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On the Cover:
Pope Francis blesses a child as he leaves his weekly general audience in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican on April 17.
(AP Photo/Alessandra Tarantino)
Stepping into the World

Recently at Creighton we bid farewell to 1,600 graduates, some of whom will be back in the fall in our graduate and professional schools, but many of whom have departed for destinations around the globe. They join 61,000 alumni across 87 countries who carry the Creighton experience in their hearts.

One particular graduate piqued my sense of nostalgia. She was among the first to complete the online doctoral program in leadership and, amazingly, is a descendant of the family that founded our University 135 years ago. Susan Russell Toohey of Omaha is the great-great-granddaughter of James Creighton, who settled in Omaha in the 1850s to work for his cousin, Edward, the businessman and civic leader whose widow, Mary Lucretia, established Creighton.

We were filled with pride to confer degrees upon the largest group of Native Americans in the history of the University — 23. These graduates will be starting employment, enrolling in additional educational opportunities, or giving back to their communities — students such as Tracy Charging Crow, Oglala Lakota Nation, who graduated from our School of Dentistry and will be a dentist at the Indian Health Service in Rapid City, S.D.

And in a time-honored tradition kept secret until the final moments of commencement, two graduates received the prestigious Spirit of Creighton Award. Laura Haller of Omaha and Matthew Leedom of Sioux Falls, S.D., were honored for their initiative, enterprise, academic achievement, outstanding character and service. Laura will be a special education teacher; Matt will begin practice as a physical therapist.

I cannot help but wonder if the original Creighton family ever could have imagined the cascading effect of their gift over the years. Could they have guessed how Creighton would flourish, to become the complex and nationally regarded institution it is today, influencing the lives of thousands of graduates — including one of their own descendants? Probably not. Our forebears acted out of a sense of mission, as do we, with a passion for education and great compassion. They told us about the powerful experiences they were having, learning from the goodness and faith of the people. Our trip deepened our relationship with the board members who make the Mission possible and we renewed our partnership with a service that so completely fits Creighton’s Catholic, Jesuit mission.

I am confident the class of 2013 will accomplish great things — as educators, journalists, healthcare professionals, military personnel, businesspersons, attorneys, scientific researchers and more. They embody Creighton’s hand in the world.

Throughout the remainder of the summer and into the fall, we will carry forward several exciting initiatives:

- In July, we welcome two new faces to the Creighton community. Edward “Ed” O’Connor, Ph.D., the University’s first provost, will provide expert leadership for our academic community. Later in the month, Gregory O’Meara, S.J., becomes rector of the Jesuit community, fostering the spiritual, physical and ministerial health of about 50 Jesuits as well as teaching in our School of Law.
- Also in July, we begin a new era in athletics as official members of the Big East Conference, an unprecedented opportunity for Creighton.
- In early October, we will celebrate the opening of the College of Business in its new location in the Harper Center and continue renovation of other areas, to maximize and modernize our campus space, creating an even better learning environment.

Most importantly, in mid-August, we will welcome another class of new students into our community of scholars. We are thrilled that they have chosen Creighton for their undergraduate, graduate and professional education; we are committed to providing them an outstanding experience.

It is a legacy of academic excellence and service that I know would make the Creighton family proud. May God continue to bless you, your loved ones and Creighton University.

Timothy R. Lannon, S.J.
President
Creighton’s Phi Beta Kappa Chapter Holds First Initiation Ceremony

Creighton University’s chapter of the Phi Beta Kappa Society, Beta of Nebraska, held its first new member initiation ceremony in April. Fifty-three juniors and seniors were inducted. Floyd Malveaux, BS’61, M.D., Ph.D., was inducted as the chapter’s first alumni member. Henry Lynch, M.D., director of Creighton’s Hereditary Cancer Center and holder of the Charles F. and Mary C. Heider Endowed Chair in Cancer Research, was inducted as the chapter’s first honorary member. Malveaux is a nationally recognized expert on asthma and allergic diseases. He is executive vice president and executive director of the Merck Childhood Asthma Network, Inc. (MCAN) and emeritus dean of the College of Medicine and professor of microbiology and medicine at Howard University. He has led Howard’s participation in several multi-million-dollar research initiatives, from basic bench research to health services research in asthma and allergic diseases.

Malveaux assumed his current position with MCAN in 2005, directing a portfolio that supports translational research and implementation of science-based asthma initiatives in the U.S. and Puerto Rico. He is a member of Creighton’s Board of Trustees. Lynch has been aptly referred to as the “Father of Hereditary Cancer Research.” A review of his research reveals a remarkable and significant social science and cancer genetics contribution on family interactions in the face of cancer diagnoses. Over the past 40 years, he has co-authored more than 800 publications on the diagnosis, prevention, counseling and treatment of hereditary disorders, primarily cancer.

As the director of the Hereditary Cancer Center, he leads a team in evaluating an individual’s genetic risk and management options for certain types of cancers.

Left to right, Marianne Culhane, Rodney Shkolnick, Patrick Borchers and Timothy R. Lannon, S.J., Creighton president.

Gross Appellate Courtroom, Classrooms Rededicated

Thanks to the generosity of alumni, friends, faculty and staff, a renovated Gross Appellate Courtroom in the School of Law and two adjoining classrooms were rededicated in April. The classrooms are named for former dean Patrick Borchers and Rodney Shkolnick, dean emeritus.

The Borchers Room was a gift of Donald, JD’78, and Daphne Campbell. For the gift of the Shkolnick Room, Dean Marianne Culhane thanked Raymond McGaugh, BA’76, JD’84, of Chicago, who serves on the Law Alumni Advisory Board; Raymond Fehringer, JD’84, of Waterloo, Neb.; and a host of law school faculty and staff eager to recognize Shkolnick for 51 years of service. Read more at creighton.edu/giving.
Creighton Celebrates Commencement

Creighton University honored nearly 1,600 graduates at commencement ceremonies in May. The University also recognized the following individuals.

Alumni Achievement Citation

Barbara Braden, Ph.D., SJN’66, BSN’73, dean emerita of University College, received the Alumni Achievement Citation, the highest award given to a Creighton graduate.

Braden began her Creighton career as assistant professor in medical surgical nursing in the College of Nursing in 1975, and she distinguished herself in numerous academic and leadership roles until her retirement from Creighton in 2011.

Braden developed the internationally known “Braden Scale,” a tool used worldwide to identify a patient’s risk of developing pressure ulcers.

Honorary Degree

Mary Lou Quinlan received a Doctor of Humane Letters, honoris causa. Quinlan is an internationally known marketing executive, best-selling author, actress and speaker. Her latest book, The God Box: Sharing My Mother’s Gift of Faith, Love and Letting Go, in which she shares her family’s personal story with cancer, became a New York Times bestseller in just three weeks. She also created a one-woman play based on the book with proceeds from her performances going to local women’s cancer and healthcare charities around the nation.

She presented the play at Creighton the day after commencement with proceeds benefitting Omaha’s Hospice House – The Josie Harper Residence.

Quinlan regularly appears in national media as a marketing expert, writing columns and articles for magazines and appearing on television programs.

Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Award for Teaching Achievement

A. Joseph Threlkeld, Ph.D., associate professor of physical therapy, received the Creighton Students Union Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Award for Teaching Achievement. Threlkeld, one of the founding faculty members of Creighton’s physical therapy program, has been at Creighton since 1992. He co-founded the Creighton clinical physical therapy practice on the Omaha and Winnebago Indian reservations in Nebraska. He chaired the Department of Physical Therapy from 1996-2001 and is the current director of the biodynamics laboratory at Creighton.

Gradoville Simon, Macdonald Honored at Women’s Athletics Fundraiser

Pamela Gradoville Simon, BSN’88, and Deborah Macdonald, BA’72, JD’80, were this year’s recipients of Creighton’s Leader for Life and Believe and Achieve awards, respectively.

During her four years at Creighton, Gradoville Simon excelled in two sports, basketball and golf. She led the women’s basketball team to three 20-win seasons, including its first postseason appearance in the 1987 Women’s National Invitation Tournament (WNIT), at the same time earning both golfing and academic honors. When she graduated in 1988, she was Creighton’s career leader in several basketball categories, including points scored. Ten years later, Creighton inducted her into its Athletic Hall of Fame.

After graduation, Gradoville Simon poured her heart into her nursing career. She completed her master’s degree in pediatric nursing and earned a pediatric nurse practitioner’s certificate. She currently is a patient care manager at the Bass Center for Childhood Cancer and Blood Diseases at Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital at Stanford University.

While a student at Creighton, Macdonald set a standard of excellence for herself, earning a bachelor’s degree magna cum laude, in 1972 and a juris doctor, summa cum laude, in 1980. She continued to set the bar higher throughout her career. Standing on her rock solid values, she made her mark in the highly competitive energy industry.

Macdonald became the first woman to manage a major U.S. natural gas pipeline company, serving as president of Natural Gas Pipelines of Kinder Morgan Management LLC (KMR) and Kinder Morgan G.P.

Kinder Morgan, Inc., headquartered in Houston, is one of the largest midstream energy companies in the U.S., operating more than 30,000 miles of natural gas and products pipelines. In 2011, Macdonald was named a director of Kinder Morgan, Inc. She has served on the Creighton University Board of Trustees since 2006.

Creighton students continue to benefit from her generosity through the Macdonald Foundation Scholarships and the Cole and Joan Macdonald Endowed Scholarship Fund. In 2005, she was the recipient of the Alumni Merit Award from Creighton’s School of Law.
Funk, Neneman and Smith Inducted into Athletic Hall of Fame

The Creighton University Athletic Hall of Fame added three alumni to its ranks in April. This year’s inductees were: Nate Funk, BSBA’07; Christy Neneman, BA’04; and Dan Smith, ARTS’90.

