Freshman Snapshot

Three straight years of near-record enrollments ... but that's just part of the picture.

The Ethics of End-of-Life Care: Lessons to be Learned from the Schiavo Case

Rebuilding Hope After the Tsunami

Creighton Centennial Feature: The School of Pharmacy and Health Professions

Fall 2005
Fantastic Freshmen
Not since 1979 has Creighton seen a bigger freshman class than the one arriving on campus this fall. The class is bright, diverse and full of potential. This class also marks a three-year trend of near-record enrollments. So what's happening on the hilltop? We check in with Creighton's admissions team.

The Ethics of End-of-Life Care:
Lessons to be Learned from the Schiavo Case
There is a renewed public interest surrounding issues of end-of-life care after the high profile case of Terri Schiavo. Professor Jos Welie from Creighton's Center for Health Policy and Ethics — along with colleagues from the Center and from law, theology and philosophy — takes a closer look at those issues and what we can learn from the Schiavo case.

Rebuilding Hope
Creighton photographer the Rev. Don Doll, S.J., spent several weeks this spring in tsunami-ravaged areas of Sri Lanka and India chronicling the tremendous work of the Jesuits in the aftermath of the destruction. The Jesuits are helping a struggling people rebuild homes, livelihoods and — perhaps most importantly — hope.

Creighton Centennial Feature:
The School of Pharmacy and Health Professions
Creighton's School of Pharmacy and Health Professions is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. While the pharmacy profession has changed drastically over the past 100 years, one thing hasn't changed: Creighton's leadership in education and pharmacological research. We take a look at two innovative researchers, Chris Destache and Alekha Dash, who are investigating the possibilities of more precise and effective drug delivery through nanotechnology.

The Priest and the Troublemaker
While growing up, Matt Holland knew Creighton alumnus Denny Holland as simply Dad — a quiet, unassuming life insurance salesman. It wasn’t until later that he more fully discovered his father’s relationship with a fiery Creighton Jesuit and his role in the civil rights movement in Omaha.

Letters to the Editor
University News
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The Last Word

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View the magazine online at: www.creightonmagazine.org.
American author Theodore Dreiser once described art as the “stored honey of the human soul.”

The fine arts, indeed, serve as an essential element of our shared humanness, and have always played a prominent role in Jesuit education.

We are blessed to have a wonderfully diverse arts community here in Omaha — one that both enriches and is enriched by our fine and performing arts department here at Creighton. We offer here but a glimpse.

In October, downtown Omaha and the Omaha Performing Arts Society will lift the curtain on the new $90 million Holland Performing Arts Center, which will feature classical and symphonic music, popular music, chamber ensembles, cabaret artists, and speakers and lectures.

The Joslyn Art Museum enters its 74th year as Creighton’s beloved neighbor, and the bond remains strong. The museum, opened in 1931, uses our facilities for some of its community workshops, and our students, faculty and staff benefit from having a first-class art museum in “our backyard.”

Creighton also has been intimately involved with the Nebraska Shakespeare Festival and its annual Shakespeare on the Green, since its beginnings nearly 20 years ago. The festival flourishes in the spirit of the Jesuit Institute for the Arts, which was held on campus some 25 years ago and featured Shakespearean plays in our own Jesuit gardens. Today, Shakespeare on the Green is held in Elmwood Park, in cooperation with the University of Nebraska at Omaha, and attracts about 35,000 people each summer for its free performances. Creighton theater professor Alan Klem is a founding director, and theater coordinator Bill Van Deest serves as associate artistic director. Creighton also provides office and rehearsal space.

Creighton’s Lied Education Center for the Arts annually hosts 15 to 16 musical concerts, four theatrical productions and two dance productions, along with six to nine gallery exhibits. These productions and exhibits attract more than 3,000 attendees annually and are partially funded by the generous support of the Richard and Mary McCormick Endowment Fund for the Fine and Performing Arts. Some 1,000 students take classes in art, graphic arts, dance, music and theater at Creighton every semester (40 to 50 are fine arts majors). These students perform and exhibit not only at the University but at various venues locally and regionally. In 2004, for example, Creighton staged The Threepenny Opera in conjunction with Opera Omaha, and three students served as understudies.

This spring, Creighton hosted ACT-SO (the Academic, Cultural, Technological and Scientific Olympics) — a major youth initiative of the NAACP, in which high school students compete in a variety of disciplines, including fine arts. Creighton also partners with the Hope Center, providing at-risk youth a chance to perform on stage, and with the Omaha Archdiocese, providing space and workshops for the Music in Catholic Schools program.

Our faculty members are engaged in the community. One example is Creighton’s Littleton Alston, who created a 1,000-pound bronze sculpture of a jazz trio for North Omaha’s Dreamland Plaza and a 9-foot-tall, 2,000-pound bronze sculpture of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. positioned near the City-County Building; and a sculpture of St. Ignatius erected in front of our Reinert Alumni Memorial Library and created in honor of Creighton’s 125th anniversary. There are many others: from Marilyn Kielniarz and her 14-piece Indonesian gamelan; to Alan Klem and Fred Hanna and their original musical Lewis and Clark; to the Rev. Michael Flecky, S.J., and his stunning photos of North African ruins; to Lisa Carter and her exquisite dance productions.

As for myself, I cautiously accepted the lead role in Opera Omaha’s upcoming production of Paul Bunyan. I am looking forward to providing the off-stage voice for the legendary lumberjack.

Please enjoy this issue of Creighton University Magazine, and may God bless you and yours.

John P. Schlegel, S.J.
Letters to the Editor

More on the Rapture

Living immersed in the southern states’ Bible Belt, surrounded by fundamentalists, Jehovah’s Witnesses and so on, the article by Fr. Hamm (“The Doomsday Scenario of the Left Behind Books: How Biblical is It?”) in the summer issue of Creighton Magazine was especially interesting. A book Fr. Hamm did not include in his bibliography, and which is a must for anyone interested in these religious fallacies, is David B. Currie’s Rapture, the End-Times Error That Leaves the Bible Behind from Sophia Institute Press, 2003. Nearly 500 pages deal with the correct Catholic biblical interpretation of the Book of Daniel, Revelation and the Olivet Discourse. Before converting to Catholicism, Currie was a dedicated fundamentalist, so he has seen both sides of the truth.

Fr. Hamm touched on the dangers to world peace from such theories, but even more insidious is the danger to American Catholics due to the outrageous hate and bigotry held by many of the proponents. The Church seems to dismiss this as “dogs nipping at heels,” but I believe it is critical that educated Catholics become thoroughly educated in (1) their own faith and (2) the “doctrines” such as the Rapture being spread by zealous fundamentalists. Creighton would not be amiss to set up a course of study just on these subjects and carry out a program of instruction through America.

B. Leon Doud, BS’56
Jasper, Ark.

A Look at Dorothy Day

Thanks for the spring 2005 letter to the editor that referred to (modern saint) Dorothy Day. Known to many as a “socialist” and “radical,” she was firmly planted in her chosen Catholic faith.

Yes, she was frustrated with the Church’s shortage of response to the injustices of Depression-age America, but she embraced Catholic teaching. Without prayer, she said, we miss the whole point. We know Christ by “partaking of that Food (Eucharist),” and we know “each other” when we sit down and eat together, thus the Houses of Hospitality of the Catholic Worker Movement. Her “hard bitter struggle with sin” became intertwined with the love of “the Church of Christ made visible” in faith and action.

Mike Sharkey, BSBA’72
Columbus, Ohio

Correction

Removing the ceiling-to-floor columns in St. John’s Church is not one of the possibilities currently being considered as part of the church’s renovation, as was reported in the Summer 2005 issue of Creighton Magazine.
Graham, Franco, Hult Receive Alumni Merit Awards

College of Business Administration

The College of Business Administration honored alumnus Donald D. Graham, BSBA'58, with its Alumni Merit Award on May 13. While a student at Creighton, Graham met and worked for John P. Begley. They joined a colleague in forming the CPA firm of Begley, Herbert & Graham, providing tax and business consultancy to various enterprises in the Midwest. During this time, Graham also served as an adjunct faculty member at Creighton. Although the CPA firm enjoyed great success, Graham found himself ready for a change in career focus. He chose to shift direction from providing tax services for others to more closely managing his own business interests. Today, Graham is chairman and CEO of a group of companies headquartered in Omaha with worldwide operations. The companies provide construction and industrial services.

School of Nursing

Theresa J. Franco, BSN’78, received the School of Nursing’s Alumni Merit Award on May 5. Franco is the executive director of Cancer Care Services for the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC). Under her leadership, the small, seven-bed bone marrow transplant program has grown to become the Lied Transplant Center, well-known for its care of transplant patients. Franco has served nationally and internationally as a consultant to other hospitals establishing bone marrow transplant programs. She is co-author of several published articles and has provided numerous professional presentations.

College of Arts and Sciences

Karen M. Hult, Ph.D., BA’78, received the College of Arts and Sciences Alumni Merit Award on May 13. Hult is professor of political science at the Center for Public Administration and Policy at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Throughout her career, she has been recognized for teaching excellence. Hult’s authoritative books, co-authored with her husband, Charles Wolcott, and her numerous other published works, presentations and consultancies have significantly influenced both scholarly research and teaching of public administration and organizational behavior. In 1995, her book Governing the White House: From Hoover through LBJ won the American Political Science Association’s award for the best book on the presidency.

Summertime Fun

Some of the more than 250 Omaha-area youth who participated in the National Youth Sports Program (NYSP) at Creighton this summer pose with Creighton President the Rev. John P. Schlegel, S.J., on the steps of St. John’s Church. Creighton has participated in the program — which provides physical and educational activities for economically disadvantaged youth — for more than 30 years.
Classmates Dedicate Room to Fr. Wagener

The newly renovated Fr. Clarence M. Wagener, S.J., Conference Room is located on the ground floor of the Hixson-Lied Science Building.

Former students honor the late, beloved professor, who taught physics and astronomy at Creighton for more than 40 years.

A conference room in the Hixson-Lied Science Building has been renovated and named for the late Rev. Clarence Wagener, S.J., a longtime Creighton physics and astronomy professor, thanks to the generosity of six of his former students from the class of 1964.

“I thought of him as extended family, someone you could always count on to be interested in your progress, personal as well as professional,” said Jeanne (Slaninger) Hutchison, Ph.D., BS’64, one of those former students. Hutchison, a former Spirit of Creighton Award winner, is now a mathematics professor at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

Fr. Wagener served on Creighton’s faculty for more than 40 years. He died in April 2000.

The Wagener Conference Room was dedicated on June 11 during Reunion Weekend 2005. A former student of Fr. Wagener’s who joined the Jesuits, the Rev. Richard Ott, S.J., performed the blessing.

In addition to Hutchison, other contributors to the Wagener Conference Room were Robert Curran, Ph.D., of Ellicott City, Md.; Joseph Fennell, Ph.D., of Torrance, Calif.; Morris Pongratz, Ph.D., of Los Alamos, N.M.; Gerald Strohmeyer, M.D., of Wamego, Kan.; and Richard Brincks of Crystal Lake, Ill.

The Spirit of Creighton Award is given annually to the students who represent the best qualities of the University’s founders.

McGovern was a participant in Creighton’s Semestre Dominicano program in 2002 and a resident adviser in Swanson, McGloin and Kiewit halls. He returned to the ILAC Center during the summer of 2004 to live and volunteer while completing an accounting internship at a local auditing firm. He also taught English as a Second Language (ESL) and translated during parent-teacher conferences to members of Omaha’s Hispanic community.

Righter was a member of numerous student organizations, and used her outgoing and compassionate personality in the community by volunteering on Spring Break Service Trips, tutoring at Kellom Academy in Omaha and by organizing World AIDS Day activities in 2003 and 2004. Righter also served as a resident adviser in Gallagher Hall.
Creighton Faculty Members Receive Fulbright Awards

Three Creighton University faculty members were selected to receive Fulbright Program awards this spring.

Beth Furlong, Ph.D., was a recipient of a Fulbright Lecturing Award for the spring semester of 2006. During this time, Furlong will teach in the School of Nursing at two universities in Hungary: Semmelweis in Budapest and the University of Debrecen in Nyiregyhaza. She will lecture on community health nursing, trans-cultural nursing, pedagogy and English.

