

CHESTNUT HILL COLLEGE MAGAZINE

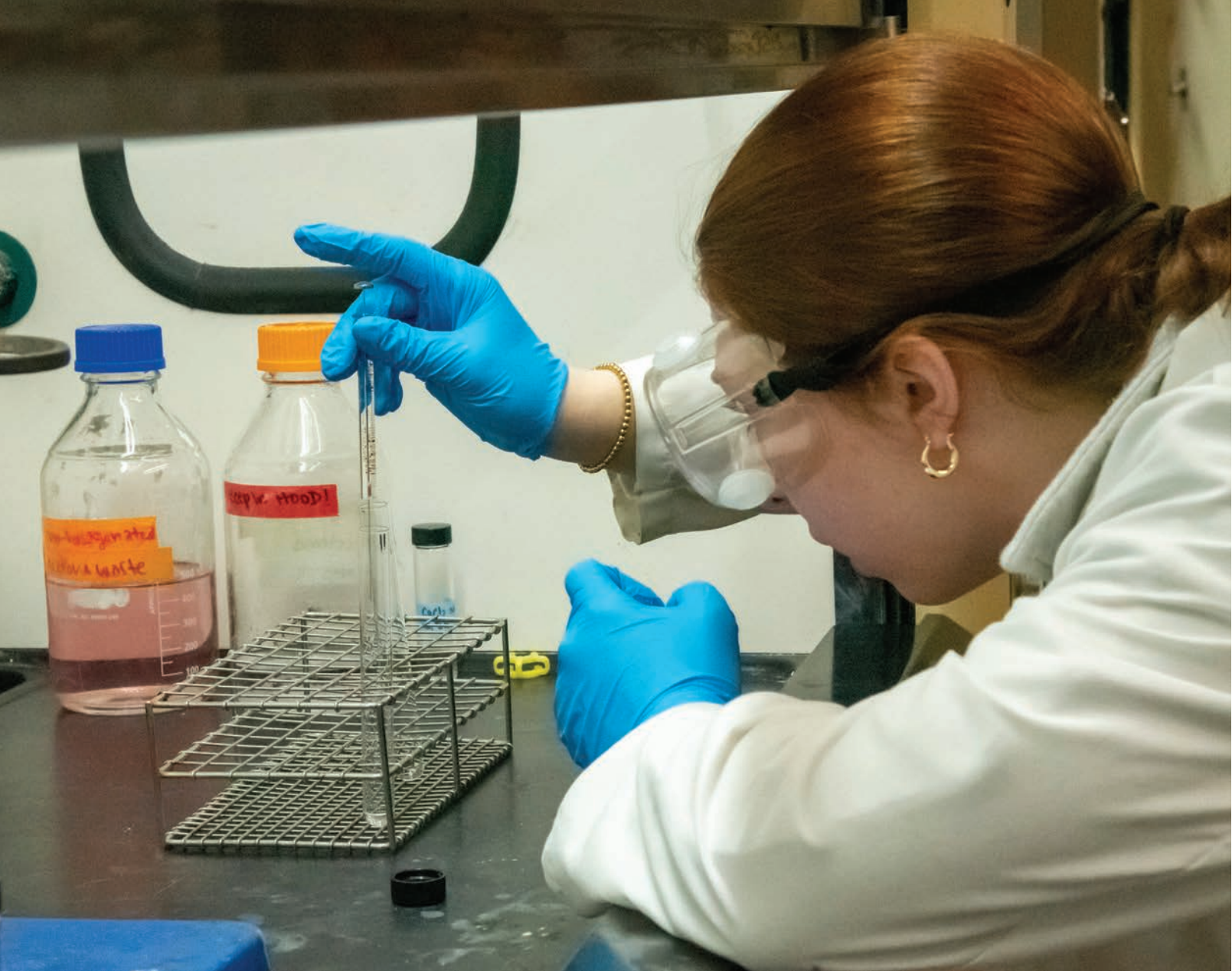
FALL 2026

THE *Health* & MEDICINE ISSUE

CHC's Nursing Program
after the First Year

From Curiosity to Career:
Alumni in Health and Medicine

Inside a Summer of
Chemistry Research



Happy Fall!

Dear Griffins and Friends,

What a fabulous 2025/2026 academic year we had!

As we begin our new academic year, one that will see the historic 100th graduating class receive their diplomas in May of 2027, we are building off last year's successful undergraduate and graduate classes. While the fall of 2025 had a significant increase in enrollment when compared to the prior fall, at the writing of this letter we are exceeding even those numbers; the Chestnut Hill College brand is growing!