Funk was a first-team All-Valley and All-District selection his junior year, leading the men’s basketball team in scoring with 17.8 points per game and rebounding at 5.1 per game. As a fifth-year senior, Funk led the MVC with 17.7 points per game and was named first-team All-Valley and Most Outstanding Player of the MVC Tournament. He was one of just six players in MVC history to play in three MVC Tournament finals victories. In his career at Creighton, Funk played in three NCAA Tournaments and two National Invitation Tournaments and amassed a long list of player honors.

In her four years at Creighton, Neneman established herself as one of the greatest women’s basketball players in MVC history. She earned All-Freshman Team honors her first season. She continued her success becoming only the second sophomore to be named MVC Player of the Year. She repeated the honor in 2003, one of only four players in conference history to earn the honor more than once. As a junior, she guided the Jays to the Women’s National Invitation Tournament (WNIT) Final Four. Then she led her team to the WNIT championship in 2004, earning the tournament Most Valuable Player award. Neneman finished her career at Creighton with 1,732 points, which remains the fourth best in the school’s history.

Smith came to Creighton in 1988 and pitched for the baseball team through the end of the 1990 season. He was named to the MVC First Team in 1989 and 1990 and to the American Baseball Coaches Association First Team All-America in 1990. He was named Baseball America First Team All-America the same year. The following year, Smith led the Jays to their first NCAA Regional Tournament in 17 years. He was named MVC Pitcher of the Year and finished the season with a 14-3 record and a then school record 1.96 ERA. Smith holds school records for strikeouts in a career, with 312 (also 10th in the MVC), and for complete games in a career at 21.

From Shijiazhuang, China, to Heider Hall: Creighton Welcomes Visiting Scholars

A husband and wife physician team will spend the next year at Creighton as part of a collaboration between the School of Pharmacy and Health Professions, College of Nursing and the 3rd Hospital of Hebei Medical University in Shijiazhuang, China. The goal: To learn more about occupational therapy (OT) and physical therapy in order to improve services back home.

“Any training in the U.S. is often seen as prestigious by professionals and the general public in China,” explained Keli Mu, Ph.D., associate professor and chair of Creighton’s Department of Occupational Therapy. “But China has an especially dire need for more rehabilitation professionals.

“To put it in perspective, the United States has approximately 133,000 licensed occupational therapists for 311 million people. China has several hundred licensed OTs for a population that exceeds 1.3 billion. And currently there is only one OT program recognized by the World Federation for Occupational Therapists in the entire mainland China,” Mu said.

Tao Zhang, M.D., a clinical resident with Hebei’s Orthopedic Institute, and Fang Han, M.D., a clinical resident with the hospital’s Department of Traditional and Western Medical Hepatology, hope to start to bridge that gap in Hebei when they return. To do so, they will audit a year of occupational therapy and physical therapy courses, as well as some interactions with Creighton’s College of Nursing and School of Medicine. They will also shadow clinical activities and observe administrative functions.

The collaboration stems from Mu’s work on the China Honors Interprofessional Program (CHIP), a cross-cultural program between Creighton and the Hebei Medical University and its affiliated hospitals in China. A group of students and faculty travel to Hebei each year during fall break to provide training through symposiums, presentations and hands-on work. They also offer consultations and co-treat patients with Hebei’s attending physicians, nurses and rehabilitation therapists. In turn, the 3rd Hospital of Hebei Medical University will continue to send specialists to Omaha for a year-long immersion in rehabilitation.

Creighton’s School of Pharmacy and Health Professions and College of Nursing have signed an agreement to continue this program for five years. Creighton is also in discussions with Hebei Medical University to expand such collaborations to other health science schools. Mu is hopeful the partnership will last well beyond the contract.

“The American Occupational Therapy Association has called for a globally connected diverse workforce,” said Mu. “We believe that by maintaining and growing this relationship with our colleagues from Hebei, Creighton can be a leader in helping achieve this goal.”
Roedlach Participates in United Nations Official Session

Alexander Roedlach, S.V.D., Ph.D., associate professor of anthropology and psychiatry and director of a new online graduate program in medical anthropology, participated in the official session of the United Nation’s Commission on the Status of Women (DSW/57) at U.N. headquarters in New York in March.

Fr. Roedlach’s order, the Society of the Divine Word (Divine Word Missionaries), and its two sister congregations, the Missionary Sister Servants of the Holy Spirit and the Missionary Sister Servants of the Holy Spirit of the Perpetual Adoration, founded a nonprofit organization, Vivat International, that has consultative status at the U.N. Economic and Social Council.

The theme of the meeting was the elimination and prevention of violence against women and girls. Delegates reviewed a document on the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS patients, a research interest of Fr. Roedlach.

Fr. Roedlach studies how government and nongovernment organizations address gender differences and gender violence around the world, and he has studied caregiving dynamics in Zimbabwe, especially.

Fr. Roedlach says Vivat International (from the Latin, “to live”) has been in existence about 10 years. One of his goals is for Creighton students to secure internships with the organization, to experience firsthand the value of advocacy in the promotion of human rights, justice and peace. Vivat’s executive team has agreed to visit Creighton, to present a workshop on advocacy and lobbying.

Fr. Roedlach says multiple religious orders — some with large international memberships — affiliate with the U.N. as a means of obtaining reliable information on human rights globally: “Representatives then disseminate information to their larger memberships, with the goal of eventually being able to affect change at the grassroots level.”

On campus, Fr. Roedlach is more readily identifiable as a professor than a priest. “I do not emphasize my role as a priest as it does not really matter in my religious community if a member is a priest or brother. I also downplay my role as a priest initially because I don’t want students to temper their reaction to me in any way, but it usually becomes known. Creighton students are very open and interactive and often ask for advice or counsel, and of course, I respond out of my role as a priest.”

He is quickly becoming known, however, for the new program in medical anthropology which he will oversee.

A cultural approach to the study of health and healthcare makes the Creighton graduate program unique and complementary to other health programs, says Fr. Roedlach. Aside from a four-day on-campus orientation, the program is completely online, with an emphasis on fieldwork and cultural analysis. It is coordinated by the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work and promotes strategies to ensure equitable access to healthcare throughout the world.

The interdisciplinary program utilizes faculty from the School of Medicine and College of Nursing as well as the Center for Health Policy and Ethics and will offer a master’s degree and a certificate. The first cohort of students will begin the program in April 2014. Some will enter directly from undergraduate programs while others will enter with experience in medicine, nursing, midwifery and healthcare administration.

Like all Creighton programs, the Medical Anthropology Program is informed by Ignatian ideals.

For more information about the program, visit creighton.edu/medical-anthropology.

Demand Fuels Development of New Graduate Level Programs

Creighton is offering two new graduate level programs in accelerated law and creative writing.

**Accelerated Law Degree:** The School of Law is now offering students a unique opportunity to earn a law degree in two years, rather than the typical three.

“This program is one of only a few of its kind in the country,” said Eric Pearson, associate dean and professor of law. “It offers a unique opportunity for highly motivated students to earn their law degrees in a rigorous, compressed schedule and quickly move into their careers.” Pearson added that the program includes the same courses, taught by the same faculty, that are included in the three-year program. Learn more at creighton.edu/accelerated-jd.

**Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing:** This fall, students interested in becoming authors can enter a two-year course leading to a Master of Fine Arts (MFA) in Creative Writing degree. Students will create manuscripts and prepare them for publication through a series of workshops, craft classes and literature seminars.

Brent Spencer, Ph.D., director of creative writing, said Creighton has had a creative writing track in the master’s program in literature. “But we wanted to design a studio program that would allow us to work closely with developing writers and in which even literature would be taught from a writer’s perspective.”

One of the unique features of the MFA in Creative Writing Program is the focus on book-length writing projects. “We’ll give our students a great deal of personal attention as they develop their manuscripts in workshops, one-on-one conferences and meetings with visiting writers, publishers and literary agents,” Spencer said.

In addition to the MFA degree, the new program will offer a graduate certificate and certificate programs in poetry and prose, as well as an online certificate in screenwriting. Learn more at creighton.edu/creative-writing.
Creighton University Magazine invited Kevin Burke, S.J., and Eileen Burke-Sullivan, S.T.D., to share their insights on the startling papal transition that took place in February and March resulting in the first Jesuit pope.

Fr. Burke came to Creighton in January to hold the Anna and Donald Waite Endowed Chair in Jesuit Education while he worked on his sabbatical scholarship project. Fr. Burke is outgoing dean of the Jesuit School of Theology at Santa Clara University in Berkeley, Calif. As dean, he also served as acting president of the school and helped shepherd it through the process of integrating with Santa Clara University while remaining part of the Graduate Theological Union.

Fr. Burke is the brother of Burke-Sullivan, associate professor of systematic theology and holder of the Barbara Reardon Heaney Chair in Pastoral Liturgical Theology. This sister and brother share many theological interests, most notably that of the Ignatian spiritual tradition, and together they published a book on that topic in 2009.

They wrote the following reflections following a series of ongoing conversations they had throughout the spring as this remarkable sequence of ecclesial events unfolded.

Central to their discussion was the nature of the decisions, both personal and communal, that brought this transition to reality. Insofar as discernment represents the characteristic Ignatian form of decision-making and surprise always accompanies the experience of “finding God in all things,” the combination of discernment and surprise provides an apt lens through which to “read the signs of these times” in the series of events that brought the Church Pope Francis.
Discernments and Surprises:  
The Unexpected Papal Transition from Benedict to Francis

Eileen: When you arrived in Omaha in late January could you have imagined that such a central ecclesial event as a papal transition was about to take place?