Furlong is an associate professor of nursing at Creighton University, as well as a faculty associate in the Center for Health Policy and Ethics. Her research interest is in health policy, agenda-setting processes and access to health care for vulnerable populations.

Creighton University management professor Justin Tan, Ph.D., was awarded a Fulbright Distinguished Professorship for a year, which began in June. He is teaching at Nankai University in Tianjin, China.

Tan has taught strategic management, entrepreneurship, and business consulting at undergraduate and graduate levels. He has advised several leading Omaha companies on strategic planning and international strategic alliance, and has worked with government leaders and legislators to promote economic interests of the city of Omaha, the state of Nebraska and the United States. Previously Tan was on the faculty of California State University and was named the Harry E. Brakebill Distinguished Professor.

Daniel R. Wilson, M.D., Ph.D., and colleagues have been awarded an Egypt-USA Research Exchange grant for 2005-06 to study “Psychotherapy & Pharmacotherapy of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: Congruences & Differences in Egypt & America.” Wilson is professor and chairman of psychiatry and professor of anthropology at Creighton, and has unique training in anthropology, medicine and psychiatry at Yale, Iowa, Harvard and Cambridge universities.

The award will launch a program of joint research with colleagues at Creighton and Behman Hospital and the University of Cairo to improve the understanding of the sociopolitical roots and pharmacological treatment of the psychological effects of ethnic violence. As principal investigator, Wilson will be a visiting professor at Behman Hospital this September in exchange with Dr. Mariam Wardakan of Cairo, who will later have an extended visit in Omaha. Other colleagues include Drs. Aly Salaheldin, Patricia Sullivan and Fred Petty of Omaha.

Gardiner Launches Irish Journal

David Gardiner, Ph.D., associate professor of English and director of Creighton’s summer school in Ireland program, has launched a new international journal of Irish studies, An Sionnach: A Journal of Literature, Arts, and Culture.

Published by Creighton University Press for the first time this spring, the twice-yearly, peer-reviewed journal focuses on developments in Irish studies in the United States, Ireland and Europe from the late 1950s to the present.

“This … journal is the first devoted entirely to the critical enquiry of contemporary Irish studies and the research and articulation of its rapidly shifting nature,” Gardiner said.

In addition to serving as editor of An Sionnach, Gardiner was named director and editor of Creighton University Press in July.
A Conversation with Creighton’s New Business Dean

Anthony Hendrickson, Ph.D., joined Creighton in July as the new dean of the College of Business Administration. Hendrickson comes to Creighton from Iowa State University, where he served as associate dean of the College of Business, associate professor of management information systems and Accenture Faculty Fellow in MIS.

CU Magazine: What interested you in the Creighton position?
Hendrickson: I was happy at Iowa State, but the more I learned about Creighton, the more interested I became. I really enjoyed visiting with the search committee; I felt comfortable here. I knew Creighton had a good academic reputation, and I liked the enthusiasm and vision of the administration. I liked the size and complexity of the University. It seems like a place where students can really get to know their professors, and that’s important. I liked the Jesuit ideals. In fact, after the interview process, Fr. Andy Alexander (Creighton’s vice president for University Ministry) said to me: “You pray for us in our decision, and we’ll pray for you.” That really spoke to me. This is a place that cares deeply about people.

CU Magazine: How do you feel a Jesuit business education differs from a business education at a non-Jesuit college or university?
Hendrickson: Business people have to make value judgments. I was working with a U.S. firm that does business internationally, and they had to decide whether they would engage in bribery in this foreign country—an unspoken but accepted custom. It would have been very easy to say that everybody does it. But they came to the conclusion that they wouldn’t do that, even though it cost them business. Every day we are faced with ethical decisions. And it’s very important, especially for 18-year-old students, to continue to develop their value system and a sense of what’s right and wrong. So much of that, I believe, comes from faith. A Jesuit education supports the idea that people should actively engage their belief system. What is it they believe and why?

CU Magazine: What are your goals for the college?
Hendrickson: There is a perceived lack of relevance between business education and business practice, as reported in a 2002 special report by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), “Management Education at Risk.” The perception is that somehow business schools lost their way; that we lost the connection with the business profession. That we’re too theoretical. As dean, I want to connect with business leaders in Omaha and with Creighton business graduates around the globe to help educate the next generation of business students. I want them to come to our classes and share their knowledge. I believe this enhances the educational process.

CU Magazine: Your expertise is in information systems. How do we use technology to improve the learning experience?
Hendrickson: I think we have a real opportunity to increase the use of multimedia technology in the classroom. Through multimedia presentations, we can more actively engage students in their learning experience. Students today are very connected, and it can sometimes be a challenge to keep pace. But, in many ways, Creighton is a leader. For example, we have the Joe Ricketts Center in Electronic Commerce and Database Management, the University has been recognized as one of the top wireless campuses, and faculty are learning to more fully integrate technology into their teaching through the Academic Development and Technology Center.

CU Magazine: Any interesting hobbies or associations outside of education?
Hendrickson: I’m a member of the Amonsoquath Tribe of Cherokee. My ancestors on my father’s side were Cherokee. I can remember sitting at the feet of my great-grandmother in her dirt-floor house in the hills of Arkansas, listening to her tell stories as she chewed tobacco. It was a different lifestyle, but I’m proud of my heritage. I also used to race sprint cars. I’ve won a few races. In fact, one summer I made more money racing sprint cars than I did the rest of the year working as a graduate student.
Phonathon Has Another Great Year

Creighton University’s Phonathon posted another outstanding year, raising more than $1.2 million for Fiscal Year 2004-2005, which closed on June 30. Part of the University’s Office of Development, the Phonathon raises money to support the Annual Fund. As the single largest source of unrestricted gifts to the University and its schools and colleges, the Annual Fund stands as the foundation of the University’s fund-raising programs.

“The greatest asset to fund raising through the Phonathon is the personal contact between the student callers and alumni and parents,” said Alysia Conklin, assistant director of annual giving.

According to Conklin, students working for the Phonathon learn more about the University through stories and advice from alumni and they develop a greater appreciation for the University when they are educated about the factors involved in their Creighton experience — namely, the costs involved in making their Creighton education so successful.

“By learning what goes into securing excellent faculty members and providing state-of-the-art laboratory and classroom equipment, the students come to appreciate the Annual Fund and what it means for the University,” Conklin said. “Hopefully, the alumni also enjoy the personal contact with students who help keep them up-to-date on the new and exciting developments that are happening every day on campus.”

Mike Noonan, a senior who will graduate in December 2005, has worked for the Phonathon the past four years. He served as a supervisor for two of those years, raising almost $200,000 for Creighton through alumni and parent pledges.

“Working for the Phonathon gives student callers a great deal of appreciation for Creighton’s alumni as well as the University. We see the dollars raised put to work around campus,” Noonan said. “Talking with the alumni is also great because you can ask them questions regarding your future career aspirations. Callers talk to alumni with the same major and it’s great to get their advice.”

Gift Honors Late Husband

With a $25,000 gift to the University, 91-year-old Catherine Basilico of Omaha has established an endowed scholarship fund in honor of her late husband, Creighton alumnus Sebastian A. Basilico, BS’54.

“Mrs. Basilico appreciated the difference Creighton made in their lives. It is that difference that prompted her to honor her husband in this manner,” said Jack Neneman, a Creighton regional director of development.

Sebastian Basilico, an Omaha native, attended both Central and Tech high schools. When he returned from serving in World War II, his wife encouraged him to attend Creighton on the GI Bill. While at Creighton, he was actively involved in student activities, including student government. Sebastian Basilico died April 2, 1995.

CU at Joslyn

Creighton University and the Joslyn Art Museum announce a new lecture series to be presented by Creighton faculty in Joslyn’s lecture hall on selected Saturdays from September through May. The series includes a mélange of fascinating topics — each linked in some way to Joslyn’s building, collections or exhibitions. Take advantage of this opportunity to gain fresh perspectives from Creighton scholars. Admission to CU at Joslyn is free; no reservations are required. For more information about the topics listed below, please call (402) 342-3300.

Sept. 17 at 10:30 a.m.
Listening to Nebraska Architecture by Thomas A. Kuhlman, Ph.D., Associate Professor of English

Oct. 22 at 10:30 a.m.
Pleasure to the People! How Oakview Mall is like the Roman Baths by Gregory S. Bucher, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Classical and Near Eastern Studies

Nov. 19 at 10:30 a.m.
American Visual Frontier: New Interpretations of the Western Landscape by Heather Fryer, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of History

Jan. 14 at 10:30 a.m.
The Handwriting on the Wall: The Bible in Art by Leonard J. Greenspoon, Ph.D., Klutznick Professor of Jewish Civilization and Professor of Classical and Near Eastern Studies

Feb. 18 at 1 p.m.
La Musique de la Belle France: Vocal Music of Sebastian Le Camus, Michel Pignolet Montceaux, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Erik Satie by the Rev. Charles Jurgensmeier, S.J., Assistant Professor of Fine and Performing Arts, and Marilyn Kielniarz, Ph.D., Professor of Fine and Performing Arts

March 18 at 10:30 a.m.
A Gesture of Love? The Language of Gestures in Ancient Greek Vase Paintings by Christina A. Clark, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Classical and Near Eastern Studies

April 22 at 10:30 a.m.
Beyond the Hollywood Western: Cowboys and Indians in American Art by Heather Fryer, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of History

May 6 at 10:30 a.m.
Life at Versailles by Jan Lund, Adjunct Assistant Professor of Modern Languages and Literatures
CU at CR8ON

By Brian A. Young
Vice President for Information Technology

BTDT, BBIAM, TTYL, LOL … Huh?

Students today come to Creighton, and other college campuses around the country, with their own language of sorts — one born from the instant-messaging craze.

According to a Pew Internet & American Life survey, 74 percent of online teens — some 13 million teenagers — use instant messaging, IM-ing for short.

Instant messaging allows two or more people to communicate in real time over the Internet. Users can create a contact list of friends with whom they want to “chat.”

The most popular instant messaging services are AOL Instant Messenger (with nearly 6 million people using this application on any given day), AOL Instant Message, Yahoo’s Messenger and MSN Messenger.

In addition to instant messaging, there has been an explosion in the use of text messaging, especially among college-age students. Text messaging involves the wireless transmission of a short text message and its receipt by another wireless device, such as a cell phone.

According to the Cellular Telecommunications and Internet Association, nearly 5 billion text messages are sent in the United States every month. Among cell-phone users ages 18 to 27, 63 percent regularly text-message (compared to 27 percent of all adults), according to another Pew survey.

Students today have become experts at multitasking and are often comfortable IM-ing five or six people at one time, surfing the web, listening to music and doing homework all at the same time. In fact, 32 percent of IM users report doing something else on their computer while they are instant messaging, according to a Pew report.

For quick communication, users of IM-ing and text messaging have developed a form of shorthand that can seem Greek to the non-user.

For those of you still scratching your head over the first line of this column, here’s a translation: BTDT stands for “been there done that,” BBIAM is short for “be back in a minute,” TTYL means “talk to you later” and LOL is “laughing out loud.”

So, how does this technology shift affect Creighton — which was honored by Intel Corp. as one of the country’s best campuses for wireless computing access for students? I believe it creates opportunity — to integrate the latest technology and communication tools into the classroom in an effort to enhance teaching and student learning. And that’s a message I like to share … A3 (anytime, anywhere, anyplace).
Alumni Achievement Citation

Creighton presented its highest alumni award, the Alumni Achievement Citation, to the Vacanti brothers — Drs. Joseph (Jay), BS’70; Charles (Chuck), BS’72; Francis (Frank), BS’74; and Martin (Marty), BS’74, MD’82. Also known as the “first family” of tissue engineering, these brothers have accumulated praise and renown for their hard work and extraordinary research.

Joseph, the eldest, is the John Homans Professor of Surgery at Harvard Medical School at Massachusetts General Hospital. The other brothers are Charles, chairman of the Department of Anesthesiology, Perioperative and Pain Medicine at Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston; Martin, associate professor and director of hospital laboratories at UMass/MemorialOwned Affiliates Hospitals; and Francis, the administrator of Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) operating rooms and an associate anesthetist at MGH.

Joseph encouraged his brothers to journey down the road of discovery where organs could be developed from a patient’s own tissue. The brothers credit their Jesuit training as motivation to think expansively in searching for the truth.

Presidential Medallion

Creighton’s Presidential Medallion was presented to the Mexican Consulate.