Applications for this fall's undergraduate class reached a record high, and the GPA of the incoming class continues to climb, exceeding 3.3, these new Griffins will soar in and out of the classroom.

Our new bachelor's degree in social work welcomes its inaugural class and our degree-in-three Criminal Justice program begins. In addition, our nursing program welcomes our 2nd full cohort of traditional undergraduates and accelerated students (ABSN). The ABSN cohort had a waiting list by August 1st and we have deposits for Fall of 2027 already.

Spring sports had success this year, our women's flag football team played their inaugural season and did themselves and the school proud. This year we will welcome a new Cheer squad to the Hill, we are proud of all our student athletes.

Our CyberTech Lab on the ground floor of Saint Joseph's Hall was refurbished this past summer to honor our two alumnae, Kathleen McNulty 1942 and Frances Bilas 1942, who worked on the ENIAC some 80 years ago, furthering the legacy of Chestnut Hill College

The highlight of this fall edition, Health and Medicine, celebrates the remarkable impact of our graduates. It honors the pioneering women who broke barriers years ago and the trailblazers who continue to transform lives and advance the medical field today. Their achievements reflect the strength of the foundational education they received at Chestnut Hill. Our science programs continue to grow as our outstanding faculty prepare the next generation of innovators, researchers, and healthcare leaders.

The college's Life Skills Through Career program, training those adult individuals in the neurodiverse community welcomed our first cohort in the spring of 2026. This life-changing program aligns perfectly with our mission and the mission of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, as we help train people to live a life independently, and with purpose.

When you receive/read this issue of our magazine, I will be preparing to be inaugurated as the College's eighth President, a humbling and surreal experience. Having been taught by the Sisters of Saint Joseph as a child, along with my siblings, it has been an honor to see the impact of the mission of the Sisters, firsthand. I am inspired and energized daily by this mission, and the tireless efforts our Sisters put forth. Their work matters now more than ever.

I am also energized by the work of our alums too, many of whom I have had the chance to meet and speak with these past two years. As we enter the 2026/2027 Academic Year there is so much to be grateful for, and so much to look forward to in our future. Our second century is off to a blazing start!

Thank you for all you do to help build our brand, it remains a great time to be a Griffin!

In gratitude,

Brian McCloskey, D.M., M.B.A.
President
Chestnut Hill College



FALL 2026

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**Cover photo: Alumna Marie
DiBerardino, c.1948**

**Inside photo: Current student
Katelyn Dougherty works on a
project for chemistry class**



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Fall Events

SEPTEMBER 23

THE INSTITUTE FOR RELIGION AND SCIENCE AT CHESTNUT HILL COLLEGE

Please join us at 6:30 pm ET on September 23, 2026 for the Howard Kenig Memorial lecture in honor of one of our generous donors. Rabbi Bradley Artson promises to engage us with his lecture, "God of Creation, God of Process: A Jewish Perspective."

REGISTER FOR THIS EVENT



INAUGURATION WEEKEND EVENTS

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25TH

MASS & INAUGURATION CEREMONY

9:00AM: Mass at the Sisters of Saint Joseph Motherhouse Chapel

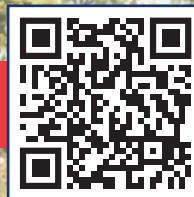
11:30AM: Inauguration Ceremony in Sorgenti Arena

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26TH

FOR THE LOVE OF CHC: A PARTY WITH A PURPOSE

6:00PM: A Philly-themed party in celebration of our 8th president, Dr. Brian McCloskey!

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TICKETS



OCTOBER 17

GRIFFIN FEST

Griffin Fest is back! This family-friendly event will feature music, food, and festivities including inflatables, face painting, DJ, food trucks, and more. Attendees can also cheer on our Women's and Men's soccer teams earlier in the day at Plymouth-Whitemarsh High School (Victory Fields). Come out and support our Griffins and celebrate your experience as a member of the CHC community!

REGISTER FOR THIS EVENT



OCTOBER 23 & 24

15TH ANNUAL HARRY POTTER ACADEMIC CONFERENCE

The Harry Potter Academic Conference (HPAC) is back on campus! This interdisciplinary conference is open to the public and welcomes all participants—from curious fans to full professors—to present and engage with scholarship on the Pottermore and find community among other Potter scholars.