Kevin: When I arrived at Creighton in January, the idea that there would be a papal transition was the furthest thing from my mind. I knew, of course, that such a transition could happen at any time, especially as the current pope was already in his mid-80s and by all accounts, growing frailer every year. An elderly man like this could easily suffer an unexpected illness and die. I also knew that it was theoretically possible for the pope to resign and that Pope Benedict had spoken of the possibility of retiring. But I had no reason to suspect that his retirement was imminent.

Kevin: What about you? Did you see this coming?

Eileen: No. I was also taken by surprise. Actually, here at Creighton we were thinking about the Church and its structure and mission, but focusing in particular on our planned celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council and its legacy. Pope Benedict had called for a “year of faith” as a way of deepening appreciation for that great ecumenical event and had specifically asked universities to contribute to a deeper understanding of the council and its documentary messages to, and for, the world.

Kevin: So the first surprise for you was the papal transition itself?

Eileen: Yes. As you mentioned, the possibility was there for the pope to retire. Years ago he sought to step down from his position as the head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith before Pope John Paul II had died. And since becoming pope, he had raised the possibility on at least one occasion, but the weight of historical precedent was against it. When he actually announced it, I would say that most of the Church and world was caught by complete surprise. People close to Pope Benedict, including a number of high-ranking cardinals, were stunned.

Kevin: Interestingly, it’s not as if there is some secret reason as to why it happened. People ask why Benedict chose to resign, and I suppose conspiracy theories will continue to make the rounds. However, I think we should take seriously the reasons he gave: He recognized that his physical health and perhaps his memory were diminishing, and he no longer felt up to the demands of providing the universal Church the guidance it deserved and his ministry demanded.

Eileen: I agree. Thinking about it from an Ignatian perspective — even though this is not the spiritual tradition associated with Pope Benedict — it struck me immediately that Pope Benedict’s decision to resign as pope came out of a process of discernment of God’s desire that bears a deep similarity to what Ignatius describes in the Spiritual Exercises. In any event, his decision to resign underscored the centrality of discernment in the life of faith and gave us a new example of what genuine spiritual discernment might look like. The surprising decision to resign appears clearly to have been the fruit of a careful, prayer-driven process of reflection on the circumstances of his life and health on the one hand and the tremendous and complex needs of the Church on the other.

Kevin: Such a process underscores that discernment — seeking God’s will, not just assuming that we know God’s will — is elemental to our human condition and the demands of living our call in a way that is faithful to Jesus’ own witnessed reflection and prayer. Discernment is always about recognizing that I am not in charge, but God is, and that God has a desire for my life and my work that will bring about my own greatest flourishing, as well as the flourishing of the works I undertake for God’s glory. It’s as if the pope, whether or not he explicitly intended this, reminded us that God is God, and the pope is not! We humans, no matter how exalted our achievements or positions, are finally, fully human. If we saw the humanity of Pope emeritus Benedict XVI is welcomed by Pope Francis as he returns to the Vatican on May 2.

the pope in the suffering of the elderly John Paul, we see in a different way the humanity of the pope and the human reality of the office itself in the example of Pope Benedict. In the final analysis, the papacy is an office, a ministry, a job. It is not an order like his priesthood, for example.

Eileen: Faithful discernment often brings surprises even when the one discerning has a sense of the possible outcome. Our God is a “God of surprises” as others have said, but here the surprise for the pope was a surge of joy and peace that seemed to radiate from him as he called the cardinals to undertake their work and completed his responsibilities.

Kevin: Yes, and Pope Benedict’s resignation involved a profound relinquishment of power and control. As such, many people have seen in this decision a level of humility that is not always associated with such high office. But I believe it also points to something else: a grace of courage — the courage to let go of something you love — the kind of courage we associate with parents who allow their children to make risky decisions with their lives. This courage corresponds to a form of faith — faith as trust in God — that makes discernment possible and gives evidence that the discernment is genuine. Benedict let go of his own power and trusted God; this may well be remembered as his greatest act.
Kevin: When I think of discernment, most of my images are drawn from the experience of the personal discernment an individual of faith might make, asking God what path he or she should follow. The classic case of discernment involves choosing a particular vocation, or entering into a commitment, etc. But something very interesting happens in a prayerful, communal discernment.

In this respect, I found myself thinking about my own recent experience as a delegate to a Jesuit provincial congregation charged with electing a delegate to attend a General Congregation and there elect a new Jesuit superior general. It wasn’t magic. I saw no divine handwriting on the wall, to use a biblical allusion, but something very interesting did happen. There was a palpable shift in the group deliberations as information came to light and data coalesced around certain gifts needed or training undertaken. Prayer focused this and opened all of us to receive something we might not have seen or heard at other times. I suspect something like this happened to the cardinals electing the new pope. From all indications, they did not go into the conclave thinking to elect Cardinal Bergoglio of Argentina.

Eileen: This conclave did something especially surprising not only in electing the first pope from the Americas, but in electing the first Jesuit pope. How appropriate, that the discernment would lead to the member of a religious community famous for its practice of discernment. Central to the Ignatian charism is the willingness to undertake the discipline of discernment in important times of decision-making.

This involves a series of questions: What is God inviting us to do or become in this situation, and in this time, in order to serve the greatest need? How will the greatest good (in God’s terms) be best served? And ultimately: What outcome here will give the “greatest glory to God?” These questions define the nature of the magis that we often refer to at Jesuit schools.

Kevin: Absolutely! From the moment he stepped out on the logia overlooking St. Peter’s Square, the man who dared to be known as Pope Francis surprised us with his simple way of dressing, his shy wave, his first words, a gentle “buona sera,” and perhaps above all, that astonishing moment before he gave the multitudes his papal blessing when he bowed and asked us — those in St. Peter’s Square and all of us around the world — to pray a blessing for him.

Eileen: His choice of Francis of Assisi as his model and patron strikes me as particularly symbolic. Francis emerged in the 13th Century as a simple, poor layman during the time of enormous papal political and economic power under Pope Innocent III.

It was a time, too, of scandal associated with simony, wealth and power in the ranks of ecclesial leadership. It was, further, a period when the Catholic Church and European culture engaged in an intermittent and seemingly interminable war with the Muslim world. For his part, Francis responded to that world with compassion and love. Francis is also known for his love for the material universe as God’s great and lavish gift — so he
cherished the earth, the air, the sun and moon, and all created things as siblings to the human — made by the creator in a harmony of love. This, too, seems strikingly fitting for our times of growing ecological concern and threat.

**Kevin:** Some people have expressed surprise that a Jesuit would choose as his namesake the founder of the Franciscans. What would you say to that?

**Eileen:** For a Jesuit, Francis is such a perfect name choice because Ignatius identified Francis as a model of Christian faith to be emulated. Ignatius challenged his Jesuit followers to see the heroic self-donation of Francis as a pattern for their lives as followers and companions of Jesus. Where he lives, how he travels, and in everything, his gaze is directed outward, to the poor, the disabled, the imprisoned, the excluded, the brokenhearted, to the world. In all this, we recognize a Catholic bishop and pope. But we are surprised — and, for some, confused — by these images.

**Kevin:** In all of this, we recognize, too, the distinctive lines of the Jesuit charism to “find God in all things” in this moment of human history. No past time is a better time; there were no “good old days” when everything was rightly ordered. We recognize God’s Spirit at work in the past so that we learn to recognize the “traces” of God’s presence in the present. Pope Francis further demonstrates his Jesuit consciousness of the faith that does justice, the Gospel call to find our crucified Savior in the lives and faces of those on the margins of hope of our time.

**Kevin:** In addition to his choice to be known as Pope Francis, what else strikes you about his election?

**Eileen:** It is very striking that Pope Francis comes from Argentina. This, too, is interesting from a Jesuit perspective. Many people do not know that during the last General Congregation of the Society of Jesus in 2008, Pope Benedict spoke to the Jesuit delegates assembled from all over the world and reminded them that the Church needed the Society of Jesus to be at the margins of human society, giving voice to the voiceless, and also at the margins of scholarship where the Church intersects the world. Pope Benedict used the image of “going to the frontiers.” The Jesuit vocation has to do with the frontiers.

One of the first things that Pope Francis stated to the people of Rome during his initial audience was that the cardinals had gone to the ends of the earth, the “margins” to find and choose him, a Jesuit from Argentina.

**Kevin:** This same point has appeared in a number of the new pope’s homilies and statements. Francis continues to challenge us, to challenge the whole Church, to move beyond self-importance and absorption with its own internal politics and to be more attentive to the needs of the people of the world. In the Chrism Mass during Holy Week, Francis implored all priests to “Go out, then, in order to experience our own anointing, its power and its redemptive efficacy: to the ‘outskirts’ where there is suffering, bloodshed, blindness that longs for sight, … to be shepherds, with the ‘odor of the sheep.’”

**Eileen:** Now that we are some weeks past the rather “heady” first days of the pontificate of Francis, are both the joy and the surprises that are consolations of a good discernment still apparent?

**Kevin:** Francis’ decisions continue to pleasantly surprise many, and to provide some discomfort to others. His decision to celebrate the Holy Thursday Liturgy with imprisoned youth, many of whom were “undocumented” according to Italy’s laws, startled many. More recently his decision to appoint a group of eight cardinals from around the world — several of whom are presidents of large bishops’ conferences — as an advisory group, along with his announced intention to revise the structures of the Vatican bureaucracy, suggest a movement toward completing some of the work of Vatican II that had been interrupted in the last three decades by other priorities.