The Consulate was established Sept. 1, 2000, and offers services to the Mexican community in its jurisdiction of Nebraska, Iowa, North Dakota and South Dakota.

Honorary Degrees


Fr. Byron has been a leader in the Jesuit community, serving as president of the University of Scranton and The Catholic University of America, and as a distinguished professor at Georgetown University. Fr. Byron founded Bread for the World, a Christian movement seeking to end world hunger. Today, he is a research professor at Sellinger School of Business, Loyola College in Maryland, and authors a syndicated bi-weekly column for Catholic News Service.

Edwards was a teacher at a number of institutions for 43 years; 23 of those years were at Creighton Prep High School in Omaha. She retired from teaching in 1991, but has remained active in the community, including service on the boards of the League of Women Voters, the YWCA, the Women’s Fund, Marian High School and Duchesne Academy. Since 1994, she has been board chair of the Omaha Archdiocese Black Student Catholic Scholarship Fund.

University News

The Vacanti brothers with Fr. Schlegel and Cam Enarson, M.D., Creighton’s vice president for Health Sciences. From left, Drs. Martin, Francis and Joseph Vacanti, Fr. Schlegel, Dr. Enarson and Dr. Charles Vacanti.
Exploring Planet Earth
Biology Students Conduct Scientific Research Through NASA Grant

Over the past 13 years, Schalles has taken 17 biology students on these NASA-sponsored trips and with a single exception — a musician — all are now engaged in some branch of science or health.

Lani Pascual, BS’96, is among them. Pascual will defend her doctoral dissertation in aquatic toxicology this year. She is currently a research scientist at the Center for Earth and Environmental Science at Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis. She accompanied Schalles to Durant, Okla., in the summer of 1995 where they spent two weeks studying 12-foot deep pools in a quest to understand how different sediments affect the optical qualities of water.

It was a transforming experience for Pascual. “I would say that working with Dr. Schalles that summer was the pivotal experience that got me into science,” she said. “Before that, I was looking at med school.”

Pascual said it was the global significance of the environmental sciences that caused her to realize that a life could be usefully devoted to issues of water quality. “I kept getting to that part of the med school application where they ask why you want to be a doctor, and not being able to answer,” she said. “But seeing all these vistas in environmental science, that it offered a positive way to affect the world, having that experience was what got me into grad school.”

Chris Hiemstra, Ph.D., BSEVS’96, had his eye on a career in research even before accompanying Schalles during the summer of ‘95. But, he said, the experience researching water quality, plant and algae life around Carter Lake, Iowa, Lake Okoboji in

Sometimes, things just work out the way they should.

NASA needs a whole new generation of scientists. People like John Schalles want to create a whole new generation of scientists. NASA has money to help that happen. John Schalles does not.

Call it good ol’ American deal-making if you want, but for the past 13 years, John Schalles, Ph.D., professor and chair of Creighton’s biology department, has been awarded NASA scholarships to take one or two of his undergraduate students on summer research trips.

The locations are not terribly exotic. They traveled to Chesapeake, Va., this year. Last year, they scouted coastal and inland areas of Georgia. The work sounds to the lay ear quite astonishing: They assess water quality by studying the spectral resolution of light bouncing off the water. These trips result in things like hefty master’s degree theses full of impressive algorithms and arcane language familiar only to the initiated.

But, as Schalles points out, this sort of thing is of great interest to NASA, whose interest in scientific knowledge is far broader than the space program.

Monitoring the state of its own planet, often with satellite photography, is as much a part of NASA’s mission as any robot dropped on the surface of Mars.

Creighton University is part of a consortium of 13 Nebraska schools that is given NASA scholarships to enable students to experience life in the field during the summer. It’s called the Nebraska Space Grant Consortium and in 2004 it was granted a five-year contract extension after earning NASA’s highest ranking for excellent performance. The value of that five-year extension is expected to approach $4.5 million.
from various universities and government agencies were conducting projects there. The NASA scholarships, Schalles said, are not large. They average about $2,500 for an approximately 8-10 week study period, but they are sufficient for the students’ needs and can even help fund their pursuit of a master’s degree.

For Schalles, the fellowships are his chance to see if a particular student is suited for an academic life made up of classrooms and coastal waterways. “That’s what’s in it for me,” he said. “I have had the opportunity to work with the best students, with gifted, very bright students.”

And many of Schalles’ 17 erstwhile backpackers have indeed gone on to inhabit the world of scientific research. Christine Hladik, BS’02, MS’04, for example, currently works as a geospatial scientist on a project sponsored by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), based at Florida A&M; and Patrick A’Hearn, BSEVS’92, is currently chief scientist for NOAA at the Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory in Seattle.

Others have become physicians. Another is a lawyer specializing in environmental law. Others have found a home with the Environmental Protection Agency. Schalles said he is preparing his students for a real world.

He recalls that his interest in aquatics was sparked by the famed documentaries of French biologist and oceanographer Jacques Cousteau, whose deep-sea explorations made him famous in the United States. But deep-sea work, while glamorous, is a rare opportunity, Schalles said. Most job opportunities in the field focus on the U.S. coastline and its inland waters where water quality issues are major concerns.

“The deep ocean is the frontier of science,” Schalles said, “but the jobs are near the coastlines — pollution and protection issues for example. “They are critical to our destiny.”
Creighton Scientists in the Forefront in Fight Against Age-Related Hearing Loss

Bernd Fritzsch, Ph.D., professor of biomedical sciences and leader of the Bellucci Research Group at Creighton University, admits that his own concerns over aging may provide an added incentive for continuing his research on hearing loss. Fritzsch is not alone in his concerns. Disabling hearing impairments currently affect about 250 million people worldwide, including one out of every 10 Americans. In addition, one out of three Americans above the age of 65 has experienced severe hearing loss, which can often lead to isolation from family and friends. As millions of baby boomers march into retirement, the need for a potential cure for age-related hearing loss could not be greater.

Fritzsch explained that age-related hearing impairment falls into two categories: middle ear mediated hearing reduction (conductive hearing) and sensorineural hearing loss.

According to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), conductive hearing loss occurs when sound is not conducted efficiently through the outer ear canal to the eardrum and the tiny bones, or ossicles, of the middle ear. Conductive hearing loss usually involves a reduction in sound level, or the ability to hear faint sounds. This type of hearing loss can often be medically or surgically corrected.

Sensorineural hearing loss occurs when there is damage to the inner ear (cochlea) or to the nerve pathways from the inner ear (retrocochlear) to the brain. Sensorineural hearing loss cannot be medically or surgically corrected. It is a permanent loss.

Research at Creighton University is

About the Bellucci Research Group

The Bellucci Research Group is funded by support from Richard J. Bellucci, MD’42. Bellucci is a national leader in the utilization of ear surgery techniques to treat conductive hearing loss. His generosity to Creighton University has been the source of a library of essential research tools, support for key equipment, stipends for promising Ph.D. candidates and the Bellucci Award given to young investigators who are making major contributions in auditory research.

Members of the Bellucci Research Group are, from left, Richard Hallworth, Ph.D., associate professor of biomedical sciences; Garret Soukup, Ph.D., assistant professor of biomedical sciences; Bernd Fritzsch, Ph.D., professor of biomedical sciences; Kirk Beisel, Ph.D, professor of biomedical sciences; and (not pictured) David He, Ph.D., associate professor of biomedical sciences.
Hearing Research — Why It’s Important Now

- Disabling hearing impairments affect about 250 million people worldwide.
- Deafness is the second most common disability in developed countries.
- One out of 10 Americans suffers from hearing loss.
- One out of three Americans above the age of 65 has severe hearing loss.
- Hearing related disorders are the second most costly ailment, and the incidence of hearing impairments will continue to rise as baby boomers age.
- Congenital deafness affects one out of every 1,000 infants. This research may help to restore hearing during that critical period when language skills develop.

progressing in both directions. Richard Hallworth, Ph.D., a member of the Bellucci team, assisted in the development of the first, multi-electrode cochlear implant. These implants can provide a sense of sound to a person who is profoundly deaf or severely hard of hearing by converting sound energy into electrical signals that are sent to the brain.

Researchers aim to cure neurosensory hearing loss through the study of the development and regeneration of hair cells, the cells in the inner ear that perceive sound.

The Bellucci team is, for example, concentrating on regenerating new hair cells through the division of existing hair cells. According to Fritzsch, the advantages of this approach are that it is the least invasive and has the potential to provide the best result, because patients will retain their supporting cells in addition to generating new hair cells.

With the goal of reversing hearing loss, one molecule at a time, the Bellucci team began by dissecting the development of the entire system to discover its building blocks (proteins) and the function each performs.

“Research has shown us that with the removal of the Retinoblastoma (Rb) tumor suppressor gene, adult hair cells can be made to undergo division and grow,” Fritzsch said. “The problem is that this process can lead to uncontrolled growth (as in a tumor). So, our next step is to discern how to control the division and growth of hair cells in order to restore hearing.”

In moving forward with their research, the Bellucci team walks a fine line between growing the hair cells needed to restore hearing loss and controlling their growth so that a tumor does not form. A second issue that the Bellucci team must address is the delayed loss of sensory neurons caused by the loss of hair cells.

Fritzsch explains, “Without sensory neurons, cochlear implants will not work and newly generated hair cells cannot get their information to the brain. Through our research, we will develop a way to maintain the nerve fibers in order to connect them to regenerated hair cells — thereby restoring hearing.”

While he admits that much work remains before these findings can be translated into the actual restoration of hearing in human patients, Fritzsch believes that with continued support of this research, age-related hearing loss may soon become a thing of the past.

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Creighton College of Arts and Sciences
2005-2006 Faculty Lecture Series

Some of Creighton’s most dynamic and talented faculty talk about their research in terms that will be accessible to a general audience.

Please save these dates:

Thursday, Oct. 6 at 6 p.m.
A Language That Is Ever Green: Environmentalism and Poetry
BRIDGET KEEGAN, Ph.D.
English Department
A light dinner will be served.

Tuesday, Dec. 6 at 7:30 a.m.
Social Science: From the Social to the Science
TERRY CLARK, Ph.D.
Political Science and International Relations
Breakfast will be served.

Wednesday, Feb. 15 at Noon
1012 Degrees: Melting Atoms to Make a Quark Gluon Plasma
JANET SEGER, Ph.D.
Physics Department
A light lunch will be served.

Cost:
- $8 per lecture
- $20 for the complete series

To receive a personal invitation in advance of the first lecture, contact Chris Karasek at (402) 280-4015 or ckarasek@creighton.edu.
Sports Shorts

Baseball Earns National Ranking

The 2005 Creighton baseball team, winners of the first regular-season conference title in school history, finished the season with a berth in the NCAA Tournament and a national ranking in two season-ending polls.

Guided by two-time Missouri Valley Conference (MVC) Coach of the Year Ed Servais, Creighton compiled a record of 48-17 and reached the championship of the NCAA Regional in Lincoln, Neb. A year-end poll by Collegiate Baseball ranked Creighton 28th in the country, and another national poll, by the National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association (NCBWA), put the Jays at No. 31.

Relief pitcher Scott Reese, who finished 12-0 with five saves and a 2.85 ERA, was named a third-team All-American by the NCBWA.

Designated hitter Zach Daeges, who holds a 3.32 GPA in accounting, was named an Academic All-American by ESPN The Magazine. Daeges also joined three of his teammates — Brandon Bird, Gabe Lapito and Tony Roth — on the MVC Scholar-Athlete First-Team. For Roth, this was his second year on the list; for Lapito, it was his third. Creighton’s four first-team selections were the most of any Valley team.

Yankees Dandies

Creighton pitcher Eric Wordekemper was drafted in the 46th round by the New York Yankees following the 2005 season. The Storm Lake, Iowa, native was 6-0 with a 3.12 ERA in a season cut short by a strained elbow ligament.

Joining Wordekemper in the Yankee organization will be second baseman Tony Roth, a Lincoln Regional All-Tournament Team and two-time All-MVC selection. Roth, who hit .323 in 201 games with Creighton, signed a free agent contract with the Yankees.

Softball Three-Peat

The Creighton softball team claimed its third straight Missouri Valley Conference Tournament championship in 2005 and again advanced to the NCAA tournament, where the Jays came up short in two extra-inning heartbreakers.