REGISTER FOR THIS EVENT



NOVEMBER 14

PREPARED AND READY: MONTESSORI MEETS THE MOMENT

CHC Montessori Teacher Education Program has partnered with the American Montessori Society on this collaborative event exploring Montessori's enduring relevance in a technology-forward world.



REGISTER FOR THIS EVENT



NOVEMBER 18

BIOMEDICAL DISTINGUISHED LECTURE FEATURING DR. AISHA GHAS

The Center for Natural and Behavioral Sciences and the Department of Biology present the 33rd Annual Biomedical Distinguished Lecture Series. Alumna Aisha Ghias, M.D. 2000, MD, MSc, PA, MPH will deliver a lecture titled, "Is Vaping Safer Than Cigarettes?"

The lecture is free, and starts at 2:00 pm in East Parlor, Saint Joseph Hall.

REGISTER FOR THIS EVENT



DECEMBER 1

GIVINGTUESDAY

This 24-hour fundraiser will honor the memory of David Zukauskas 2007.

The David Zukauskas Memorial Fund named in his memory, helps students with emergency needs get back on track.



DECEMBER 4

CAROL NIGHT & HOLIDAY CHEER

The tradition continues! Join us in the Rotunda for the sounds of the season performed by our Chestnut Hill Singers. Following the concert, join fellow alumni and friends in the Redmond Room for merriment, food and drink. Don't miss this!



DECEMBER 6

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA

Bring children of all ages for this special visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus in the Rotunda. Enjoy a delicious breakfast and the opportunity to take your photos with Santa. All are welcome!



For more information on CHC events, please visit: www.chc.edu/calendar

Campus News



CELEBRATING THE WOMEN WHO PROGRAMMED THE ENIAC

On March 24, Chestnut Hill College honored the 80th Anniversary of the ENIAC (Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer), the world's first computer, by holding a conversation with Kathy Kleiman about the computer and its all-female programming team. Kleiman spoke to a packed room of the six female "computers" responsible for programming the ENIAC, including two alumnae, Kathleen McNulty '42 and Frances Bilas '42, highlighting their journey from Chestnut Hill College to the ENIAC team.

Kathy Kleiman's book, *Proving Grounds: The Untold Story of the Six Women Who Programmed The World's First Modern Computer*, is available on Amazon and other online booksellers. 🦋



CYBERTECH LAB UPDATE

Thanks to our generous donors, the Cybersecurity & Technology (CyberTech) Lab in the lower level of Saint Joseph Hall underwent much-needed renovations this summer.

This fall, the two rooms adjacent to the main hallway will be rededicated as the McNulty (SJH 49) and Bilas (SJH 48) labs in honor of two CHC alumnae, Kathleen McNulty 1942 and Frances Bilas 1942, who worked on the world's first computer, the ENIAC. More information on the rededication coming soon!

Thank you to all our donors who supported this important project! 🦋



Students gather on the steps of the Capitol to advocate for education.
Photo courtesy of Jeffery Carroll, Ph.D.

CHC STUDENTS SPEND EXCITING DAY IN HARRISBURG

Jeffrey Carroll, Ph.D., associate professor of Political Science and Chair, Center for Data & Society, accompanied students to the Pennsylvania State Capitol for the Association of Independent Colleges & Universities of Pennsylvania (AICUP) Day to advocate for student aid via PHEAA and the PA State Grant.

It was very exciting meeting with State Rep. Tarik Khan and being recognized on the House floor. Especially thrilling was a visit with two exceptional CHC alumni who work on Capitol Hill, **Rep. Sean Dougherty 2016** and **Sen. Amanda Cappelletti 2010!** 🦋



GRIFFIN'S DEN Reimagined

Thank You to All Our Donors!

In the spring, we launched a campaign to raise money for the *Griffin's Den Reimagined* project, which was based on the comments of many students, including the six seniors who presented the idea as part of their business class final.

Though the goal was ambitious, WE DID IT! With the help of over 230 donors, and a very special \$25,000 matching gift from an alumna in the Class of 1973, we were able to make the goal!

We would like to extend a HUGE THANK YOU to all our donors who gave to this project. We are deeply grateful and our students would like to send you a big THANK YOU, too!

Watch your email and social media for updates on the Griffin's Den! 🦋



ABSN student Kimberly Hickey explains her research on Kawasaki Disease to a classmate. Photo by Bob Bogdon.