**Eileen:** In fact, as we have continued to develop our Creighton Celebration of the Legacy of Vatican II, I have listened with delight to his challenge to make the work of the council a part of our growth in faith. His reflections on the role of the Holy Spirit in the council have offered great encouragement that the renewal written into council documents will become more fully realized. He stated that we must neither reject the work of the council nor make it a monument, but rather, see it as part of the ongoing work of the Spirit that constantly renews and refors the Church to more closely align us to the mission of Jesus, our head.

**Kevin:** Both renewal and reform offer constant surprises. Some are delightful surprises and yet are uncomfortable, because only God has all the answers. Ultimately that is the definition of Ignatian discernment, an often uncomfortable process of seeking God’s will where we don’t expect it to be leading us — and God always rewarding us with joy and a surprising sense of peace in the discovery.

**Eileen:** From the perspective of the Ignatian tradition that formed both of us and that shapes the identity and mission of Creighton University, it seems that we are experiencing a genuine springtime of ecclesial change. Hopefully this will continue to be a season of rediscovering the enthusiasm and hope that blossomed with Vatican II. May the delight and excitement that we experienced this past winter and spring with the election of Pope Francis be a grace both for this University and for the universal Church.
The Creighton University School of Dentistry has come a long way in its 108-year history. Today it provides state-of-the-art teaching in 3-D imaging and dental implants while staying true to its Catholic, Jesuit roots of serving others.

It is hard to imagine how far the curriculum of Creighton University’s School of Dentistry has come since its start in 1905. Following its founding, the school nevertheless soon established a reputation for excellence, coming to be known as “unsurpassed in the West.” They taught simple extractions, preventive care and even limited restorative efforts.

“Still, a seat in a Creighton-educated dentist’s chair a century-plus ago more often than not came down to an oft-repeated procedure: exodontia — or tooth extraction,” said Mark Latta, D.M.D., dean of the Creighton School of Dentistry. Done often enough, it is no wonder some people came to be known as what Latta calls “dentally disabled.”

Even early on in his practice, Latta said, there still were a lot of extractions.

Today, though, he said, “We’re better about keeping what God gave us.”

The introduction of fluoride in the mid-20th century was huge, of course. But in the last two decades, dentistry has seen “remarkable changes,” Latta said.

We know more about preservation — not just of teeth, but of soft tissue and bone, too. Materials are much more sophisticated, with implants composed of titanium, polymers and alloys. And we know so much more, like how diabetes, low birth weight, cardiovascular disease or even certain medicines are related to oral health. And we are starting to explore the very real possibility that oral health affects the rest of the body — something insurance companies are hot on, considering they pay less in medical benefits to those who have more robust dental treatment.

Charles Wilcox, D.D.S., who served 23 years as a dentist in the U.S. Air Force before joining the Creighton faculty, said he has never seen a more exciting time.
“We’re doing things now that are unrecognizable from 40 years ago, not even conceivable,” Wilcox said. “And it comes rapidly. We are changing and updating stuff every year … and running out of breath trying to keep up.” Wilcox noted that in 1947, the year he was born, 65 percent of all Americans could expect to need complete dentures by the age of 45. Today, that number is below 5 percent.

Creighton not only is keeping up but often is setting the pace. That is especially so with cutting-edge developments and instruction in 3-D imaging. Creighton is ahead of the curve with dental implants, too.

That is passed on to students through hands-on training that produces in-demand alumni — alumni who make up 70 percent of Omaha’s dentists and others found throughout the country, especially west of the Mississippi. All while serving as a safety net for thousands of Omaha’s working poor.

“We believe that our curriculum education is really leading all the dental schools,” said faculty member Takanari Miyamoto, DDS’08, MBA’12, Ph.D., chair of the Department of Periodontics. “When I talk to post-graduate program directors in other schools, they always want our students because they think our students are the best in this country.”

**All Hands on Deck**

That certainly does not go unnoticed by student prospects wanting to get in. Nationally, nearly one in every three dental school applicants applies to Creighton. In 2012, that came to 2,727 applications for just 85 available seats.

The average GPA of applicants, 3.62, is as high as ever, said Latta. But grades are not the school’s only consideration. “We don’t just skim the cream off the top,” said Latta, who became the school’s dean in 2011.

Creighton does a “whole file” review, also considering service and one’s desire to be a dentist. The dental school also promotes
That means there is plenty to go around. “We hear stories from other schools where their students are finding it difficult to find enough patients to get a broad range of practice while they’re in dental school,” said Wilcox, who directs and coordinates implant dental services performed at the school. He also maintains a private practice in Omaha. “We don’t seem to have much of that problem here,” Wilcox said. “Our students tend to leave here with more actual clinical experience and a broader clinical experience than many other schools.”

Even complex procedures that might go only to graduate students at other schools are available to all Creighton students. “Our students are directly involved in the placement of the implants,” Wilcox said. “Our students are actually in the surgery suite when the placement takes place.”

And, Miyamoto said, Creighton students do not just know how to do procedures. They also know why they are doing them and what is next for the patient. “Our students understand more about why we do this and how we do this and how we plan it,” said Miyamoto, who previously worked at Boston University and maintained a periodontics practice in Massachusetts.

Dental School Announces New Department of Diagnostic Sciences

The School of Dentistry opened the Department of Diagnostic Sciences in May. Chaired by John Shaner, D.M.D., associate professor of general dentistry and director of clinical teams, the department aims to improve the educational experience for students and increase clinical efficiencies in the school’s clinic.

The Department of Diagnostic Sciences will focus on the accurate identification of head and neck pathology for patients in the dental clinic, including oral cancer screening, medical risk assessments and the development of a comprehensive treatment plan. Faculty and staff members have specialty training and clinical expertise in oral diagnosis and treatment planning, oral and maxillofacial pathology, and oral and maxillofacial radiology.

In support of the new department, the dental school is creating a Maxillofacial Imaging Center, which will consolidate the clinic’s two Cone-Beam Computerized Tomography (CBCT) units to better support dental school patients and an increasing number of outside dental office referrals. The school will also open an Oral Pathology Consultant Office to provide easier access for oral pathology consults and install another intraoral radiographic unit and chair to improve access for radiographs.

“We are committed to achieving the best educational environment for our students by maximizing their clinical experiences while providing excellent care for our patients and service to the citizens of our community. Our focus on care and education will be enhanced by this new department structure,” said Mark Latta, D.M.D., dean of the dental school.
Another Dimension

Student instruction extends even to complex procedures such as 3-D imaging and implants. The two work hand in hand.

As for 3-D imaging, Douglas Benn, DDS’10, Ph.D., director of oral and maxillofacial radiology, said it is an area that is “booming” with estimates of up to 10,000 cone beam CT machines throughout the United States. Those can scan and create 3-D images.

But technology has raced ahead of know-how.

“It requires special training, more than you normally get in conventional dental courses ... and much more difficult to read the images,” said Benn, who, with Tim Walker, BusAdm’77, DDS’85, is one of two professors of dental radiology at Creighton.

“So the critical problem for the dental profession now is getting the additional education to be able to read these 3-D images.

“We are introducing into Creighton teaching how to read cone beam CT for dental students, which most schools are not doing yet,” Benn said.

Creighton has been carrying out such scans for nearly a decade. Scans typically are performed of teeth, the lower jaw and face. But, according to Miyamoto, improvements in software the last five years have made the scans even more valuable.

“It’s significantly improving treatment planning and predictability of implant procedures,” said Latta, previously associate dean for research and once a director of research and development for a large dental company.

The 3-D scans can tell dentists the thickness and height of bone, where nerves are located, the layout of surrounding anatomy and more. Benn said 3-D scans also detect about one-third more infections at the roots of teeth than X-rays.

Software can take 3-D information and allow dentists to pick a precise, best-fitting implant. It also can provide a custom surgery guide for exact placement of those implants.

“We do everything in the computer first,” Miyamoto said. “Then we reconstruct the information from computer to reality, placing implants according to how we planned it. Everything is done exactly in the same manner.”

It is, he said, “more like robotic surgeries.”

“It will give us the most precise way to place implants,” Miyamoto said. “Anatomy is very different, so it is very important to pick the right size of implant for the patient and carefully find out the location of the implant.”

Wilcox added that 3-D scans give Creighton the ability to place implants in people who typically would have been denied such a procedure.

### 3-D Imaging

Creighton has been doing cone beam CT scans for almost 10 years. 3-D scans can tell dentists the thickness and height of bone, where nerves are located, the layout of surrounding anatomy and more. Software such as that used by Tim Walker, BusAdm’77, DDS’85, can take 3-D information and allow dentists to pick a precise best-fitting implant and also provide a custom surgery guide for exact placement of implants.

**Image 1**: Shows a full implant placed and oriented.

**Image 2**: Full implant with a stone model is the same as image 1 but has the diagnostic model incorporated into the image.

**Image 3**: Shows the tooth (brown) placed virtually.

**Image 4**: Patient was in full dentures and this image has implants placed and oriented for reconstruction.

**Image 5**: This full mouth scan with a stone model is the working model incorporated into the cone beam CT image.

**Image 6**: Denture wax up as it will appear on the implants.
patient getting a nicer looking set of pearly whites. The 3-D scans on occasion pick up other problems, like tumors or other malignancies. Many dentists are not trained to see them. When they are found, patients are referred to specialists.

Creighton students are being exposed to all this technology and the procedures.

“Most of our students know how to read a CT scan now and therefore they can explain to the patient if dental implants treatment can be possible or not,” Miyamoto said.

Once they are graduates and in their own practice, they will know where to turn for help, too.