The 44-13 Jays were led by Easton Softball All-Americans Melanie Dorsey and Tammy...
 Nielsen, Dorsey, a two-time All-MVC outfielder, led the league with a .402 batting average in 2005. Nielsen, a three-time All-MVC pitcher, was 28-8 with a 1.54 ERA in 2005. The all-time winningest pitcher in Creighton history (with 76 career victories), Nielsen holds the school and conference record for career strikeouts with 914. She also was named the MVC Tournament MVP for the third straight year in 2005.

Creighton's Abby Johnson earned MVC Player of the Year honors and joined Dorsey and Nielsen on the All-MVC First-Team. The first baseman/pitcher and Creighton's all-time RBI leader (144), Johnson also received Midwest region honors along with Nielsen.

In addition, catcher Christine Fukumoto, who graduated in May with a 3.65 GPA in mathematics, was named an Academic All-American by ESPN The Magazine and was named to the NCAA Regional All-Tournament Team along with Nielsen.

**Tops in the Valley**

Creighton totaled more wins than any of the other nine schools in the Missouri Valley Conference last season in a combined comparison of seven major sports: men's and women's basketball, men's and women's soccer, baseball, softball and volleyball.

Among the seven sports, Creighton collected 175 wins — almost 30 more than second-place Wichita State. Creighton also led the conference in overall winning percentage (.698), most league victories (79) and league winning percentage (.665).

In addition, Creighton was the only school to post a winning record in each of the seven sports, and the only one to qualify for postseason play in five or more of the sports.

In fact, Creighton joined Notre Dame and North Carolina as the only schools in the country with postseason bids in men's and women's basketball, men's and women's soccer, baseball and softball in 2004-05.

**Smart and Smarter**

Creighton's student athletes recorded their highest cumulative GPA in 2004-05, with a 3.25 average. Nine student athletes finished with perfect 4.0s, and 36 percent achieved a 3.5 or higher.
Don’t get Tyler Monahan started on Kyle Korver.
A self-described “college basketball junkie,” Monahan, through the NCAA Tournament, developed an appreciation for the former Creighton star that really blossomed when Korver was signed by Monahan’s beloved Philadelphia 76ers. “I have to say that I became addicted to Kyle Korver and his sweet shot,” said Monahan, a Scranton, Pa., native who grew up just two hours from Philly. “My friends get sick of me talking about him.”

Ask about the mechanics and aesthetic beauty of Korver’s 3-point shot and you might get stuck for hours. Not that long ago, however, if you asked Monahan what he knew about the former Bluejay’s alma mater, you’d probably get a blank stare longer than Korver’s patented knee-high socks. “My level of familiarity with Creighton,” he said, “was very little.”

Soon, though, Monahan will be following in Korver’s size-14 hightops when he takes his first class as a freshman at Creighton this August. And he’ll have plenty of company.

Creighton’s incoming freshmen number 975 students strong, bigger than any previous class save for the 989 freshmen of 1979. And the 2005 harvest is just the latest in a string of freshman bumper crops. Combined with the 968 freshmen who came in 2004 and the 936 in 2003, Creighton has enrolled a whopping 2,879 first-year students, nipping the previous three-year best of 2,874 freshmen from 1979-1981.

And don’t think the admissions office is padding its numbers with bodies only; the class has plenty of brains to go around, too. Don Bishop, Creighton’s associate vice president for enrollment management, points to U.S. News & World Report data on high school GPAs, class rank and ACT scores that place Creighton’s freshmen among the five best incoming classes at private Midwest universities with undergraduate enrollments of 3,000 or more. Among the 220 Catholic institutions of higher learning in the entire country, Notre Dame, Georgetown, Boston College and Holy Cross lead the way in the academic profile of freshmen, but, “You can argue five through 10,” said Bishop, adding, “We’re in that argument.”

Just what’s happening up on the hilltop? Five aspects have contributed to the bigger and brighter classes at Creighton: increased personalization of recruiting; campus growth; continued academic vitality; a broadly diverse student body with a wide range of backgrounds that remains strongly Catholic; and, more hands to help. Like the five fingers, they can’t do much alone. Together, though, they’ve packed quite a punch.

Bishop himself is a relative newcomer to campus, leaving Cornell University
three years ago to seek a post at “a high-quality Catholic university that wanted to grow; that was really good but wanted to get better; a school that arguably was regionally dominant with the goal to become more nationally prominent.” He found it at Creighton, continuing an enrollment management career that began nearly 30 years ago at Notre Dame (also his alma mater).

He arrived about the same time as the freshman class of 2002, with its 802 students. That followed 2001’s even smaller class of 763 students, a two-year low not seen in almost 20 years. The dip wasn’t exactly due to a fall in supply — Nebraska’s pool of graduating high school students was and is relatively stable, while the national crop is expanding. If the enrollment and applicant pools were to grow, Bishop said, Creighton had to improve the way it recruited the local Omaha area and in-state students while doing the same for carefully selected markets in other states.

“We need to do both at the same time,” he said. “And that’s what Creighton is starting to accomplish.”

Getting Personal

The first step taken to which Bishop credits the enrollment uptick was a more focused enrollment approach in the admissions and financial aid offices — one that stressed increased personalization.

“This process began with a talented and experienced staff in admissions and financial aid,” Bishop said. Then, in 2003, Bishop hired Mary Chase as director of admissions, a position that includes working with merit awards. Chase, a top-level admissions consultant with Noel-Levitz before coming to Creighton, has “thrived” in the leadership role, Bishop said. Chase teams with Bishop — as well as financial aid director Bob Walker and the rest of the admissions staff — in developing admissions strategies.

“The staff is a close-knit team that is fanatical about getting personally involved with the lives, hopes and dreams of their applicants,” Bishop said. “We are more analytical in our recruitment planning and more personal at the same time. Mary and the admissions team deserve high praise for accomplishing this balance.”

900 and Beyond

Creighton has enrolled freshman classes of 900 or more students seven times in its 127-year history. The last three freshman classes, including this year’s class, have exceeded the 900 mark and set a three-year record.

The 2005 freshmen also boast Creighton’s highest academic profile — as measured by ACT median and the percent of freshmen who were at the top of their class in high school.

*Projected freshman class
Over the past three years, the admissions staff has done more targeted traveling for in-person visits with students and high school counselors. They’ve reinstated, “to great success,” admissions receptions in key areas across the country — bringing together prospective students and their parents with admissions staff, area alumni and parents of current students. Even current Creighton students are making contacts — often with prospective students from their own hometowns. Direct mail messages were beefed up, phone calls were made, e-mails were sent and the University’s admissions website was overhauled. If questions were asked, the admissions team made sure they got answered in a personal manner.

“It really enforced the reality of Creighton, that this is a very personal place that will care about you and will respond to you as an individual,” Chase said. “That’s the strength of Creighton, and we are now conveying that message effectively by our efforts to personalize the process.”

Such personalization was one of the things that swayed Tricia Watson, one of 131 freshmen who boasts at least one parent as a Creighton alum. Tricia’s father, Dennis, and her mother, Mary (O’Neill), both graduated from Creighton in 1981. Tricia Watson was attending Ursuline Academy in Dallas when Joe Bezousek, a regional manager with Creighton’s Admission Office and a 2001 graduate of the College of Business Administration, came calling during “college night.” “He was a major influence in my decision,” Watson said.

“When he talked, I didn’t feel like I was listening to a persuasive advertisement intended for everyone. Joe cared about my individual needs as a student. He was obviously excited about my interest in the school and excited about the school in general. All my friends will tell you, I loved talking about Creighton with him.” Watson ultimately chose Creighton over admission offers from Notre Dame, Southern Methodist University and Saint Louis University.

Incoming freshmen Kenneth Stable and Joe Schaefer tell similar stories. A graduate of Regis Jesuit High School in Aurora, Colo., Stable first had contact with Creighton when admissions regional manager Nick Constantino, BSBA’00, visited; Schaefer was at Saint Thomas Academy in Mendota Heights, Minn., when admissions regional manager Amanda Kranz came to town. Neither had heard of Creighton before the visits. Stable, though, eventually turned down Marquette in favor of coming to Omaha, while Schaefer chose Creighton over the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Minnesota and Marquette.

Creighton even reconsidered how it recruits in Omaha. In March, for instance, the University held a reception for prospects off campus. About 200 people attended.

Personalization also became important in the determination of scholarships. Merit awards, for instance, were being issued in a manner that seemed impersonally “numbers in, numbers out.”

“Students and parents felt that merit awards were an entitlement transaction,” Bishop said. “We seemed to be operating more like a state school than a selective private school.” Essays, once absent, were reinstated. “We started getting to know the applicants better, and once we knew the applicants better, we were more responsive to them, talking to them about what they were interested in.” Now, applicants compete for service and leadership merits in addition to academic grants.

The result? The academic prowess of Creighton’s 2005-06 freshmen might top any previous class. The group boasts a median ACT of 26 and a median SAT of 1210. More than a quarter of the class had ACT scores of 29 or higher. (A perfect score is 36.) And while the highest SAT in 2004-05 was 1490, nine students from the incoming class had SATs topping 1500, two of them with near-perfect 1570s out of a possible 1600. Also impressive: 40 percent of the incoming freshmen ranked in the top 10 percent of their high school graduating classes, while 12 percent were their school’s valedictorians or salutatorians.

The group did more than just hit the books, too. At least half of the freshmen held leadership positions such as student body or class president, national honor society president, school publication editor, team captain or MVP, or attended a state or national-level leadership conference.

**Growing Gains**

The student body isn’t the only thing booming at Creighton, of course. So, too, is campus construction, a clear sign to recruits that CU has an eye on the future. The works include the Hixson-Lied Science Building, the Michael G. Morrison, S.J. Stadium (home to Creighton’s nationally recognized soccer programs), Davis Square student housing project and the redesigned campus mall with wireless Internet access, all ready for the incoming class. And more is on the way. Phase II of junior/senior town homes, two parking...
garages and more mall renovations are among the major projects under way. Construction of a new “living-learning” center — which will integrate student and academic support services with leisure, classroom and meeting space — is planned to begin in 2006. Since 2000, Creighton has started, completed or designed expansion and renovations totaling more than $175 million.

The Hixson-Lied Science Building has been particularly helpful considering Creighton’s perennial attraction for students eyeing health sciences-related careers. “Students and parents see this wonderful increase in facilities,” said Bishop. “A substantial portion of our surge in enrollments has been students interested in health sciences.”

Creighton hasn’t become so big, though, that a freshman could get lost (OK, more than usual). Chase said the campus has “a natural advantage” over larger private and Catholic universities by choosing to stay just under 4,000 undergraduates. “The thing that I like most about Creighton is the campus, because it is not that big and it is enclosed,” Stable said. “It makes it very easy to get around.” Added Schaefer: “It was perfect. Not too big, not too small.”

CU’s growth is matched by Omaha’s downtown and riverfront development. The admissions office “aggressively” uses valuable press from national publications such as Forbes magazine and others that have promoted Omaha of late.

The growth makes it that much easier to attract locals. “The campus development wasn’t the deciding factor, but it certainly made the choice very appealing,” said freshman Emily Bartlett, a graduate of Omaha Marian High School whose parents both graduated from Creighton. Her father, Stephen, earned a law degree in 1977, and her mother, Rita (Fucinaro), earned a bachelor’s degree in 1976 and a master’s degree in 1977. “Having grown up in Omaha and seeing the changes in the riverfront and all the projected development,” Emily said, “it’s a very exciting time to be part of the Creighton campus.”

**Awesome Academics, Alumni**

When it came time to talk academics, Bishop said Creighton focused not just on the classroom, but on the boardroom, too. “We talked more about the academic quality of the faculty and our programs, and we also talked about the outcomes,” he said. “The success of our students getting into professional and graduate schools and getting jobs. And the success of our alumni long-term.”

The admissions team points to U.S. News & World Report rankings that place Creighton among the top 50 universities (and only Catholic institution) for involving undergraduate students in original research, paper presentations, etc. They also stress that 45 percent of Creighton’s graduating seniors successfully enter professional or graduate school right after finishing their undergraduate work. “That is one of the largest percentages for any university in the Midwest or in the country," Chase said. “It appears we have more freshmen who come in with that plan or with that goal.” Students who indicate such a desire receive extra emphasis in recruiting.