ABSN STUDENTS NURSING SYMPOSIUM

A group of ABSN (Accelerated Bachelor of Science, Nursing) students attended the first Nursing Symposium, where they presented their findings last spring on various topics in the SugarLoaf Library. 🦋

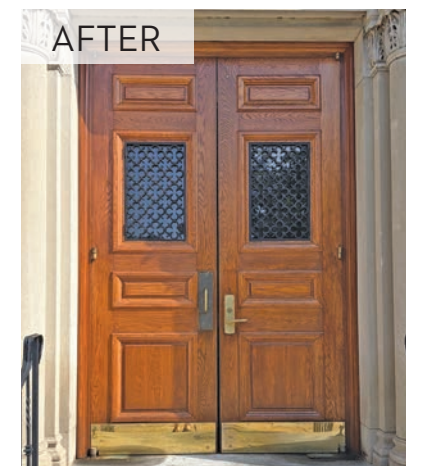
FOURNIER DORM ROOMS RENOVATED, THANKS TO GENEROUS DONORS

Fournier Rooms 260 and 330 were renovated over the summer with a stunning result! Thank you to all who donated to the *Restore the Majesty* drive that raised money for the renovations last spring. We were thrilled to have enough to redo two rooms! 🦋



FOURNIER DOORS UPDATE

Both sets of doors to Fournier Hall have been refinished and they look wonderful! Thank you to M. Schnoll & Sons of Philadelphia who did a fantastic job, and thank you again to all the donors who helped turn this project into a reality. 🦋



BIOMEDICAL DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES

By Lakshmi Atchison, Ph.D., Professor Emerita of Biology & Director of the Lecture Series

Classroom teaching within the four walls is not sufficient for student learning. Students should think outside the box. With this deep passion, the Biomedical Distinguished Lecture Series was initiated during the Spring of 1994 to help students expand their horizons on science careers in health and medicine. Health and medicine go hand-in-hand as complementary bookends for stability and well-being. Health represents the holistic state of physical well-being, while medicine uses science for diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of diseases to restore the normal state.

One of the goals of the lecture series is to develop new contacts for our students' pursuing careers in basic research, health, and medicine. This has been accomplished by bringing high-caliber speakers with expertise in health and medicine to the CHC campus. Due to their participation, the lecture series has become phenomenally successful. The distinguished series includes **Four Nobel Laureates in Medicine**, Lasker Award Winners, six elected members of the National Academy of Sciences, awardees of the Benjamin Franklin Medal in Life Sciences, and the General Motors Cancer Research Foundation, Chief Executive Officers of leading institutions, institute presidents, vice presidents, a variety of deans, directors, endowed department chairs, professors, and section chiefs. All these speakers are true role models who graciously accepted the invitation and gave their professional time without an honorarium. They were all extraordinary and raved about our college, our students, and enjoyed the hospitality of the CHC community.

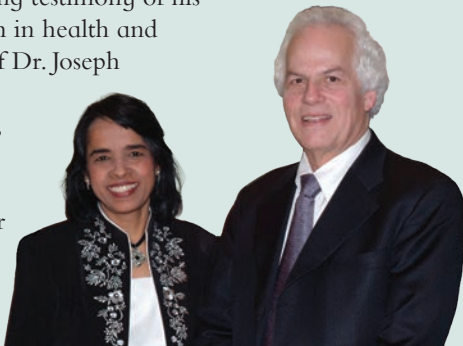
One of the highlights was the presence of our 19th annual keynote speaker Dr. Charles J. Yeo, M.D., F.A.C.S., Thomas Jefferson University. His keynote lecture on *"The New Faces of Pancreatic Cancer Surgery and Treatment"* was one of the most memorable lectures of this series. His presence at CHC was so timely that Dr. Yeo generously gave his time to extend and improve the quality and health of one of our own staff members affected by pancreatic cancer. Dr. Yeo recognized the magnitude of the lecture series and gave his unwavering support by introducing many elite professionals from Jefferson. One recent highlight was the 26th annual keynote by Dr. Stephen K. Klasko, MD., MBA. His keynote titled "Is there an Avatar in the House: *The Changing Role of Healthcare Professionals in the Age of Artificial Intelligence (AI)*". Dr. Klasko then served as CEO and President of Thomas Jefferson University/ Jefferson Health and recently made a generous contribution in honor of CHC's lecture series.