Taking Root

Creighton also is teaching its students the very latest related to dental implants. Again, advances are coming rapidly in the field.

For instance, “The use of bonding and adhesives in restorative dentistry was not known 40 years ago,” Wilcox said.

Creighton, he said, “was probably the first school to have an implant program for predoctoral students. That was a bit more than 25 years ago. Now all dental schools have a predoctoral implant program.”

That said, Wilcox pointed out that some schools confine the implant program to a select group of students. Not so at Creighton.

“You’ll have predictable placement of the implant,” said Walker, who returned to the University after working as a resident in the Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology Program at the University of Texas (UT) Health Science Center in San Antonio. “It’s night and day difference.”

Even with full dentures. The technology can provide such a secure fit that the part of a full denture that covers the roof of a patient’s mouth is no longer needed. “Now they have more room for their tongue. Physically, it’s more comfortable,” Walker said. “Second of all, their ability to taste goes back up. So it’s a huge benefit to these people.”

The service was available at UT but not at Creighton. Walker is working to change that within the next year.

“This whole cone beam technology … has brought us out of the back room, and we can provide a service to practitioners that wasn’t even imagined 10 years ago,” Walker said.

Walker is building a faculty practice, which private dentists can access — no matter where they are. If another dentist has access to advanced imaging, they can provide Creighton scans via secure data transfer. Creighton faculty will be able to provide precise implant measurements, treatment plans and surgical guides.

Benn said about half the 3-D exposures Creighton performs now are done on patients referred by area dentists who do not have such a scanner.

“So we provide a very important service to the dental community, as well as state-of-the-art teaching for our dental students,” Benn said.

And 3-D scans sometimes provide benefits well beyond a
“To a certain level, we were in on the ground floor of that particular movement,” Wilcox said.

Miyamoto said Creighton teaches its students how to restore implants. The school also is teaching about custom abutments and crowns so that an implant can be precisely tailored for precise fits.

With the precise information provided by 3-D scans dentists can choose a specific implant with proper length, thickness, etc. The school also is advancing into custom-made abutments.

And Creighton has developed implant-related innovations on its own. Other schools, for instance, let students practice implant placement on stand-alone plastic jaw models. Creighton introduced a training program in the simulation lab that places the mandible model inside a mannequin.

“Our implant placement laboratory mannequin program is the only one of its kind in the nation,” Wilcox said. That helps students learn how to drill precise holes in a setting as similar to a patient’s mouth as possible.

“We are the only ones who have that at this particular time,” Benn said. “In five years or so, I imagine everyone else will be jumping on that.”

It is nothing new.

“Creighton was one of the first schools that trained other schools how to place implants,” said Timothy McVaney, D.D.S., longtime faculty member with the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery. He is course director for pain control and the director of the surgical section of implant dentistry. He also maintains a 20-year private practice in periodontics in Omaha.

That continues, he added, with ongoing education for general dentists today, some from far away. Miyamoto, a native of Japan, four years ago began a one-week summer program for 25 to 30 international dentists for dental implant education.

“They choose to come to Creighton over other institutions such as New York University, UCLA or USC,” he said. “(They) recognize Creighton is better than others all the way.”

Innovation

Even with all the advancements, no one at Creighton is resting on his or her laurels. Melissa Lang, D.D.S., along with Miyamoto and others, is working with Switzerland-based Straumann, perhaps the world’s most prestigious dental company, on investigating a new abutment system.

Martha Nunn, D.D.S., Ph.D., meanwhile, is primary investigator on a $100,000 National Institutes of Health grant that is trying to establish a global standard for prognostic indicators of whether a tooth should be extracted and an implant established or if a tooth should be kept and crowned.

The same tooth could be treated differently by various dentists, Miyamoto said.

Nunn, co-investigator Miyamoto and others are reviewing nearly 60,000 Creighton records from the last five years to determine if there are prognostic indicators that would help establish standards for such decisions.

Service

All of this takes place while fulfilling a role key to Creighton’s Catholic, Jesuit roots — service. As Latta notes, “We serve the working poor of this community.”

The 11,000 patients and 45,000 visits, Latta said, are “a real eye-opener for a lot of people.”

“When it comes to providing dental care, safety-net dental care, we have a huge impact,” Latta said. “We’re providing access to an awful lot of folks.”

Fees are about one-third of what they would be for private care. The trade off to the excellent dental care they receive, Latta said, is that service can take longer than it does in a private setting — the result of students working under faculty supervision.

On Thursday evenings, Creighton students and faculty volunteer their services for free screenings. Plus, Creighton dentists, dental students and other volunteers have taken part in the past nine “Give Kids a Smile Day,” held in conjunction with National Children’s Dental Health Month.

What isn’t there to like about the Creighton School of Dentistry? It offers innovative programs, has cutting-edge software and focuses on service.

“Our students are really top-notch,” McVaney said. “They are highly regarded, well trained in all aspects of dentistry, allowed to do procedures and go to postdoctoral programs. Their proficiency is turned into expertise.”

Yes, the school has come a long way since 1905 — all the way from extractions as the only option to sophisticated restorations and presentation techniques.
Moonlight, Stardust, Blue Moon, Sunset, Harvest Moon, Sundown … these were common monikers given to drive-in theaters that once filled the American landscape from coast to coast not so long ago.

A combination of America’s love of the automobile and the movies, outdoor theaters reached their peak of popularity in the U.S. during the 1950s and 1960s with some 4,000 facilities nationwide. Over time, this movie venue has seen a huge decline, with only about 368 in operation today.

In an ongoing body of work, Michael Flecky, S.J., professor of fine art photography, has produced a series of photographs representing the familiar, historic and frequently abandoned structures originally constructed for outdoor movie entertainment. Fr. Flecky’s photographs have been described as visual records of a bygone but fondly remembered era in the nation’s cultural history.

Fr. Flecky made his first drive-in photograph at the Pineview Drive-In outside Long Pine, Neb., in 1984. At that time, several outdoor theaters could still be seen along the distant prairie horizons near Nebraska towns including Schuyler, O’Neill, Kearney, Grand Island, Kimball and Alliance, to name a few.

“I continued to be attracted artistically to these visual relics of America’s love affair with the cinema, the outdoors and the entertainment they suggest,” Fr. Flecky said. “The distinctive form and structure of the projection screen, along with the grain elevators and church steeples, evoked a familiar profile of the Midwestern rural landscape before air-conditioning, cable channels, large-screen televisions and home movie players.”

For 29 years, Fr. Flecky has photographed the sites of drive-in theaters throughout the Midwest and around the country. On the following pages, Creighton University Magazine shares some of those photos, recalling part of Americana.
The Drive-In Theater

Rich Visual Culture

By Sheila Swanson

Starlight Drive-In, Alliance, Neb., 1999.

Pineview Drive-In, Long Pine, Neb., 2011. No longer open, the sign remains and the screen can be seen in the distance behind the trees.
“As sources for visual art and objects of attention, the projection screens in drive-in theaters are a photographer’s dream, particularly engaging as blank canvases — ‘frames awaiting pictures’ and commanding the audience’s attention,” Fr. Flecky said. “They remain as evidence of once-exciting pictorial venues for focus, awareness, imagination, ideas and information, community participation and shared appreciation.”

The Sunset Drive-In, Bridgeport, Neb., 1999: Fr. Flecky was attracted to the positive/negative space of what remains of the screen.


An unidentified drive-in near Atwood, Kan., 2002: The remnants of the local drive-in theater now in the middle of a farm field.
The popularity of outdoor theaters developed after World War II in the U.S. with the increased availability of automobiles, cheap gasoline, the improvement of highways, the popularity of Hollywood movies and the development of a teenage culture. In their heyday, drive-ins operated from March through October in seasonal climates and in some areas of the country year-round. As the size and number of outdoor theaters grew, owners gradually added elaborate concession stands, playgrounds for children and miniature golf courses.
Outdoor theaters are quickly becoming a thing of history and archeology. However, several hundred remain in operation in the U.S., including those pictured on pages 22 and 23.

During his travels, Fr. Flecky noticed the prominent role drive-in theaters played in rural weekend entertainment, particularly for families. “I was immediately captivated by the sense of community at the theaters, how people celebrated their cars and families and friends — how they waited for the picture to appear on the screen. It was almost like church, only people showed up early and sat up front,” Flecky said.
The Drive-In Theater

A panoramic of the Transit Drive-In, Lockport, N.Y., 2009. Although the drive-in experience may not offer the high-tech features of today’s indoor movie theaters, it offers movie-goers a unique opportunity to gather as a community under the stars.

66 Drive-In Theatre, Carthage, Mo., 2009

The Lucky 13 Starlight Cinema, Eureka, Ark., 2010: Screens can be as simple as a wall that is painted white, or they can be a steel truss structure with a complex finish (as seen above at the 66 Drive-In Theatre).

Fr. Flecky’s “Sunset Drive-In” Series has been on exhibit most recently at Southern Illinois University (2009), Canisius College in Buffalo, N.Y. (2011), the Museum of Nebraska Art in Kearney, Neb. (2012), and the Betty Strong Encounter Center in Sioux City, Iowa (2013).
For Christians, the Lord’s Prayer is so familiar that one can lose sight of the originality and radicalism of the message. Jesus encourages us to call God “Abba” or “Father.” We are to pray and work for the Kingdom of God in all its fullness, “on earth as it is in heaven.” We should trust in God’s bountiful and providential care, whether in the provision of bread or protection from evil.

For me, the radicalism of the Our Father stands out most clearly in its teaching on forgiveness, especially the intimate connection it establishes between divine judgment and human action. “Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.” Christians rightly proclaim the mercy and forgiveness of God. How often, though, do we reflect on Jesus’ teaching that God’s forgiveness of us depends in part on our forgiveness and reconciliation with our enemies?