Like, for example, Watson, a self-labeled nerd who says she is “OBSESSED” with biology. Though also majoring in secondary education with an eye toward teaching, she’s really hoping to become a pediatric orthodontist. Creighton’s education was a selling point. “Probably the number one thing was the amazing health sciences program that Creighton has,” she said.

**Universal by Faith, Face and Place**

The 2005 incoming freshmen are mostly a class of faith, too. “I had a very good relationship with the Jesuits (in high school) and I wanted to attend a college where I would be able to continue my spiritual growth,” said Stable. That sentiment was echoed by Watson. “I love being involved in peer ministry, and my Catholic upbringing is a major part of my life that I will never let go,” Added Monahan. “I knew that I wanted to go to a Jesuit university, and this is why Creighton became a candidate.”

The three won’t have to keep their Catholicism to themselves on campus. Nearly two-thirds of the first-time students arriving this August are Catholic. They’re active, too: 81 percent of the incoming freshmen reported being active in a church or community service organization, 26 percent in a leadership role.

Don’t think, though, that Protestants need not apply — or Jews, Muslims and students of other faiths. Thirty religions are represented in the freshman class. “We’ve always embraced the value of being a Catholic, Jesuit University, and by openly practicing and celebrating that, people of all faiths can relate to the importance of having God in their life and they feel less alone,” Bishop said. “People of faith who want to be in a close-knit community, who want to become … people of great service to others, feel very comfortable here.”

Additional diversity will arrive this fall not by faith, but by face and place. Students of color will compose about 18 percent of the freshmen, due in large part to the efforts of Omar Valentine, Creighton’s coordinator for multicultural admissions, Bishop said. This is higher than any major university
in Nebraska, Kansas, Iowa and South Dakota. Creighton’s total enrollment is expected to hit 6,850 this fall (another record) and will include students from all 50 states. A bit more than one-third will hail from Nebraska, and there’s considerable representation from traditional strongholds such as Kansas City, Minneapolis, Denver, Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Louis and Hawaii. But 22 percent will come from the West, South, Southwest and East Coast (growing numbers from Dallas, Austin, Houston, Phoenix, Las Vegas, Oklahoma City and Tulsa). Students from more than 40 countries will be enrolled as undergraduate, professional or graduate students.

Such diversity makes Creighton even more appealing to the locals — one reason, Chase said, that the number of Omaha-area students has increased from 250 to 320 students in the last four years.

**People Power**

All this hard work doesn’t come easy, of course, and can’t be done single-handedly by one office. Increased enrollment, complemented by a diverse and involved class, is a result of a coordinated effort across campus, Bishop said.

“We’ve mobilized more factions of the University to assist in recruiting, and they deserve credit for this,” he said. “The Financial Aid Office is absolutely central to our efforts. In many cases, they are the final closers — working with the family on financing and listening humanely to their needs.”

Creighton’s coaches have always been exceptional in making the case for CU, Bishop said, but now the University’s admissions efforts are being bolstered by students, faculty, the student services department, academic senior management, the development office, marketing and public relations, and alumni. In fact, about 350 alumni participated in the Creighton Alumni Partners (CAP) program, assisting their alma mater by attending college fairs in their local areas and by contacting admitted students.

“All of these groups were mobilized and responded to that opportunity, and they’ve added to the personalization of the process. On-campus visits have been improved because of the commitment our faculty and others at the University have shown to personally visit with prospective students,” Bishop said. He added that the faculty, collectively, spent “thousands of hours” meeting with prospective students and parents.

Even Kyle Korver did his part, though he may not know it.

Thanks to Creighton’s revamped and revitalized emphasis on recruiting, Monahan wasn’t left thinking of Creighton only as some tidbit on Korver’s career bio. A different shot, taken by a Creighton recruiter to his high school, “is when I began to learn about the college,” Monahan said.

“I became aware that the college had a lot to offer other than its basketball reputation.”

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**Diversity and Balance**

Creighton’s 2005 freshman class includes 181 students of color, representing about 18 percent of the class. See chart below.

Among the entire class, about half live 200 miles or more from campus; 27 percent have had a family member graduate from Creighton; 25 percent are first-generation college students; and, while 63 percent are Catholic, some 30 religions are represented.

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**Creighton Works to Keep Retention High**

For three years now, Creighton has proved it can get ‘em. But can CU keep ‘em?

Nationally, according to research by ACT, Inc., about 32 percent of freshmen leave a university after their first year. That’s a bit better at master’s level private universities (Creighton’s placement), which on average lose 25 percent of their freshmen after Year One.

Creighton is proving it has a better grip on the problem.

From 1999 to 2003, just 13.1 percent of Creighton students left after their freshman year, a marked improvement from the previous four years when 16.2 percent of freshmen departed. That stretch included an 18.4 percent departure rate in 1997.

The improvement wasn’t by happenstance. “I think we have worked hard to improve the academic advising of freshmen and sophomores,” said Mary Higgins, BA’73, Creighton’s director of undergraduate student retention.

“Advisers are much better prepared to assist students prior to declaration of major. Advisers call incoming freshmen prior to their first registration so that they are guided through decisions on course selection. Advisers are asked to meet individually with each advisee at least twice each semester so that the advising relationship can develop.

“Students know they have a Creighton professional able and willing to assist them with academic and/or personal issues.”

The two most common reasons students depart, Higgins said, are financial strains and academic struggles. While the latter certainly can mean a GPA that falls below 2.0, it also can mean a GPA of 3.0, not something a medical school hopeful would want on a transcript. Beyond money and grades, Higgins added, students leave for reasons as varied as the students themselves — changes of major, physical or mental health issues, homesickness or military obligations. “It’s all over the chart,” said Higgins, who prior to taking her current post seven years ago was assistant athletic director for five years and women’s softball coach for 17 years. “Wanting to
live in a bigger city, wanting a smaller community. Wanting a more liberal environment, wanting a more conservative environment.

“If a student does decide to leave, it is not usually appropriate to try to talk them out of it. Usually, the decision has already been made, and it is our job to help them depart gracefully and to make sure that the student is familiar with the correct procedures and has all his or her questions answered. Nearly all retention-related initiatives are done on the front end and are designed to increase student satisfaction.”

Higgins’ office was formed about 10 years ago when the University was experiencing “attrition difficulty” that continued to be pronounced with the exodus of sophomores. Each entering class from 1995 to 1998, for instance, lost approximately 25 percent of its students after their second year. That’s improved to 21 percent in 2001 and 19.5 percent in 2002. Early figures on the Class of 2004 indicate continued progress with just 3.2 percent of freshmen leaving after their first semester, the lowest mark in 10 years and less than half the figure in 1997.

Why the improvement? Better financial aid has helped, but it’s with academic aid where CU really has made strides.

That’s just what Julie Nakandakare needed after struggling mightily as a freshman. The Hawaiian psychology major says she missed too many classes her first semester and didn’t know how to adequately study for tests. “By the time I tried to get serious and bring up my grades,” she said, “it was too late.”

Nakandakare found herself on academic probation — and in Higgins’ office. A strategy was developed that included Nakandakare dropping chemistry in the spring so she could concentrate on her other classes. She also took “Strategies for Academic Success,” a two-credit class that covers reading comprehension, note-taking and outlining, test preparation, time and stress management, motivation and goal-setting. Up to 125 “at risk” students are expected to take the class this fall. The course is required for incoming students with slightly lower ACT scores, as well as freshmen whose GPA falls below 2.0 after the first semester. Among the former group, research by

Creighton’s Don Bishop has shown that those students post a median GPA of 2.8 by the fall semester, with nearly 25 percent earning a 3.2 or higher. Freshmen and sophomores with a GPA below 2.0 who already have taken the class are assigned to meet regularly with an academic probation counselor. “The course and the personal intervention are Creighton’s best means of boosting academic preparedness,” said Higgins.

The class worked for Nakandakare. “I studied really hard from the beginning of the semester,” she said. “My friends helped me a lot. Every time I wanted to just fool around and watch TV my roommate would keep on asking if I had any homework to do.” Nakandakare’s Ds turned into a couple of Cs with the remaining grades all Bs in the second semester of her freshman year.

As in Nakandakare’s case, additional help came from outside the retention office. “It truly ‘takes a university’ to retain a student,” said Higgins. While some students ask for assistance on their own and the Faculty Feedback Program catches others, her office depends on Student Support Services staff, resident advisers, coaches, administrators and others to suggest when a student might need help. In Nakandakare’s case, her mother made the first call on her daughter’s behalf.

Sarah Belt praises several individuals for helping her through a rocky second semester. Her first semester went so well, she said, that “over Christmas break, I felt like superwoman.” Come the next round of finals, though, “The pressure was so much that I honestly felt like I was having a meltdown. I was in the Student Support Services office, bawling my eyes out in front of Rich Jehlik (one of the office’s advisers) and thinking to myself that I should have set my sights lower, gone to a school that wasn’t as academically demanding. Countless times I was ready to throw in the towel.”

Jehlik helped Belt through her biology class, and Cynthia Fitzgerald, the office’s senior counselor, met with Belt weekly. When money became tight, Tami Buffalohead-McGill, BA’89, Creighton’s director of Student Support Services, arranged a work-study job for Belt. “The entire staff and the other students in the office really kept my spirits up and helped me laugh when things became too much,” she said.

The result? Belt didn’t throw in the towel.

Neither did Nakandakare and, increasingly, other Creighton students who, once on campus, are deciding to stay.

About the author: Anthony Flott is a freelance writer in Omaha.
Recently, five Creighton faculty members convened to discuss the case of Terri Schiavo. Or rather, to discuss what we may learn from that tragic case. For there is little point in commenting yet again on the particulars of this case. Too many people have already done so, some qualified, many not so qualified, and most without firsthand information about her case. It is time that we allow Terri to rest in peace and her family to mourn the loss.

There is much we can learn. Although the Schiavo case was unusually complicated in that many vexing ethical issues converged in that one case, each of those ethical issues occurs elsewhere with considerable frequency. Thousands of patients, families and caregivers throughout the U.S. are dealing with similar issues right now or will be soon.

Consider, first of all, Schiavo’s medical condition: PVS or “persistent vegetative state.” As Richard O’Brien, M.D., a colleague of mine in Creighton’s Center for Health Policy and Ethics, points out, “This is truly a devastating diagnosis. PVS essentially means that the patient’s cortex (or higher brain) has been destroyed, hence the synonym ‘cortical death.’ The patient is not dead because her brain stem is still intact. It keeps the ‘vegetative’ functions of the body operating, such as breathing, heart rhythm, digestion and the wake-sleep cycle. The patient even responds reflexively to stimuli, such as following objects moved in front of her eyes. But the part of the brain that enables higher functions, such as thinking and emotion, has been damaged beyond repair. Awaking from PVS after three months is exceedingly rare and after 24 months essentially nonexistent.” (An autopsy on Schiavo found that she had massive and irreversible brain damage, and that her brain was about half of its expected size. “No amount of therapy or treatment,” the autopsy report states, “would have regenerated the massive loss of neurons.”)

Is a patient in a PVS terminally ill? Is she actually dying? As long as life-sustaining technologies such as artificial nutrition and, in some cases, ventilatory support are applied, death is not imminent. But neither is there a real
chance of recovery. The patient continues to breathe and metabolize, but she will never again be able to pursue life’s ends. Medical technologies have allowed us to maintain physical existence and stretch out the dying phase over many years.

That brings us to the second issue: What is the proper role of medical treatment and technology in the dying phase of life? In the latter half of the 20th century, at the very time that we had finally obtained the biomedical science and technology to cure most patients or at least help them survive life-threatening illness and traumas, something strange happened. Patients began to refuse those life-sustaining interventions. Initially, this was shocking news to many physicians. But we came to realize that life-sustaining medical treatments are a mixed blessing. There can come a point when the burdens of such treatments outweigh the benefits.

One of the problems in cases such as the Schiavo case is that we ask the wrong question. Imagine you visit your doctor’s office because of a persistent cough. The physician examines you and then tells you: “I am going to do lung surgery.” This is certainly not what you expected her to say. So you respond: “Surgery? Why surgery?” But now the physician appears perplexed and answers: “Why not? Why should I not do surgery?” So you say, “I don’t know; I am not a doctor.” To which she replies: “Well if there is no reason to forgo surgery, we may as well begin.” This would be a strange and perplexing conversation indeed. For you rightfully expected the physician to explain why and how lung surgery will help.