Our 29th annual keynote lecture marked by Drew W. Weissman, M.D., Ph.D., Lasker Award winner and 2023 Nobel Prize winner is yet another major event of this series. Dr. Weissman's mRNA-based research led to the development of Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna Covid-19 vaccines saving

millions of lives is a living testimony of his Nobel winning research in health and medicine. The arrival of Dr. Joseph Cacchione, MD, FACC (CEO, Jefferson Health, and Thomas Jefferson University) to celebrate our 30th milestone year with his keynote on "Healthcare Then and Now" is yet another extraordinary testament to Dr. Charlie Yeo who graciously helped to bring Dr. Cacchione to our campus. It is our hope that through this prestigious lecture series, meaningful interactions and collaborations among our institutions will evolve for the common good of our students. It is significant to note that our students are fortunate to receive a lifetime opportunity to meet these highly acclaimed professionals. It is equally significant to note that two of our former students will take the coveted spot in our distinguished series to be role models for our Gen Z students: Alumna Aisha Ghias, MD, MSc, PA, MPH, Pulmonary Critical Care Fellow, New York, Long Island will be our fall 2026 speaker and Victor S. Diaz, MD, Captain, United States Air Force, Medical Corps, Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi, Internal Medicine, will be our spring 2027 speaker. The speakers in our lecture series have come from coast-to-coast, north-to-south, and from as far away as Germany, helping to put Chestnut Hill College on the global map to shine a spotlight on our campus. CHC's biomedical lecture series is unique among undergraduate institutions in the nation. 🦋

Acknowledgement with gratitude: The continued success of the lecture series is due to the valuable support of CHC community, deans, VPAA Dr. Andra Basu and President Dr. Brian McCloskey. Their valuable support of this distinguished series, initiated with steadfast support and leadership of President Sister Carol Jean Vale, Ph.D., and six Vice Presidents (Drs. William Walker, Kenneth Soprano, Wolfgang Natter, Stephen Guerriero, Christopher Dougherty, and Mark Meachem) has been transformative.

Dr. Lakshmi Atchison is the recipient of 2009 Christian R. and Mary F. Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching. She has many publications in cell biology, human genome research, and is the author of *Cancer Biology Basics*, 3rd ed. McGraw Hill. Lakshmi's main passion is to educate students on cancer prevention and to provide practical information on eight cancers that can affect young adults. Dr. Atchison has developed several education models including: 1. Human skin model, "Think Inside the Box" as a hands-on lab activity. 2. A simple model to understand osteoporosis (winner of 2019 Best Poster Award at HAPS National conference). 3. Blood Cell Visual Models to study various leukemias and blood cell disorders and awarded US Patent.



Nobel Laureate Stanley Prusiner (right) with Dr. Lakshmi Atchison



CHESTNUT
HILL
COLLEGE



BIOMEDICAL
DISTINGUISHED
LECTURE SERIES

Center for Natural and Behavioral Sciences and Department of Biology
Present the 33rd Annual Biomedical Distinguished Lecture Series



WELCOMES CHC ALUMNA

Aisha Ghias
MD, MSc, PA, MPH

Class of 2000

Pulmonary Critical Care Fellow
Long Island, New York

Lecture Title:

***Is Vaping Safer
Than Cigarettes?***



Wednesday, November 18th, 2026

2:00 PM | East Parlor, St. Josephs Hall

Join us!
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26TH

For The
LOVE Of



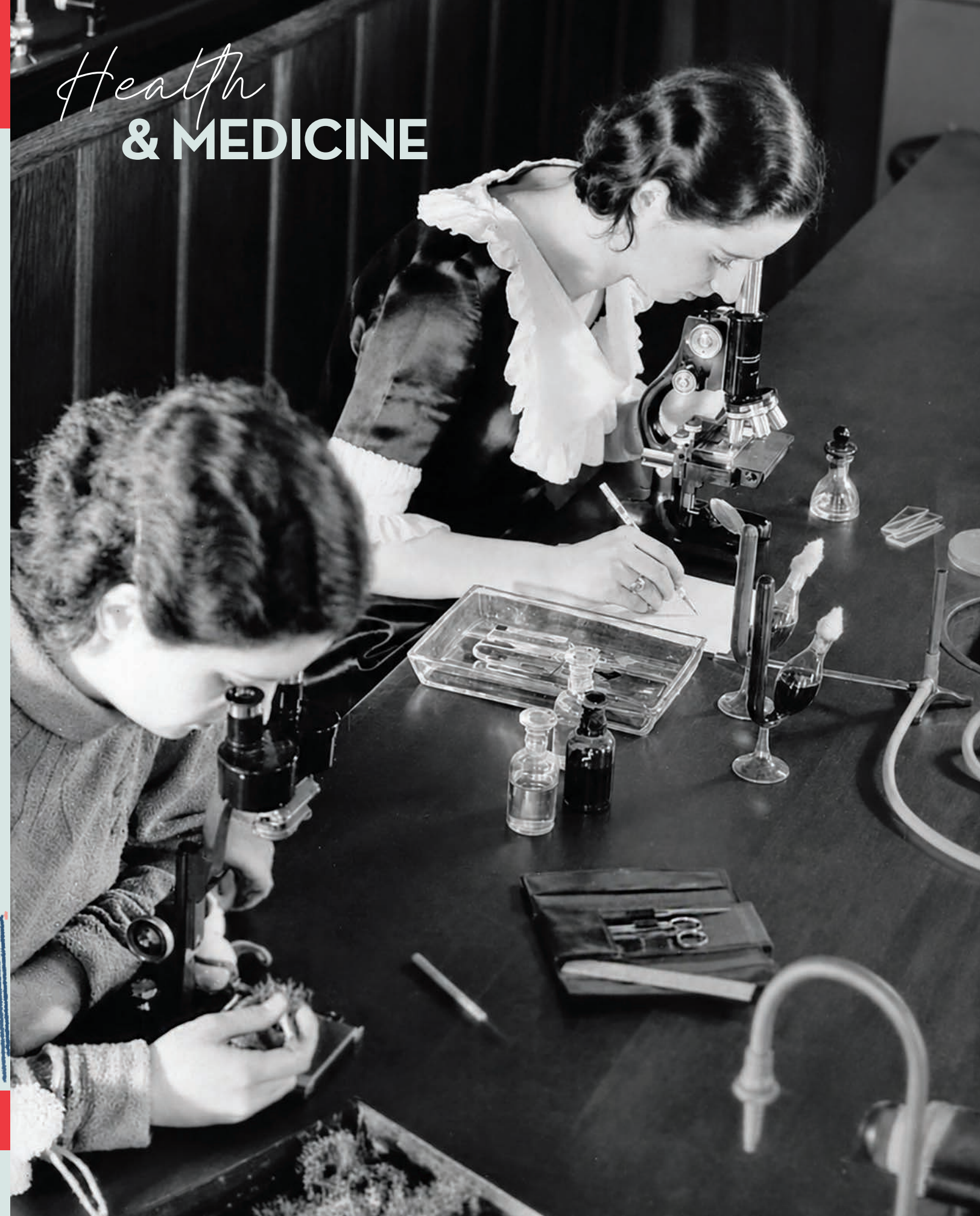
**A Party With
A Purpose**

**A Fundraiser to Celebrate the Inauguration
of our 8th President, Dr. Brian McCloskey**



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*Health
& MEDICINE*



Answering The Call: TRAINING THE NEXT GENERATION OF COMPASSIONATE, CONFIDENT RNs

By Robert Bogdon, Executive Director of Strategic Marketing and Communication

On a bright morning inside Chestnut Hill College's brand-new Nursing Clinical Arts Center (NCAC), a group of nursing students gathers around a hospital bed. Their "patient"—a high-fidelity simulation manikin named and given a personal history—lies quietly, his chest rising and falling with programmed regularity. When a student shines a penlight into his eyes, his pupils constrict. His heart and lung sounds are audible through a stethoscope. Then the scenario shifts: his blood pressure drops, his breathing grows labored, and the students must respond—quickly, precisely, and collaboratively—as if every decision counts.

This is the current state of nursing education at Chestnut Hill College: completely immersive, demanding, and well-practiced. Since receiving full registration from the Pennsylvania Board of Nursing on May 9, 2024, CHC's Center for Nursing has been transforming healthcare education in the Philadelphia region—and doing so in a way that is distinctly its own.

The CHC nursing program was born of purpose. Grounded in the charism of the Sisters of Saint Joseph and the College's commitment to serving the "Dear Neighbor," the curriculum asks students not only to master clinical technique, but to bring compassion, ethical judgment, and self-awareness to every patient encounter.



Robin Bankhead, RN, MSN, ACNP, Nursing Skills Instructor,
Left: Cole Caruso, Daniya Harris, Alexa White, Right: Zanele Moyo,
Kimberly Hickey, and Jordan Tavaraz

What sets CHC apart is its emphasis on resilience and self-care as core competencies—not afterthoughts. In a field defined by long hours, high stakes, and emotional weight, CHC recognizes that nurses equipped to care for themselves are far better prepared to care for others. "It's amazing seeing these students' progression from when they first stepped into the door to this point so close to finishing their degree—it is truly amazing and inspiring," says Susan Apold, PhD, RN, AGNP-BC.