Through the generous support of Creighton’s George F. Haddix President’s Faculty Research Fund, I had the privilege of grappling with this question in the presence of 150 African Christian leaders. These leaders were meeting in Kampala, Uganda, at the African Great Lakes Initiative (GLI), an annual ecumenical gathering of Christian leaders from a region notable for its large Christian populations and recent history of violent conflict.

For one week, Christian leaders come together across denominational, national, linguistic and ethnic lines, striving to embody the biblical promise of Ephesians 2:13: “You who were once far off have been brought near through the blood of Christ.”

In many ways the GLI was a week of stories — stories of despair and hope, bitterness and forgiveness, violence and peace, sin and new creation.

Over lunch, Sam Eibu Okikor, a Ugandan Baptist minister, spoke with me about his reconciliation ministry.

Above left, at Our Lady of Fatima Queen of Peace Cathedral in Luweero, Uganda, a stained glass image of two of the famous 1880s Ugandan martyrs, St. Charles Lwanga and St. Kizito.
between his own Teso ethnic group and the neighboring Karamajong. Pastor Okikor told me that his own people were angry with the Karamajong for their violent cattle raids. They also looked down on the Karamajong for their hygienic and culinary practices, such as keeping milk at room temperature and eating rats. Reconciliation did not become possible until Pastor Okikor and others began to visit the Karamajong in their homes, accepting their hospitality and sharing meals with them. In Okikor’s words, “we had to treat them with love.”

Likewise, a Catholic laywoman, Maggy Barankitse, has sought to embody what she calls God’s “revolution of love” in her home country of Burundi. Barankitse lost 60 members of her extended family during Burundi’s genocidal civil war; she was forced to watch as Tutsi soldiers executed Hutu children at the diocesan chancery where she worked.

In response, Barankitse started Maison Shalom, a network of children’s homes for war orphans that now includes more than 30,000 children and young adults (maisonsshalom.org). I was familiar with Barankitse’s ministries, but what struck me about her testimony at GLI was her ability to “change the narrative” in a situation of conflict.

For example, during the war, a child soldier stopped Barankitse at a roadside checkpoint. In response to his interrogations about her agenda, she replied, “I am looking for you, my lost child.”

The young man immediately demanded that she kneel down (a likely prelude to execution). Noticing that the young man was wearing a rosary around his neck, Barankitse told him that she would only acquiesce if he also kneeled down to pray with her. After a moment’s hesitation, the child soldier agreed. This man went on to become her personal driver and adopted son. For Barankitse, this story was emblematic of the Church’s call to embody a new “Christian we” that transcends the poisonous Hutu-Tutsi story that had shaped so much of her country’s history.

The Maggy Barankitsees of the world don’t magically appear in the midst of crisis situations; their visions of reconciliation and forgiveness emerge from years of formation. This lesson came home to me in the testimony of Fr. Zacharie Bukuru, a Burundian Catholic priest who spoke on the final day of the GLI.

As rector of Buta Junior Seminary in southern Burundi, Fr. Bukuru was entrusted with the spiritual and educational formation of dozens of young seminarians between the ages of 16 and 24. When civil war broke out in 1993 after the assassination of Burundi’s first Hutu president, the Buta seminarians asked Fr. Bukuru to allow them to return to their villages. Knowing they would likely become embroiled in the growing ethnic war, the rector convinced them to stay at the seminary.

Over the next several years, Hutu and Tutsi seminarians shared openly and honestly about their grievances, anger and the roots of what Fr. Bukuru called “the poison in their hearts.” Sustained by common practices of prayer, study, work, dance and exercise, they gradually built a “culture of peace” in the midst of war.

As schools closed around the country, Buta Junior Seminary remained open through the worst years of the war. Unfortunately, their ethnically mixed school also drew unwanted attention from Hutu and Tutsi extremists. In April 1997, 2,000 militia members showed up at the seminary and asked the students to separate Hutu from Tutsi. The students refused. As grenades fell around them, the seminarians sang psalms of praise and called on God to forgive the soldiers, repeating Jesus’ words that “they know not what they do.” Forty seminarians died in the ensuing slaughter.

Arriving on the scene after the massacre, Fr. Bukuru encountered a dying seminarian who looked up at him and smiled. “Father, they ordered us to separate. We refused. We won — the victory is ours.”

Burundi’s 40 young “Martyrs of Fraternity” embody the paradoxical message of the Cross — the call to embody community in the midst of division, to find joy in the midst of death and violence, to forgive one’s persecutors, to sing hymns as grenades fall.

As an American outsider, such stories can also seem like heroic narratives for Africans “over there.” But as Maggy Barankitse reminded us at the GLI, her mission was not to inspire Christians to “marvel at Maggy” or replicate Maison Shalom. Rather, Christians should listen to the voice of God calling them to reconciliation and new creation in their own local contexts. In other words, Christians are called to discern and embody the gift, promise and responsibility of the “Our Father” wherever we live.

“Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven, give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.”
We Are All One: Traveling the Camino de Santiago

By Eugene Curtin

Margaret Guzlec Hoarty, BSN’70, and Tom Hoarty, BA’70, JD’73, arrived in Santiago on Oct. 4, 2012, having walked 500 miles from their start at Saint Jean Pied de Port, France. After spending several days in Santiago, they traveled by bus to Finisterre on the sea, where the above photo was taken on Oct. 7, 2012.
Known to the English-speaking world as The Way of St. James, the Camino de Santiago is a medieval Christian pilgrimage, a 500-mile journey from the French town of Saint Jean Pied de Port, which sits five miles from the border with Spain, across the Pyrenees Mountains and then along the northern length of Spain to the cathedral in Santiago de Compostela on the Spanish west coast where tradition holds the bones of the apostle James found their final resting place.

It was a long, 38-day journey that caused Margaret at one point, having contemplated the human circumstances of the pilgrimage — the long odds against any of these pilgrims ever meeting again and the sense of connection the pilgrimage builds with those cowled and sandaled supplicants a millennium ago — to note a simple and profound thought in her journal: “We are all one.”

The call of the Camino sounded for Margaret in 2006 after she read Joyce Rupp’s account of her Camino pilgrimage titled, Walk in a Relaxed Manner: Life Lessons from the Camino.

A retired nurse and a member of Creighton University’s class of 1970, Margaret gave the book to her attorney husband, Tom, also a 1970 and 1973 Creighton graduate. He read it, and said that if Margaret was up for the trip, he was too.

Reflecting on the pilgrimage last February before a gathering at Creighton, some four months after returning home, Margaret recalled the moment they made the decision to go.

“It was a decision of the heart,” she told the gathering. “The Camino extended us an invitation to experience hardship and grace, joy and mystery, an invitation that even now is beyond explanation, and we accepted.”

They left Omaha on Aug. 26, experienced a minor but promising miracle when they secured the two remaining seats on the bus that took them to their beginning destination, and on Aug. 28 set foot on the ancient trail.

Between that day and their arrival in Santiago de Compostela on Oct. 4, Margaret and Tom walked between 13 and 15 miles a day and experiencing a great many realizations about life, the importance of the
We Are All One: Traveling the Camino de Santiago

journey, of lightening loads, of being humble enough to accept other people’s generosity, of not judging, of discovering that true humility resides outside one’s established comfort zones, and of the importance of breaking in walking shoes long before approaching the first rocks of the Camino.

Relaxing in their midtown Omaha home, recalling the journey, Tom and Margaret said the challenge, the adventure and the opportunity for discovery proved irresistible.

“The opportunity to walk it, and to meet people from other cultures was just fascinating,” Tom said. “It was something we could do together, and it seemed like it might be fun, and it was fun.”

“For me there was a spiritual component to it, however you define spiritual,” Margaret said. “I think it’s getting to know yourself better, and your connection with the rest of the world.”

The bones, even in the event they do belong to St. James, were not the draw, she said, although they may have been for the pilgrims of ages past.

“It was more than that,” she said. “It was not even about getting to Santiago. It was about the journey.”

A feature of the journey, Margaret recalled, was the volume of “things” that had been discarded by pilgrims who decided their baggage was more hindrance than help, something both she and Tom saw as a metaphor for life’s burdens.

“Many of (life’s burdens) are worries that seem critical at the time but turn out not to be so and the extent to

The Way of St. James or St. James’ Way (El Camino de Santiago, Galician) is the pilgrimage route to the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia in northwestern Spain, where tradition has it that the remains of the apostle St. James are buried.
which you can eliminate those worries makes life much easier,” Tom said.

“It was just such a metaphor for our lives,” Margaret said. “We accumulate so much stuff, and then all the stuff you have takes time, because you have to maintain it, and it takes up space both physically and mentally and then creates problems you have to deal with.

“It was very freeing to carry everything you were going to use on your back.”

The hostel system along the way, which has evolved to serve the pilgrims, was a source of great simplicity, good food and friendship, Tom said.

Freed from modernity’s tendency toward isolation, people were open, easy to engage in conversation and eager to share what they had, be it food, water or a helping hand over a rocky outcrop.

“People would spend time with you,” Tom said. “If we were walking alone by ourselves and another couple was coming by, they’d stop and we’d visit for 20 minutes or so.”

As a trained nurse, Margaret proved popular with the other pilgrims for her ability to treat foot injuries.

“There was a great sense of solidarity with people, I felt,” Margaret said, “with this common purpose and assisting each other …”

“… and encouragement,” said Tom. “You can do this, it’s not that far, you can make it.”