Whenever physicians want to initiate treatment, they must have good reasons to do so. Without such a “medical indication” physicians should not treat.

So the key question to be asked is not: “Shall we stop treatment?” The key question is: “Shall we begin it?” Or if it has already begun: “Shall we continue it?” The burden of proof is always on the person who wants to begin or continue medical treatment; that person must justify the treatment. This rule applies to all medical interventions, including life-sustaining interventions. A physician may propose dialysis only if she has good reason to believe that dialysis will be an effective remedy. A physician should only resuscitate a patient whose heart has stopped beating if she has good reason to believe that CPR (cardio-pulmonary resuscitation) will benefit the patient. It may come as a shock to avid ER fans, but in many cases CPR is not an effective and beneficial intervention. The success statistics for the hospitalized patient whose heart stops beating and is then resuscitated are actually rather poor.

Some may wonder whether this is really an important issue. Why does it matter which question is asked? By asking the
The Ethics of End-of-Life Care: Lessons to be Learned from the Schiavo Case

fall 2005

that “Catholic moral doctrine has always underscored the sanctity of human life, indeed of all of human life, including frail, sick and disabled persons. Each of us is individually responsible to be a good steward of our own life, and as a community we are charged to respect and protect the lives of our fellow men. However, the Church also acknowledges that good stewardship does not require that we use every possible medical treatment and technology to extend life. The Vatican Declaration on Euthanasia from 1980 underscores that we are morally required to use all ‘ordinary’ means but may forgo ‘extraordinary’ means.”

It should be emphasized that the word “ordinary” does not at all mean “common,” “routine” or “normal.” Rather, what is ordinary or “extraordinary treatment must always be determined in reference to the individual patient while considering his or her unique situation. For example, antibiotics may be perfectly ordinary for most patients, but maybe not for Mr. Jones, who is 96 years old and suffering from advanced dementia, kidney failure and an unhealed broken hip. Artificial nutrition may be perfectly ordinary for a patient who underwent abdominal surgery and whose intestines need a break from digesting food. On the other hand, it may not be ordinary for a patient who is dying.

“In fact, it may become too burdensome physically for a dying patient,” cautions Amy Haddad, Ph.D., professor and director of the Center for A Legal Look at End-of-Life Issues

How can you prepare for the end of life?

Julia Belian, JD, assistant professor of law, encourages people to write down their wishes regarding end-of-life medical care, including any specific instructions to caregivers, as well as who should enforce those instructions.

In all 50 states, such documents — also called advance directives — are legally binding. These directives only take effect when you cannot express your wishes yourself anymore (e.g., because you are in a coma). Belian offers these tips:

1. Be as precise as possible; try to avoid vague language that caregivers and family members will have difficulty interpreting.

2. Know your options under the law. Most of us forget we live in a federalist system with 50 sovereign states, and each has the potential to handle things somewhat differently, including advance directives. However, in all states, such directives can take one of three forms:

   1. A specific description of your wishes for end-of-life care. This document is generally called a “living will,” but is known by different legal names in different states. Most of these state laws do not protect your written wishes about medical care in general, but only what medical care you are willing to accept when you are nearing death.

   2. A document in which you grant some other person the authority to make health care decisions on your behalf. These “power of attorney for health care” documents cover all situations (including end-of-life care situations) in which you cannot decide for yourself and need somebody else to make health care decisions for you.

3. It is also possible to issue both, or a combination of the former two documents. For example, you can grant a family member the power of attorney to make decisions on your behalf, but also specify what kinds of medical care you would (not) want to undergo.

3. Share your directives. Provide copies to all health-care providers who might need them, to all persons named as decision-makers, and to all other family members or close friends who should know about their existence. Advance directives that are safely stored away are simply useless.

Although most state laws do not require that an advance directive be written by a lawyer, Belian says working with a lawyer is probably the most reliable way to make sure that your document will be legally effective. Second choice is to complete a form familiar to your doctor or health care system. Most hospitals have forms. Belian least favors documents provided by web-based companies.
Health Policy and Ethics. “Dying patients rarely feel hunger or thirst like healthy people. They don’t suffer discomfort as a result of dehydration. Rather, forcing food and fluids into dying patients may make them feel very uncomfortable once their organ systems are shutting down. Of course, this does not mean that if a competent dying patient asked for water or food, we would refuse his request. The intent here should be to alleviate the patient’s discomfort.”

How case-specific the ordinary-extraordinary distinction really is becomes clear from an example provided by Julia Fleming, Ph.D., associate professor of theology.

“The distinction actually predates modern medical technologies, for it was articulated in the 16th century. A 17th century Jesuit theologian provided this example of a potentially life-saving treatment that a patient could choose to forgo. Suppose that, for the sake of her good name, a virgin felt it necessary never to submit to a medical examination conducted by a man. Even if she were suffering from a life-threatening illness, such a medical examination would be unduly burdensome, and hence, not required, for that woman.”

We should not mistake the ordinary-extraordinary distinction for the modern right to refuse treatment. The 17th century physician in the previous example was not morally obligated to forgo treatment because the woman exercised her right to refuse even beneficial medical treatment. Rather, the treatment itself was no longer in her best interests because its benefits were outweighed by its burdens.

Unfortunately, modern medical ethics frequently makes this mistake. When the question arises whether antibiotics, ventilation or artificial nutrition is still indicated and ordinary, we are tempted to turn to the patient or his family members and say, “Well, you decide.” The same happened in the Schiavo case. Instead of focusing on the question whether the various medical interventions were benefiting Schiavo, the courts zoomed-in on the question, “Was there any evidence that she would have consented to or rather refused these interventions?” That is an important question, but it should be asked only after it has been decided that the interventions will benefit the patient.

Most assuredly, in order to determine what will benefit the patient, we have to consider the individual patient herself. That is exactly what the “ordinary-extraordinary” distinction requires. And nobody is a better source of information than the patient herself. So we need to engage the patient in the discussion. But the core questions are not: “Do you want treatment X — yes or no?” and “Is the patient competent to make such a decision? If not, who is legally authorized to consent to treatment?” Rather, the core questions are: “Who is this patient? How is her life broken and necessitating intensive physical therapy. And all of this is complicated by the fact that the patient cannot herself cooperate in any way in her own healing process.

High-Profile ‘Right to Die’ Court Battles

Several court battles have shaped living will legislation since Karen Ann Quinlan’s parents fought the first right-to-die case in 1976. Three high-profile cases in which families fought court battles to take loved ones off life support and the legislative results that followed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>RULING</th>
<th>RESULT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Karen Ann Quinlan’s parents had the right to remove her from life support. She had been in a coma for six years.</td>
<td>Many states passed laws recognizing living wills as legal documents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Nancy Cruzan of Missouri was fed through a tube for seven years until the Supreme Court ruled in 1990 that it could be removed.</td>
<td>Congress passed law requiring hospitals to tell patients about state laws on living wills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>A law that connected the feeding tube of Terri Schiavo in a battle between her husband and parents.</td>
<td>Variety of actions in state legislatures are trying to beef up living will laws.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Supreme Court refused to step in to keep Terri Schiavo hooked to a feeding tube.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: AP Worldwide
We really need to make a continuous effort to focus on the patient as a whole person as opposed to a collection of organs, a patient with her own life story, a patient in context.

And here we find the third cause that rendered the Schiavo case so vexing: Nutrition and hydration are very context-specific terms. “From a biomedical perspective, there really is no difference between artificial ventilation and artificial nutrition,” O’Brien explains. “Both mechanically transport molecules into the body that are needed for our body to keep functioning. In the case of ventilation, it’s oxygen; in the case of nutrition, it’s proteins, carbohydrates and the like. Once inside, the body (respectively the lungs and the digestive tract) absorbs and processes those molecules. And yet, most people have far fewer ethical qualms about removal of a ventilator (as opposed to artificial nutrition).”

Why is this? The difference lies in the fact that food and drink — but not air — have very important social connotations. For example, when we share a meal with a patient or bring her a cup of freshly brewed coffee, we do so not only because we are trying to keep that person alive. Rather, the meal is a nonverbal way of communicating, a special way of being together, of expressing care and love. Yet it is precisely this value-added meaning that is lost when we switch to artificial nutrition and hydration. Some ethicists believe that this loss is not decisive, concluding that artificial nutrition is ethically analogous to regular feeding. Others think the loss is decisive, concluding that artificial nutrition is analogous to artificial ventilation instead.

This issue is not likely to be settled soon. In the meantime, we will all continue to grow old, fall ill and ultimately die. “From a Christian perspective, death is inevitable, but it is not the end,” Fleming reminds patients, family members and health care professionals. “Death is indeed an evil to be struggled against, but death is not the ultimate evil.”

Indeed, letting go is not euthanasia. Euthanasia (and likewise physician-assisted suicide) requires that we want the other person to die, and we direct our actions toward that person’s death. If a patient begs his physician to help him die, and the physician next injects a very large and lethal overdose of pain killers, there are only two possible conclusions: Either the physician is incompetent and does not know how to treat pain, or she committed euthanasia.

On the other hand, if family members and caregivers jointly come to the conclusion that available medical treatments cannot heal our 96-year-old Mr. Jones; that these treatments add to, instead of relieve, the burden for the patient; that the various monitors and machines are now infringing on, instead of supporting, the patient’s intrinsic and inviolable dignity; in short, when they find that it is time to let go, their discontinuing these medical interventions is not euthanasia.

There is a time to act vigorously to protect and extend human life, all human life. And there is a time to let go.
A Natural Means of Preserving Life?
By John W. Carlson, Ph.D.
Professor of Philosophy

Few issues have roiled the waters of Catholic biomedical ethics like the debate over medically delivered nutrition and hydration for patients in persistent vegetative (and similar) states. This issue has produced opposing positions among academics, medical professionals, and even bishops. It involves questions about both the interpretation of Church teachings and the application of these teachings to difficult cases. Classical starting points for the debate include a 1957 allocution by Pope Pius XII on “ordinary” vs. “extraordinary” means of maintaining life, and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith’s 1980 document, Iura et Bona, on euthanasia and related matters. Pope John Paul II made several contributions to the discussion, the most famous coming in a 2004 address to a Vatican conference on this very issue.

Briefly, the Church’s pertinent moral teachings can be summarized as follows. Euthanasia, defined in Iura et Bona as “an act or omission that of its nature or by intention causes death” (i.e., the death of a patient), is never to be morally approved. However, some cases in which a patient is allowed to die can be seen, not as euthanasia by omission, but rather as justifiable decisions to discontinue — or not to begin — modes of treatment that constitute “extraordinary means.” The term “extraordinary” is defined by contrast with “ordinary,” the latter applying to means of preserving life that satisfy two criteria: First, they offer a reasonable hope of benefit to the patient (considered as a whole individual). Second, they involve no excessive or disproportionate burden, in particular to the patient.

Interpretive controversy arises about the fuller articulation of “benefit” and about how it is to be determined whether a treatment’s burden is truly disproportionate. In the present type of case, a special question arises: whether continued biological life with no realistic possibility of cognitive awareness is to be regarded as a benefit, or a sufficient benefit, to fall under the standard teaching. But it also has been asked whether some medically delivered forms of sustenance are, so to speak, ordinary by their very nature, and thus, when medically necessary for continued life, always to be used.

In his 2004 address, John Paul II surprised many by seeming to side with those who answer the last question in the affirmative: “The administration of food and water, even when provided by artificial means, always represents a natural means of preserving life.” Moreover, its use “should be considered, in principle, ordinary and proportionate, and as such morally obligatory....” (Emphasis in original.)

Some commentators — e.g., Vatican Bishop Elio Sgreccia, and the Boston-based National Catholic Bioethics Center — regard the issue as now definitively resolved: If nutrients and fluids can be assimilated by the body, their provision is absolutely required. Other trusted commentators — e.g., Kevin O’Rourke, O.P., now of the medical center at Loyola of Chicago, and John Paris, S.J., a bioethicist at Boston College — disagree. My own view is that John Paul’s remarks are best read in the context of his call for building a “culture of life.” The phrase “in principle” in the previous quote indicates that the pope was not propounding a moral absolute; rather, he was pleading with societies to make it economically and psychologically feasible for patients and families to choose life even in extremis.

About the author: Carlson’s academic specialties are biomedical ethics and public policy and thought of Pope John Paul II.
“Water, water, water is coming!”