TWO PATHWAYS TO LICENSURE

CHC's Center for Nursing offers two degree programs designed to meet students where they are in life.

The traditional four-year, 120-credit Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) delivers a rigorous curriculum through an integrated sequence of coursework, laboratory simulation, and supervised clinical experiences. Graduates earn a BSN and are eligible to sit for the NCLEX-RN licensing examination. The program serves a wide range of students—those entering nursing as a first calling as well as those who arrive with diverse life experiences that enrich their practice.

For those who already hold a degree in another field, CHC's 15-month, 56-credit Accelerated BSN (ABSN) offers an intensive route to licensure across four consecutive semesters. Career changers bring maturity and professional breadth to nursing; CHC's program capitalizes on those strengths while building the clinical skills and confidence needed to thrive in today's healthcare landscape.

A STATE-OF-THE-ART LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

In August 2025, CHC unveiled its Nursing Clinical Arts Center on the College's SugarLoaf campus—the technological and educational heart of the nursing program, where theory becomes practice. Students enter the NCAC in their very first semester, and every clinical course includes a simulation component.

The **Health Assessment Room** features 10 examination stations where students develop foundational skills: taking blood pressures, temperatures, and pulse oximeter readings, and performing heart, lung, neurological, and gastrointestinal assessments. The **Skills Lab** accommodates low-fidelity manikins for hands-on procedural training in everything



Daniya Harris with a pediatric manikin

from IV line management and injections to wound care, catheter insertion, and tube feedings. The **KbPort Mobile Medication System** introduces students to realistic medication administration workflows, featuring a fully simulated Electronic Medical Record, barcode scanners, and a complete medication formulary—medication carts open only upon scanning the correct patient's barcode, reinforcing the verification habits that prevent real-world errors.

At the center of the NCAC is the **Simulation Lab**—a replica of a clinical care environment stocked with manikins ranging from newborn to adult, including a pregnant manikin capable of delivering her baby. Each is assigned a name and personal history, and all feature palpable pulses, blinking eyes, voices, and simulated breathing. The high-fidelity simulators respond physiologically to student interventions: blood pressure fluctuations, pupillary reactions, heart and lung sounds, and signs of deterioration such as cyanosis or seizures. Select manikins can also undergo "moulage"—the application of realistic wounds or skin changes to heighten scenario authenticity.

The lab is fully equipped with IV pumps, EKG monitors, crash carts, and working oxygen, with real-time vital signs displayed on bedside monitors. Students are expected to knock, introduce themselves, and interact with simulated patients exactly as they would in a live setting.

Behind one-way mirrors, faculty direct each simulation from a dedicated control room—monitoring, adjusting, and evaluating student performance in real time. After each scenario, students review recordings of their own performance as a group. The design is intentional: during simulations, students function as

registered nurses without instructor assistance, making decisions and communicating independently.

"The most rewarding part of this work in nursing education is watching the students gain confidence in their practice—simulation gives them a safe, supportive space to explore, make mistakes, ask questions, and really grow into their roles as future nurses," says Briana Antwi, MSN, RN, AGNP-BC, Director of Simulation and Innovation.

Mistakes, in fact, are the point. Faculty intentionally design scenarios around common nursing errors, giving students the chance to recognize and correct them before entering a live clinical environment. Scenarios span the full spectrum of patient populations—adult, pediatric, newborn, and obstetric—building competencies in clinical judgment, safe medication administration, team communication, and technical proficiency. "It's not solely just about doing tasks. It's about learning all those aspects of managing patient care when you're in the hospital," says Robin Bankhead, MSN, RN, ACNP-BC.