Not everyone approached the pilgrimage the same way as Tom and Margaret. Living so far away it was incumbent on the Hoartys to complete the journey. Europeans, who live closer, would sometimes commit to just a portion, returning in future years to complete other portions. Some rode horseback. Some carried their backpacks, while others had them transported to the next hostel.

Here, too, lay a life’s lesson, Tom said.

“Everybody’s different,” he said, and we should be slow to judge.”

“I thought that was a lesson we kept experiencing,” Margaret said. “When you got to know people, and you heard their stories, you realized what was behind some of their decisions.

“Many times it was a physical issue, and even if it wasn’t, that was how they chose to do it, and did that impact our journey? No. We just wanted to be true to what we saw as our desire for our own journey.”

“We are all one,” Margaret penned in her journal, shortly after setting foot on the Camino. It was a sentiment that clearly stays with her, an attempt to describe the presence of God in every man and every woman.

“For me, there was just the sense that we were all from these different cultures, and yet we had many more similarities than differences. I felt that throughout the journey.”

A video of Margaret’s discussion about her journey, complete with slideshow, can be found at YouTube.com by entering “On the Camino in Lent.”
Steiers Celebrate 70th Anniversary at St. John’s

Maurice Steier, BSP’43, and his wife, Marian, renewed their wedding vows at St. John’s Church on May 1 — 70 years to the day after they wed at the same altar. Maurice graduated from Creighton School of Pharmacy the same month as those 1943 nuptials. Since then, the couple has sent all eight children and 16 grandchildren to school at Creighton University. “We had no choice,” son Jim Steier, BSP’69, M.D., remembers. “We’re happy we didn’t.”
Love of Running Cemented in Life-Altering Way

Two physicians, a father and a daughter, both Creighton alumni, have had the bond they share through their love of running forever cemented in an unforgettable — and life-altering — way.

Joe Stavas, MD’82, and Natalie Stavas, BSN’03, M.D., were among the 23,000 runners in the Boston Marathon on April 15. It was the third time they had tackled the legendary race together. The heroics Natalie exhibited in the wake of the bombings, and their willingness to tell their stories, resulted in innumerable media requests and interviews.

Behind the cameras and the tragedies, however, were simply two family members — like so many others that day — who found their strength and faith tested. The Stavases both proved up to the task.

Natalie, 32, a second-year pediatric resident at Boston Medical Center and Boston Children’s Hospital, and Joe, 58, professor of radiology at University of North Carolina School of Medicine, were about one mile from the second bomb when it went off.

“We heard it, but we couldn’t see it,” Natalie said.

The Stavases were at a slower pace than usual or they would have already crossed the finish line. Natalie had developed an avulsion fracture in her foot during marathon training; she was on crutches for two weeks and in a walking cast until three days before the race.

“It was sore and I was a little nervous,” Natalie said, but she wanted to run with her dad and for those who had donated the $6,000 she had raised for the Boston Medical Center.

After the explosions, Natalie’s instincts (she had been a trauma nurse before attending medical school) took over. She leaped over a barricade, past police, as adrenaline pushed her to reach the victims via back streets.

The horrific carnage, pain, chaos and shock that she found consumed her as she employed CPR and controlled bleeding on victim after victim. “I fell into auto pilot,” she said.

Meanwhile, Joe was stuck in the sea of runners forced to stop. “People’s muscles were cramping up and they were experiencing hypothermia,” he said. “There was confusion because it is uncharacteristic to stop a marathon. Some became hysterical because they were worried about family at the finish line.”

He began helping those in distress and knocking on doors to ask people to take in the shivering runners.

He was impressed by the magnanimity of the Boston crowds. “They were cheering on people they didn’t know; most races don’t have 1 million people cheering for you. Then, after the disaster, there was a total outpouring of compassion and kindness.”

Natalie’s memories are more complex.

A few weeks later, she began having nightmares: “I am covered in blood and I can’t get it off. I wake up drenched in sweat.”

She also has dealt with more media attention, including all of the major U.S., and some international, media organizations. She was on “Katie,” Katie Couric’s talk show, and was interviewed on CNN’s special report “Back to Boston: Moments of Impact.”

“One day my pager went off 30 times in one hour from media requests,” she recalled. “The hospital had to shut off my pager.”

There is also the “hero” label. “It is hard to accept hero status,” she said. “I am honored, but in this time of tragedy with so much sadness, I feel guilt and anguish. I wish I could have done more. I was just trying to be a good physician.”

Joe makes an analogy between difficult times in life and running. “After loss, you have recovery, like in a marathon. You have to seek a higher meaning.”

Natalie credits her Creighton nursing education for training she relies on daily. “It was a phenomenal education. The Jesuit training teaches you compassion, humility and kindness in a way that you incorporate into your daily practice. I think I’m a better physician because of my nursing background. “And being on the crew (rowing) team gave me discipline and strength. We got up at 4 a.m. six days a week and trained for three hours before classes.”

Joe, who was the 1982 Spirit of Creighton Award recipient and often prays while he runs, sees his medical education as a gift from God. “Creighton was a long shot. I applied for three years and had decided God must have another plan, when out of the blue I got an acceptance letter in the summer of 1978. In just a few days, my life changed completely.”

He recalls two Jesuits, Jim Quinn, S.J., and John Lynch, S.J., whom he met at St. John’s Church during the years he was applying to medical school while working in engineering. “They helped me work through it all. They deepened my faith.”

Like Natalie, he feels his Creighton education has been important to his role as a physician. “The Jesuits taught me to express my spirituality in daily life. I find, because of this, I connect much better with patients. It opens many doors of empathy and new dimensions to treating illnesses.”

He has relied on his faith after the Boston bombings. The following day, he said, “We went into the chapel on Boylston Street to pray. We had to reflect on this, and ask God for guidance, for healing for the physical, emotional and spiritual losses, for forgiveness of the bombers.”

Natalie hopes this experience will allow her to be an even better children’s advocate. “The question is why is this happening — why are people getting shot at schools and blown up at a race? I’ve been in pediatric advocacy and health disparity for two years but I’ve never felt such an urgency to do something.”

Joe Stavas, MD’82, and his daughter Natalie Stavas, BSN’03, M.D., running at the Boston Marathon on April 15. The two were near the end of the race when bombs exploded.
Enduring Faith, Steady Wisdom Guided Fitzgerald’s 40 Years on Creighton’s Board

He graduated from Creighton University with a business degree in 1959. He embarked on a successful business career, and before he turned 36, William A. Fitzgerald was a member of the University’s Board of Directors (now Trustees).

He stepped down from the Board this June, becoming chairman emeritus. But for 40 years, from 1973 until 2013, his enduring faith, steady wisdom and strong leadership were integral to the major decisions that have helped Creighton University grow, adapt and excel.

Five Creighton presidents, Fathers Joseph J. Labaj, Matthew E. Creighton, Michael G. Morrison, John P. Schlegel and most recently Timothy R. Lannon, all members of the Society of Jesus, have relied on his counsel and called him friend.

An alumnus serving on a university’s board is not unusual. One serving for 40 years is. His family and friends say that Bill, a product of Our Lady of Lourdes grade school and Creighton Preparatory School in Omaha before coming to Creighton, saw his service to the University as a way to help repay what he had gained from his education. “Bill’s life was changed by the Jesuits,” said Fr. Lannon. “And he has given all these years of service in return.” Fr. Lannon added, “Creighton became his passion. And he made sure things happened and were done well.”

Throughout his tenure on the Board, Fitzgerald was adamant that Creighton’s Catholic, Jesuit identity be preserved. He maintained a strong relationship with the Omaha Archdiocese, and his ability to negotiate and be a liaison to the Chancery were invaluable assets, according to Steve Scholer, JD’79, the University’s senior philanthropic advisor. “Bill trusted Creighton’s leadership and was a strong advocate of the presidents having use of unrestricted operating gifts to apply to areas of greatest need,” Scholer said.

Fitzgerald has been inducted into both the Nebraska and Omaha Business Hall of Fame, evidence of his long and highly successful career with Commercial Federal Savings and Loan, later Commercial Federal Bank. He became president in 1975, taking over from his father, William F. Fitzgerald.

Like Creighton, Commercial Federal grew up with Omaha, and under his leadership became a community icon. Fitzgerald retired when Commercial Federal was sold to Bank of the West in 2005.

“Bill was iconic,” said fellow Board member Robert Reed, BSBA’61, president and CEO of Physicians Mutual Insurance Co. “From time and temperature signage, to gift incentives (open an account and get a toaster), to pioneering in ATMs, he was an innovator whose company was a part of Omaha. As a Creighton Board member, he was embraced by alumni and others in the community.”

Fitzgerald is often described as a consummate gentleman. “He is really a person who makes a difference at all levels with all sorts of people,” Reed said. “He is a spiritual person. His life gives witness to a deep and profound way to live, and the difference that a Jesuit education and the Creighton experience can have on someone.”

Fitzgerald and his wife, Barb, have a philanthropic history that has had a major impact on Omaha’s Catholic schools and colleges as well as healthcare and civic institutions. Giving back comes easily for him. “His priorities are so in order,” Barb Fitzgerald said. “I think he feels that he was able to be successful in his business life because of what Creighton taught him and how he was guided. He is so principled. I think that definitely comes from the Jesuits.”

Over the years, Fitzgerald has served on nearly every committee of the Board, including the Academic Affairs Committee and the Health Affairs Committee. He was chairman of the Board from 2000 to 2011. In his tenure, Creighton grew in almost every aspect — physically, academically and in reputation. He is particularly proud of the successful business people in Omaha who have graduated from Creighton. “He is proud of all that has been accomplished at Creighton,” his wife said, “but he wouldn’t take credit for any of it. He would say that we had the right people at the right time making the right decisions, and he would say that God provided that.”