The Rev. Joseph Mary, S.J., had just finished Sunday morning Mass and was sitting down to breakfast when a frantic young boy came running into the rectory yelling and screaming that ominous warning.

“I looked out, and, lo and behold, the sea had spread out its fangs and was rushing to devour us!” Fr. Joseph remembers.

Overpowering Fr. Joseph’s poor, seafaring community in Batticaloa, Sri Lanka, that Dec. 26, 2004, morning was a tsunami of epic proportions — one that would grab the world’s attention as it tore through several Asian countries, claiming an estimated 225,000 lives.

Eight months later, those devastated by the tsunami continue to rebuild their shattered lives. And, in many areas, the Jesuits are accompanying them in this difficult journey.

The Rev. Don Doll, S.J., who holds the Charles and Mary Heider Endowed Jesuit Faculty Chair at Creighton, spent several weeks in India and Sri Lanka in April with Creighton alumna Anne Burke, BA’82, and her husband, freelance videographer Chris Bell, to document the work of the Jesuits. Burke and Bell are producing a video titled “The Spirit of the Tsunami.” For more on the video, visit Fr. Doll’s website, http://magis.creighton.edu.

At left, Fr. Joseph watches as a villager puts the final touches on a fishing canoe. Through donations to the Jesuit Relief Service, the community was able to purchase 100 new boats.

Fr. Joseph blesses the sea after blessing the boat of two local fishermen — Thangavadivel, 42, left, and Puvanendran, 38. After the tsunami, many people felt betrayed by the sea, which they revered as a loving mother and provider. Jesuit priests, like Fr. Joseph, are trying to rebuild that trust in the ocean.
Top, Fr. Joseph shows 4-year-old Charles Anthony how to reverence his brother, David Benedict, who died in the tsunami, as his mother, Parameswarie, and his sisters, Stella, 18, and Nishanthini, 14, look on.

Above and right, locals carry stones and fit them into place as the foundations for new homes. The Jesuits are helping to build 100 homes between two area Jesuit parishes in Batticaloa. In Fr. Joseph’s parish alone, nearly 600 homes were destroyed and 165 people were killed by the tsunami.
“To be with the poor is to be with God,” said the Rev. Peter Arokiadass, S.J., a Jesuit priest living and working in India. And in India, the poorest of the poor are the Dalits — the outcasts, the “untouchables.”

Even in the wake of the devastating tsunami, news reports told of Dalits not being allowed to drink from water tanks set up by relief agencies — for fear they might “pollute” the water — and of Dalit children being denied access to basic latrines in relief camps. In this atmosphere of discrimination, the Jesuits have undertaken a preferential option to serve the Dalits. “To be a friend of God, to be a friend of Jesus today, is to be a friend of the poor, a friend of the victims of sufferings,” Fr. Peter said.

At top, the Rev. A. Sahaya Philomin Raj, S.J., an advocate or lawyer, passes out Tamil translations of the government’s guidelines for obtaining tsunami aid in the Dalit village of Yerum Salai Graman, in southeast India. The government had published the guidelines in English, which the Jesuits then translated.

At left, a Dalit woman listens intently to Fr. Philomin, and two Dalit men ride new bikes that the Jesuits helped acquire.
The Vailankanni Shrine

Inside the Vailankanni Shrine Basilica, located near the Indian Ocean on the southeastern tip of India, the faithful once again gather in prayer. According to tradition, Mary appeared as an apparition with the infant Jesus on separate occasions to two boys in the 16th century and rescued a troubled 17th century Portuguese ship from stormy seas at Vailankanni. Outside the ornate white exterior of this 17th century Roman Catholic church, the narrow road leading up from the ocean is once again filled with people and merchants.

But on that harrowing day of Dec. 26, 2004, the same street was awash with chaos and death as the waves from the tsunami came crashing in, killing an estimated 1,200 people in the vicinity of the shrine. After the disaster, the church, which was not damaged, became a refuge for those left homeless.

Above left, the street leading up from the sea to Vailankanni Shrine. Center, a view from the street to the shrine. Right, inside the shrine pilgrims from around the world gather in prayer.
"We are there with the people, struggling with them and teaching them skills ... and we are building their humanity," said the Rev. Anbarasan (Anbu) Mariaraj, S.J.

Fr. Anbu is a newly ordained priest and vocation promoter for the Jesuits of the Madurai Province in Tamil Nadu, a state in southern India. Tamil Nadu was especially hard hit by the tsunami — an estimated 8,000 people died and about 130,000 homes were badly damaged or destroyed.

"Seeing so many dead bodies and so many houses destroyed, it was unbelievable," Fr. Anbu said. "Really, I lost hope."

But he set to work with his fellow Jesuits, establishing vocational programs for area youth and women. Young men now enthusiastically gather for a course on boat engine repair and more than 40 women are enrolled in a tailoring class, among other programs.

The courses are not only about teaching a skill ... they are about building hope.

Fr. Anbu tells the story of a young boy deep in grief, struggling with the loss of his mother — a tsunami victim. “He was on the brink of committing suicide,” Fr. Anbu explained. The Jesuit priest began talking to the boy and invited him to participate in the engine repair course. “Now he has found himself fit to live,” Fr. Anbu said. “He has found hope in real devastation.”

Fr. Anbu has seen similar success with...
More than 40 women are enrolled in the Jesuit-run tailoring class in Tamil Nadu, including 28-year-old Selvi (above), a mother of four whose family lost their house and all their possessions in the tsunami.

Fr. Anbu watches as women enrolled in his tailoring class complete a project.

the tailoring program. After the tsunami, he said, many women stayed in their homes, overcome by grief. The tailoring program has provided these women with a loving community where they can share their stories and offer each other support. “Once, we were telling jokes, and this woman started to laugh,” Fr. Anbu said. “She told me that after so many months, she could finally laugh again.”

“Through these training programs, we are equipping people for the future,” Fr. Anbu said. “We are reaching out to them, and we are rebuilding their humanity.”
“They love us so much because we were there with them in their difficulties,” said the Rev. Paul Mike, S.J., coordinator for the Jesuit Tsunami Service relief effort in Tamil Nadu’s Nagapattinam district.

“We are accompanying people in their struggle,” Fr. Paul continued. “We are traveling with them in their struggle. We hope that it will bear fruit and that our journey with them will instill a sense of hope.”

The Jesuits are doing more than just providing basic relief — distributing supplies and aid. As Fr. Anbu puts it: “We go into the communities with empty hands first, and we stay in the village and study the situation and study the real needs of each person.”

The Rev. Eugine Muthu, S.J., director of Rural Action for Development and Research for the Jesuit’s Madurai Province, organized 84 religious nuns and students, some of whom were Jesuit scholastics, to visit traumatized tsunami victims in 72 villages in the...
Nagapattinam district. The death toll in Nagapattinam topped 6,000.

“What we do is go and meet the people who are grieving and be with them and enable them to talk to somebody,” Fr. Eugine said.


The team distributed educational materials — school bags, textbooks, notebooks, writing supplies, as well as school uniforms — to about 1,900 school-age children in 42 villages.

They also conducted creative workshops that allowed children to share their pain and grief in words and pictures.

Study centers were established in the villages to supplement the students’ formal education, and a special summer program is providing educational assistance to some 1,000 students.

The healing takes time, but the Jesuits are making progress.

“They are getting back their own faith in people, themselves and God,” Fr. Eugine said, adding: “The work that the Jesuits are doing is very personal.”

Members of the Jesuit Tsunami Service in Tamil Nadu join in song about the coming together of people following the tsunami. Fr. Paul, one of the coordinators, is seated second from left. The song, written by Fr. Stephen (seated, middle), concludes:

*Hands were held out without looking at caste
Shouldered the burden without ascertaining one’s creed
An army of people came to serve.
That spirit of service is Humanness!*
Celebrating 100 Years of Excellence

The Creighton University School of Pharmacy and Health Professions dates its beginnings to 1905, when the trustees of Creighton University purchased the Omaha School of Pharmacy (founded in 1901). The School expanded in 1982 to the School of Pharmacy and Allied Health Professions. It added occupational therapy in 1985 and, 10 years later, offered the nation’s first doctoral program in physical therapy. The School also includes programs in pharmaceutical sciences, in emergency medical services and in health services administration. Over the past 100 years, Creighton’s School of Pharmacy and Health Professions has been an innovative leader in educating health professionals of distinction, in conducting valuable research, and in serving the community and the world.

The profession in the early 1900s, long before sulfonamides (one of the first chemical substances used to treat and prevent bacterial infections in humans) and the rise of antibiotics would change the course of pharmacy forever. The biggest challenges to human health at the turn of the century? According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s historical and statistical abstracts, the causes of death at the time the School opened would have been pretty straightforward:

- Major cardiovascular disease led, followed by influenza and pneumonia. Tuberculosis was still rampant in the U.S., with gastric microbial disease not far behind.
- Accidents, cancers, diphtheria and typhoid were next in line, followed by measles, cirrhosis (liver failure) and whooping cough.
- Syphilis, diabetes, suicide and streptococcal throat ailments completed the list of top national killers, in that order.

These major illnesses often reflected not only the lack of weapons against infectious disease but also the limitations of the human environment. As people drew into ever-larger urban groups, limitations that included lack of good water sanitation, poor food safety and poor lifestyle choices resulted in characteristic rises in related — and often fatal — illnesses.

But the times were gradually to change. For instance, said Creighton’s Dean of Pharmacy and Health Professions J. Chris Bradberry, Pharm.D., at the turn of the century and into the 1930s, pharmacy practice was focused on the art of compounding chemicals into individualized dosage forms. As pharmaceutical research advanced in the 20th century and pharmaceutical manufacturers produced drugs that were not required to be compounded, pharmacy practice began to shift to a more patient-oriented and drug therapy focus, with compounding medications taking a secondary role for pharmacists.

Meanwhile, too, the lines between
Creighton’s Chris Destache, PharmD’84, left, and Alekha Dash, Ph.D., are conducting innovative research in the field of nanotechnology.
medicine and pharmacy began to become more distinct in the U.S., with both professions issuing stricter standards. And even more new standards were coming, as well, with the creation of the U.S. Pure Food and Drug Administration in 1906.

Eventually, pharmacy research began to change, Bradberry points out, and to focus on drug discovery. This advance was made possible with the development of new disciplines in pharmacy such as drug synthesis, drug dosage form research, the study of the time-course of drugs in the body (pharmacokinetics), and the study of animal and human pharmacology leading to modern-day clinical drug trials, he notes.

The development of nanotechnology as a tool in drug dosage form development is one of the exciting research focuses in the School of Pharmacy and Health Professions today.

Here, meet two Creighton pharmaceutical scientists, whose research takes them to a world not even imagined in 1905!

* * *

Imagine a particle so small that it can easily slip through the cell walls in your body (microscopic walls that can detect the tiniest bacteria and even many viruses). This diminutive particle can defy the “radar” of your ever-vigilant cellular “alarm system,” which has evolved to repel invaders.

Welcome to the nano-world, a universe that operates in our bodies and everywhere else in nature at a level of which we are not the least bit conscious. Yet, it is just at this level that pharmaceutical scientists like those at Creighton are working to bring us new drug therapies.

Chris Destache, PharmD’84, and Alekha Dash, Ph.D., work in a world where nanoparticles rule. Smaller than the average virus, these particles are measured in — you guessed it — nanometers, measurements so small that the period at the end of this sentence would appear to inhabitants of the nano-world as the universe does to us.

You may remember that a meter is equal to a little bit less than one yard. But to get an idea of how small this nano-world is, you’d have to chop up a meter infinitesimally. A nanometer is one billionth of a meter in size. And that is exactly why this tiny wisp can slip by your cell’s defenses — and, Destache and Dash hope, can, in the process, carry therapeutic drugs to their target, your cells, as well.

“A lot of drugs don’t go where you want them to go, unless you give them intravenously,” said Destache, associate professor of pharmacy and medicine at Creighton’s School of Pharmacy and Health Professions.

And even IV’s have their limits, he said, as the body has many means of destroying what it perceives as invaders traveling along the bloodstream and elsewhere with their load of medicines.

The cell walls are one of the final lines of defense in the body’s elaborate safety system against perceived and actual invaders. Nanotechnology offers a way to bypass the cells’ restrictions with a targeted drug that goes along on the nanoparticle “for a ride.”

