MATHER, BS '04 is pursuing a master's degree in professional leadership at St. Bonaventure University.

MELISSA MCCAFFERY, BS '03 is a customs officer for U.S. Customs and Border Protection in Buffalo, N.Y.

MELANIE MCGUIRE, BS '05 is pursuing a master's degree in social work at the University at Buffalo.

KARA (ADAMS) MRUGALA, BS '04 is a legal secretary/paralegal at Zdarsky, Sawick & Agostinelli in Buffalo, N.Y.

MADELYN MULLINS, BS '04 is a senior real estate specialist at MJ Peterson in Buffalo, N.Y.

JOANNE NIEMAN, BS '04 is a deputy sheriff in the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office in Virginia.

JAMES NUCCI, BS '05 is a utility equipment sales representative at Linder Industrial Machinery in Jacksonville, Fla.

ROGER PENN, BS '01 is with Cooper Compression in Buffalo, N.Y.

BONNIE ROLL, BA '03 received a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling from the University at Buffalo.

WILLIAM SCULLY, BS '03 was named the Hamburg Police Benevolent Society's Officer of the Month for October 2005.

ELIZABETH SEIVERT, BA '05 is a graphic artist in Buffalo, N.Y. She is pursuing a master's degree in integrated marketing communications at St. Bonaventure University.

SARAH SKELTON, BA '03 is pursuing a master's degree in counseling at St. Bonaventure University.

REGINALD SMITH, BS '02 is a representative on the Consumer Advisory Board for the New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities in Jamestown, N.Y.

AMANDA SMOLAREK, BS '04 is a correctional officer at the Fishkill Correctional Facility in Fishkill, N.Y.

JILLIAN (JENNETTI) SUTTELL, BS '05 is a paralegal in the Bouvier Partnership in Buffalo, N.Y. where she is focusing on lead-based paint litigation.

BETTY (SILVER) VOGEL, BS '03 has been elected to the Hilbert Alumni Association Board of Directors.
LORRANCE WEHRMANN, BA ’02 received a master’s degree in school counseling from St. Bonaventure University.

CHRISTINE WICKES, BS ’01 is an estates and trusts paralegal at Lippes Mathias Wexler Friedman LLP in Buffalo, N.Y.

STACEY WICKES, BS ’04 graduated from the Central New York Police Academy and is a deputy sheriff in Onondaga County.

ERICA ZIMNY, BS ’03 has been named to the dean’s list at Cooley Law School in Lansing, Mich.

CHRISTY ZEITLER, BS ’04 is a marketing coordinator at Rich Products in Buffalo, N.Y.

Weddings

AMANDA ALESSI, BA ’04 to Robert Steinbacher

CHRISTOPHER BOOKER, BS ’04 to Amy George

KRISTEN BURGESS, BS ’00 to Patrick George

KELLY DONOVAN, BA ’02 to Michael Brehm

DAVID FISHER, BS ’04 to Christin Borowski

MICHAEL HALL, BS ’02 to Sarah Rusin

VICKI HILL, BS ’01 to David Marian

REBECCA KRAUS, AAS ’96 to Daniel Wickett

PAUL LANKES, BS ’02 to Kasey Chapin

MARY JO MCCARTHY, BS ’00 to Justin Ignasiak

RYANN MCCRAITH, BS ’02 to Brian Kinyon

LISA MILITELLO, BS ’03 to Alan Caruana

KRISTEN WILCZAK, BS ’03 to Matthew Brownell

Births

JESSICA (HANSON) IZZO, AA ’93 and her husband, Christopher, welcomed a son, Maxwell Robert, who joins older sister, Sophia.

In Memoriam

BRUCE BELL, AA ’72
Aug. 9, 2005

JOHN DILIBERTO, AA ’79
Nov. 18, 2005

Hilbert Alumni Reconnection Celebration: An Evening With Sister Edmunette

October 22, 2005

JULIE (PEACOCK) MICHEL, BS ’02 and her husband, Jason, welcomed a son, Tyler Steven.
the ’80s

Before the days of Microsoft Windows and Word, Excel and Powerpoint, there was MS-DOS, WordPerfect, Lotus and dBase. The computer world has changed considerably the past couple decades and so too has how and what Hilbert College students are learning in the classroom. Small clusters of computers like those shown here for Hilbert students to do classroom work were set up in designated areas in Bogel Hall, considered the predecessor to today’s computer labs where classroom instruction and computer coursework all take place in one room.

To share some of your favorite memories as a student during the ’80s, contact the Office of Alumni Relations at 716-926-8789, or e-mail pbaubonis@hilbert.edu.

Hilbert College
5200 South Park Avenue
Hamburg, NY 14075
Return Service Requested

Parents: If newsletter is addressed to a graduated son or daughter who no longer maintains a permanent address at your home, please clip the address label and return it with correct address to the address shown above.