In a speech on the Creighton campus in October 2004, the Very Rev. Peter-Hans Kolvenbach, S.J., then superior general of the Society of Jesus, said, “Among the lay people, our partners in ministry, there is a rich variety of lay women and men called to holiness … called to be the leaven of God’s salvation in the world.” Bill Fitzgerald is one of those, leading a long list of lay partners who have made an indelible impression on Creighton’s history.

“Bill makes St. Ignatius proud,” Reed said. “All the fruits of his labor have been for God’s greater glory.” He is a perfect example of how one of Creighton’s own gave his heart and soul on behalf of the University for 40 years in order to position it for success in the next 40.
of his novel, The Uninitiated, won first prize in the Tarcher/Penguin Top Artist Competition.

09 Tamara L. Bernard, BSN, Council Bluffs, Iowa, received her Master’s in Public Health-Administration from the University of Nebraska Medical Center in 2005 and currently is the bariatric program nurse coordinator at Alegent Creighton Health in Omaha. In February, she and her husband, Bill, and their children, Ethan and Lillian, spent 15 days in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, for a medical mission trip through CURE International Orthopedic Hospital.

10 John T. Ratelle, MD, Rochester, Minn., received the 2013 “Joseph D. Messler, M.D. Fellowship Award” for excellence in general internal medicine from the Mayo Clinic, where he did his residency. He was selected to be a chief medical resident in Mayo’s Internal Medicine Training Program beginning in July.

11 Alexandria L. “Alee” Forsythe, BA, Omaha, is a campus staff member for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, a nonprofit organization serving students and faculty on college and university campuses nationwide. Her office is located on Creighton’s campus. Michaela A. “Kayla” Spaustat, BS, Omaha, has joined Wells Fargo Advisors as a financial advisor in their Omaha office.

Marriages

03 Paula S. Porzelt, BA, and Eric Remer, Sept. 21, 2012, living in Omaha.
05 Kimberly J. Righter, BSN, and Ehren Foss, Jan. 6, 2013, living in Boston.
07 Alexandra L. Sutton, BA, and Joshua M. Ganzemiller, Oct. 6, 2012, living in Ellicott City, Md.

Births

99 Chris Kamnykovski and Mandy Hobson
Kamnykovski, BS, St. Louis, a daughter, Austen Rose, Dec. 3, 2011.
01 Joseph R. Bezouek, BSEB, and Rebecca A. Stiverson
Bezouek, BSN, Omaha, adopted a son from Seoul, Korea, Matthew Tae Quinn, on Nov. 6, 2012. Matthew was born on March 22, 2012.
02 Arvindran P. Somasegaran and Shaugn Singh
Somasegaran, BSEB, Omaha, a daughter, Zabra Jasmine, Jan. 6, 2013.
03 Adam W. Stryker, BSBA, and Britanny Bennett
Stryker, OTD’06, BSHS’06, Las Vegas, a son, Parks Page, Sept. 13, 2012.
05 Rahul S. Sualy, BSBA, and Abby Modica Sualy, BA’06, Omaha, a son, Cooper Graham, June 24, 2012.

School of Nursing Renamed College of Nursing

The School of Nursing has officially changed its name to the College of Nursing to conform to the Creighton University Statutes, which state that academic units admitting students directly from secondary schools “shall be called colleges.” Nursing faculty approved the change in late spring.

“The School of Nursing was a ‘college’ in the past,” said Dean Eleanor Howell, Ph.D., “and was changed to a ‘school’ in 1978 to better align its name with the names of Creighton’s other health sciences schools.

“The faculty agreed, and I concurred, that it was important to maintain consistency with the University’s statutes,” Howell said. A decision to retain the school designation would have required a change to the statutes.

Deaths

40 Marjorie Rynaski Powers, BPHJNL, Omaha, Feb. 21, 2013.
43 Romain P. Clerou, MD, Bakersfield, Calif., Nov. 20, 2012.
45 Robert D. Storck, MD, Dubuque, Iowa, March 14, 2013.

52 Duane E. Behm, BHS, Omaha, Feb. 15, 2013.
56 Frederick J. Langdon, MD’51, MSM, Omaha, March 10, 2013.
57 Rose Provaznik Pierce, ARTS, Omaha, Jan. 28, 2013.
58 Donald F. Bauer, DDS, Huson, Mont., March 18, 2013.
60 Joseph M. Badame, MD’52, MSM, Los Gatos, Calif., Feb. 18, 2013.
61 Viola Feldman Durdon, MAIR, Omaha, March 14, 2013.
62 John E. Keilly, BS’58, MD, Omaha, March 16, 2013.
63 Annabel Smith LaPlante, BA, Derry, N.H., March 8, 2013.
64 Leo L. Polak, BS’54, DDS, Creighton, Neb., March 2, 2013.
65 Patrick M. Ford, BA, Omaha, March 24, 2013.
66 Scott Crystal, BSEB, Omaha, March 21, 2013.
Internship Paves Way to Position at International Monetary Fund

We see it in the news nearly every day — how will the global economy react if oil prices go up? What will happen if Europe increases austerity measures? Businesses and governments around the world rely on this information, and a recent Creighton graduate is at the forefront of developing it.

Pedro Espaillat, BSBA’12, is a research assistant at one of the most sought-after employers in the world of economics: the International Monetary Fund (IMF), whose primary purpose is to ensure the stability of the international monetary system and enable countries to transact with one another. Espaillat works within the Economic Modeling Division, which uses a range of tools to develop macroeconomic models to see how an economy will react to certain scenarios and how the effects could spill over into other countries.

“I help maintain and build the models — making sure we have the right data and that the economic assumptions hold,” he explains. “I also assist the economies on analyzing scenarios that are later used by the IMF to recommend certain policies and to publish economic literature.”

“The IMF is one of the main economic centers of the world and a dream of every economic student. Their work does have an impact. It’s not just economics in theory; it is actually economics in practice.”

Sometimes Espaillat finds it hard to believe that one year ago he was still a newly minted college graduate. He’d just earned a double major in economics and finance and a double minor in math and international relations and was ready to make his mark on the world. Soon after graduation, Espaillat took an internship with the Institute of International Finance (IIF) in Washington, D.C. His experience there, which included contributions to IIF publications, helped pave the way for his position with the IMF.

“Pedro’s success highlights that Creighton students are not only nationally competitive for jobs, but internationally competitive,” says Kristie Briggs, Ph.D., assistant professor of economics in the College of Business. “People from around the globe apply for jobs at the IIF and IMF; they are hard to get. The fact that job candidates educated at Creighton are being chosen for such positions speaks highly about the quality of education received and skills learned while at Creighton.”

Espaillat does credit his coursework for helping him develop those skills, calling his finance and economics classes the “building blocks” of nearly everything he does at the IMF. But he points to another set of skills he took away from Creighton as even more central to his development: critical thinking, the ability to challenge ideas, the desire to learn and the drive to go after goals. And for Espaillat, the world economy is but a stepping-stone on the path to his ultimate goal.

“One day I would like to make it back to my home in the Dominican Republic. I want to use my talent to help improve my country through sound economic policy.”
Alumni Homecoming Weekend Favorites

Sept. 20:
> Golden Jays Luncheon & Ceremony
> Dean’s Receptions followed by the President’s Alumni Dinner

Sept. 21:
> Getting Blue Block Party

Sept. 22:
> Mass at St. John’s Church followed by Donut Social

Thank you to our title sponsor, First National Bank of Omaha.

The fast, easy, secure way to register is through the Alumni Homecoming Weekend website where you can also find an updated schedule of events, campus map, parking, event details and more!

alumni.creighton.edu/weekend

Keep up-to-date with all the plans for Alumni Homecoming Weekend through the Bluejay Buzz!

Join the Creighton Alumni Homecoming Weekend Facebook page
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Follow us on Twitter
twitter.com/CreightonAlumni #weekend

Check out the Alumni Homecoming Weekend website for the most up-to-date information!
Congratulations to graduates Laura Haller, BS’13, of Omaha and Matthew Leedom, DPT’13, of Sioux Falls, S.D., who received the prestigious Spirit of Creighton Award at May commencement.

This annual award honors two students who — through their initiative, enterprise, academic achievement and outstanding character traits — exemplify the best qualities of the University’s founders.

While at Creighton, Haller was a positive force for others, choosing activities that led her to challenge her peers, create opportunities for personal development, serve others and lead by example. As a resident adviser, she mentored underclassmen and through the Cortina Community, an academic, service-based living-learning community for sophomores, she sought holistic development opportunities through service projects and coursework.

In the Ignatian spirit of caring for the poor and marginalized, Haller worked with the Jesuit Middle School and volunteered at Precious Memories Daycare, Lindenwood Nursing Home, Open Door Mission, Kids Can and more. Last summer, she spent six weeks working in an alternative school for Aboriginal children in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

Leedom served as a peer tutor to other students in the Department of Physical Therapy. He also designed and taught a six-week experience in teaching and research as part of the department’s education program.

Leedom served as core ambassador for the Nebraska American Physical Therapy Association and Student Assembly. He was active in campus student organizations, including Creighton’s Student American Physical Therapy Association, the Physical Therapy Leadership Guild and the Geriatric Physical Therapy Organization. He received the 2011 Spirit of Physical Therapy scholarship award for his commitment to academic excellence and class camaraderie. In addition, through the University’s Respite Services, Leedom volunteered twice a month to care for an individual with a traumatic brain injury.

Best wishes to Laura and Matthew and all of Creighton’s 2013 graduates.