Work on microparticulate drug delivery systems has been a popular area of pharmaceutical research since the mid-’80s, said Destache and Dash. But today, the area is even more of a hot topic, drawing the Creighton scientists to intense research in several exciting areas.

For example, Dash, a professor and interim chair of the Department of Pharmacy Sciences, is working with the U.S. Department of Defense on development of novel drug delivery systems designed to protect people from the effects of radiation exposure at the cellular level and in the treatment of breast cancer.

Responding to a growing concern about bioterrorism, Dash’s research involves trying to devise a nanoparticle-delivered shield for the cells’ DNA, the target of radiation that causes cell destruction. The exact details of his work are proprietary in nature, but Dash is open about its challenges: targeting the right compounds through the cells’ defenses in order to protect each cell with a radiation “shield” made of chemicals.

Destache’s research, meanwhile, focuses on getting drugs to the brain, using nanoparticles as the delivery system. With his interest in Parkinson’s disease, the Creighton professor is looking to nanotechnology as a means of bypassing the brain’s own unique shield.

This blood-brain barrier, he said, has long served humanity’s survival, keeping what’s circulating in your brain in the brain — and what’s circulating in your body in the body. This barrier allows nutrients to cross from the body to the brain, but, hopefully, nothing else, especially not harmful microorganisms.

Yet, in order to treat certain neurological disorders, that special
barrier sometimes needs to be crossed. This is the challenge of Destache’s work.

So, Destache is intent on equipping a nanoparticle with proteins to slip past the brain’s barrier and to go to work on the brains of Parkinson’s patients.

“In Parkinson’s disease, cells die for a variety of reasons, mostly inflammation,” Destache said. “However, there are a few proteins that can ‘protect’ the cells from going down that pathway of cellular death.

“My research mainly focuses on: (1) Can I deliver these proteins (they are relatively big, so they do not cross the blood brain barrier)? And (2) can I equip the nanoparticle that crosses into the brain with a protein to ‘protect’ the part of the brain that is involved with cellular death for Parkinson’s patients?”

“Of interest,” Destache explained, “is that this protein can ‘regenerate’ neurons.” The Creighton scientist said this finding runs counter to the accepted wisdom: that once neurons die, they are not replaced.

“So, long-term, could giving this protein(s) stop the neurological decline of Parkinson’s patients or, more importantly, could it get back some of their neurological function that was lost?” Destache is tantalized by this thought. While not curing Parkinson’s, Destache sees a better outcome possible for Parkinson’s patients with this new therapy.

If you were a visitor to the nanoworld, what would your experience be at the typical patient’s cell-level?

First, you would have to nano-size yourself in order to observe this quantum world. Secondly, you’d be on the look-out for polylactic glycolic acid (PLGA), the biodegradable substance that might alert you to the presence of a typical medicine-laden nanoparticle.

Dash says nano-medicines must be “haul” their cures in biodegradable “luggage” that dissolves like absorbable sutures once their use has expired. PLGA is just one of those biodegradable substances extensively used for the fabrication of nanoparticles. “Build-up of even benign materials is a big challenge and problem,” Dash said, “so we wish the nanoparticles to leave no trace of their presence, once their work has been done.”

Here, too, holding the nanoparticles in a state of stability is a special challenge, requiring a great deal of energy and control, he added. These controls require just the right selection of formulation parameters for better stability.

Also of interest to Creighton and other scientists is the world of gene therapy using nanotechnology — as well as the use of adenovirus delivery methods. Suppose a person has cystic fibrosis, Destache said. “The defective CF gene may be stored in many cells of the body. So, you need a delivery system that can target all the locations of these defective genes with a load of corrected genes.”

Destache said that nanotechnology delivery of genetic material has only recently been looked at as a means of getting genes to cells of the body. This type of research has been “performed in cell cultures (in vitro), together with some success in mice as well as one human trial. The human trial determined whether using nanoparticles with the gene for CF could be transferred to the epithelial cells in the nose of CF patients. Research results showed the gene could be transferred.”

But, Destache cautions, “this (finding) is a long way off from injecting nanoparticles with the CF gene and having it cure cystic fibrosis in patients.”

That’s why Destache believes adenovirus (common cold virus) delivery systems pose an interesting alternative.

“A better system is to use adenovirus that contains a piece of our DNA and to replace a defective gene with a new gene that the adenovirus brings to the cells. Since the common cold can infect all of us, researchers are using adenovirus to deliver DNA.”

Creighton and similar research centers are in the very early stages of nanoparticle pharmacology, said Destache and Dash.

Bradberry couldn’t agree more. “This exciting basic pharmaceutical science work described by Drs. Destache and Dash is typical of the innovative research that scientists in the School are doing on a daily basis.

“Nanotechnology as applied to drug dosage form development and the targeting of drugs to specific cells is indeed cutting-edge work. The advances in pharmaceutical research have been revolutionary when one looks back over the past 100 years,” Bradberry said, “and we at Creighton are very proud of our faculty who are on the new frontier of drug discovery.”

“Like the explosion in research,” Bradberry added, “the practice of pharmacy is continually evolving and are all other health care professions.

“It’s an exciting time to be a pharmacist. The skills of the pharmacist in drug therapy management are needed now more than ever and this role will continue to expand. The provision of health care is a team effort, and pharmacy practice is a major part of that effort and the future of health care in our nation.”
Reflections

Follow Your Passion: Insight from a New Course on Justice and Vocation

By Roger Bergman

Vocational discernment in the field of social justice is all about discovering your passion.

outstanding practitioners to speak about their own paths to the kinds of work they do?

I then arranged to have 20 leaders from the Omaha community from a variety of professions, in effect, serve as my co-teachers in the seminar. Financial support was provided by Cardoner at Creighton, a five-year program on vocation funded by the Lilly Foundation.

Two by two, in 75-minute sessions, these magnanimous souls engaged my idealistic seniors in conversation about life in the trenches — feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, instructing the inner-city young, housing the elderly poor, defending the rights of tenants and migrants, healing the indigent sick, empowering congregations to take action on behalf of the common good, advocating for more just public policies, and practicing corporate responsibility in the community. In other words, we heard first-hand about the traditional works of mercy in the modes of modern Catholic social teaching.

Of course, we were inspired by the decades of struggle represented. But more importantly, we learned that vocational discernment in the field of social justice is all about discovering your passion. It’s what draws you into the work in the first place, and it’s what keeps you there for the long-haul, when the odds are always against you.

Our last speaker, the Rev. Larry Gillick, S.J., director of Creighton’s Deglman Center for Ignatian Spirituality, really drove that insight home. Fr. Gillick asked the students if they thought God had a plan for them. When a few offered a tentative “Yes,” he simply observed that would be a very unGod-like thing for God to do. “The one thing God won’t do,” said Fr. Gillick, “is make God obsolete.” If you think you’ve got a plan, a roadmap to happiness, you no longer need God, who wants only our love and our trust. If we’re certain of where we’re going and how we’re going to get there, we’ve put God out of business.

Follow your passion, our speakers seemed to say — your compassion, your “cold anger” at the ways things are and your hope for the ways things could be — and God will be with you. For these young men and women, imbued with a passion for justice but not always with a clear sense of what exactly that means for them, this was a liberating and consoling message.

Looking for more spiritual inspiration? Visit Creighton Online Ministries at: www.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/online.html.

About the author:
Roger Bergman is the founding director (since 1993) of the Justice & Peace Studies Program in the Creighton College of Arts & Sciences and a longtime member and former chair of the Social Ministry Commission of the Archdiocese of Omaha.
In the great books of history, it will go down as little more than a cultural footnote; in the second half of the 20th century in the United States, pro football’s popularity as a spectator sport grew to eclipse that of Major League Baseball. My book, *America’s Game*, was an attempt to determine how pro football rose up so quickly, and usurped baseball’s position so convincingly.

What was so striking about the sport’s ascent is that, well into the ’50s, few people saw it coming. To say that baseball was the top sport in America at the end of World War II is to imply a hierarchy where none existed. Baseball towered above the sporting landscape like a colossus, the unquestioned National Pastime, the only game that mattered.

And yet, within the space of a single generation, that all changed. You could argue that football started its present rise back in January 1946, at an epic owners’ meeting that set the stage for all that followed. The combative owners ousted Commissioner Elmer Layden and replaced him with one of their own, former Eagles owner Bert Bell, so beginning a legacy of stability in which the NFL has had three commissioners over the past 59 years. Under Bell, the league’s attendance increased during every year of the ’50s. But the outfit was still run modestly, out of a two-room office in suburban Philadelphia.

The league didn’t begin to truly assert itself until 1960, when the 33-year-old general manager of the Rams, Pete Rozelle, was named the new commissioner on the 23rd ballot, replacing the late Bell, who’d died the previous October.

Under Rozelle — a lifelong fan and former public relations executive — the pace of change quickened. League offices moved to New York, and Rozelle pushed through the all-important joint TV package (in which all teams shared equally in television revenue), whose significance grows in stature every year. Shortly thereafter, the Jesuit-trained (University of San Francisco) Rozelle orchestrated the beginning of NFL Films, and its incalculable contribution to the game, and NFL Properties. By the mid-’60s, the game was being marketed with a sophistication that sports had never known before. Not as a juvenile afterthought but as an absorbing, complex adult pastime, meritng and rewarding intense and extended scrutiny.

And the numbers show that the pivotal decade in pro football’s ascendance was the 1960s. The upstart American Football League brought the game into several markets — Kansas City, Oakland, San Diego, Denver, Buffalo — hungry for big-time sports. The “war” between the two leagues intensified interest in the game throughout the years. And television delivered the contest into America’s living rooms, to dramatic effect. From 1961 to 1972, the number of Americans who chose pro football as their favorite sport rose from 21 percent to 36 percent, the number who named baseball as their favorite sport fell from 34 percent to 21 percent. Baseball’s mistake was a fundamental one that is worth mentioning here. The leaders of that game, so accustomed to their position of pre-eminence, viewed baseball’s position as the national pastime as a birthright, part of the natural order of things. By the time they discovered that wasn’t the case, it was too late to do much about it.

And today? The game stands alone, as the last of the great mass entertainments. A recent Harris survey showed that Americans name pro football as their favorite sport by a 2-to-1 margin over baseball (29 percent to 13 percent).

America is an increasingly balkanized narrowcast land, with 100 discrete and separate demographic groups. One of the great promises of the NFL is that for a while each week, many of these groups come together. Take a 58-year-old white businessman, and a 35-year-old Hispanic housewife and a 17-year-old black student. They’re not reading the same magazines. Or listening to the same music. Or watching the same movies. But every Sunday afternoon, in cities all across the country — at the stadium or in sports bars and living rooms — they’re watching the same game, cheering for the same team, being not just fans but citizens of a larger community. And when those teams rise up to victory, it has an impact that’s almost impossible to quantify. People say it’s just a business. But no one celebrates this way over an annual report. They say it’s just entertainment, but people don’t walk out of the new *Star Wars* film and take to the streets in jubilation. Football can do that. And that, as much as anything, is what has made it America’s Game.


This is part of a continuing series highlighting Creighton Jesuits who are celebrating 50 years in the Society of Jesus in 2005 — the 50th anniversary of the Wisconsin Province.


I’d die a happy man if my calling of theology professor and Jesuit priest would warrant the epitaph: “He helped us recognize God’s presence in our lives.”

Over the years, I’ve grown to recognize God’s presence in my life more and more. The spirituality of St. Ignatius, the founder of the Society of Jesus, focuses on finding God in all things — people, daily events, nature, world events, prayer, and, yes, suffering. Looking back, I realize that, as I have grown to recognize and treasure that presence, God has moved me to share my insights with others — in preaching, teaching and writing.

I’m convinced now more than ever of what I teach and preach: Don’t be afraid of embracing God’s Will. God’s Will for us is our path — our path to our deepest peace and happiness, as well as to our most effective service of others.

— Richard J. Hauser, S.J.
Professor of Theology
Director, Christian Spirituality Program
Rector, Creighton’s Jesuit Community

Fr. Hauser, the oldest of six children, holds little brother and eventual Creighton graduate, Joe Hauser, BS’77, as a Jesuit novice in the 1950s. And today with his three books: Moving in the Spirit: Becoming a Contemplative in Action, Finding God in Troubled Times and In His Spirit: A Guide to Today’s Spirituality.


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