In a healthcare landscape defined by a nationwide nursing shortage, Chestnut Hill College is answering a real and urgent need—with a program shaped by the values, intellectual rigor, and spirit of service that have defined CHC for a century. 🌟



Left: Riley Regan, Right: Ashley Francis,
Sharon Mingo, DNP, MSN-Ed, RN Professor of Nursing, and David Lieber

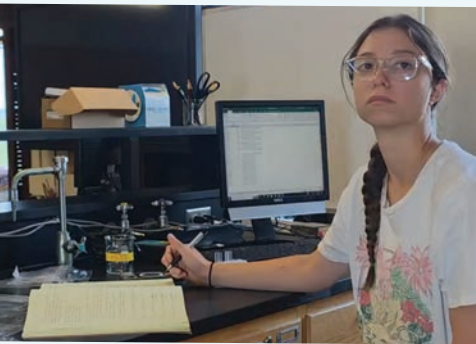
Inside a Summer of Chemistry Research AT CHESTNUT HILL COLLEGE

By Robert Bogdon, Executive Director of Strategic Marketing and Communication

On the fifth floor of St. Joseph Hall at Chestnut Hill College, four students spent their summer chasing down the invisible — formaldehyde hiding in baby clothes, vitamin C hiding in juice bottles, a controversial herbal stimulant hiding in a natural botanical product, and menthol hiding in a cloud of e-cigarette smoke. Guiding them was a chemistry professor and department chair whose own background is in inorganic chemistry, but whose real specialty this summer was something harder to teach: how to think like a scientist when the instrument breaks, the literature doesn't agree with your data, and nobody — not even the professor — knows the answer yet.

"I really think it's important that when you have a foundation of the basic principles, you should be able to learn new techniques and apply your chemical reasoning to a variety of experiments," explained Rebecca Eikey, Ph.D. Professor & Discipline Chair, Chemistry and Physics, describing the philosophy behind the program. That philosophy shaped four distinct projects, all funded by the Clare Boothe Luce Foundation, a philanthropy dedicated to supporting women in STEM.

ISABELLA RODRIGUEZ: WHAT'S REALLY IN THE ONESIE?



Isabella "Izzy" Rodriguez, a rising senior biochemistry major, is measuring formaldehyde levels in infant and maternity clothing — a class of consumer goods that, unlike in the European Union, faces no U.S. regulatory limit on the chemical, a known carcinogen.

Rodriguez's process starts with the Nash reagent, a chemical mixture she prepares herself so that formaldehyde — which isn't naturally visible to a UV spectrophotometer — reacts into a fluorescent green derivative that is. Clothing samples are soaked in a water-bath shaker for two and a half hours, combined with the reagent, heated for another thirty minutes, and finally placed under UV-Vis light at 411 nanometers, the wavelength her calibration work identified as optimal.

Her early results are encouraging: published research puts a typical benchmark at around 8.5 parts per million, while Rodriguez's own samples are coming in closer to 7–7.5 ppm. But getting clean numbers took troubleshooting that sharpened her method. The original paper she adapted from a

Spanish research team simply said that samples were "filtered" without specifying how. A paper-and-nylon filter combination produced suspiciously uniform six-ppm readings across all samples; nylon alone produced messy, inconsistent readings. It wasn't until switching to a glass-fiber filter that her data stabilized.

Rodriguez, whose mother is a cancer survivor, is aiming for a PhD and a career in cancer research. "It's just that cancer has affected my family a lot," she said. "I really want to go out there and hopefully make a huge change in how everything's done and find a cure."

GESIELYZ SANCHEZ: CHASING VITAMIN C THREE DIFFERENT WAYS

Gesielyz Sanchez, a double major in biochemistry and chemistry who just finished her first year, set out to measure the levels of ascorbic acid — vitamin C — in drinks like Ocean Spray cranberry juice and Vitamin Water. What began as a straightforward UV-Vis project, inspired by a paper a graduating senior had brought to the professor's attention, grew into a broader comparison once Sanchez decided one method wasn't enough.



She started with UV-Vis spectrophotometry, comparing sample absorbance against a standard curve calibrated near 263–265 nanometers. Week two brought titration — not with iodine, as she'd originally proposed, but with DCPIP, a blue dye used in food-industry testing that turns light pink when it reacts with ascorbic acid. Week three introduced cyclic voltammetry, a technique neither Sanchez nor her professor had used before. It proved so novel that when the professor called the equipment manufacturer for guidance, the company had no existing experiment for measuring vitamin C this way — and asked to collaborate on designing one for other educators.

Sanchez's cyclic voltammetry calibration plot showed a correlation of 0.998, and she's now cross-checking her three methods against each other, with plans to continue the work into August. Her long-term interest is pharmaceutical sciences. "I feel like it not only has guided me more into learning more chemistry-wise," she said of the research, "but being able to be very precise... that has been a lesson that has helped me."

DEVIN WARNER: THE CHEMISTRY OF AN UNREGULATED SUPPLEMENT

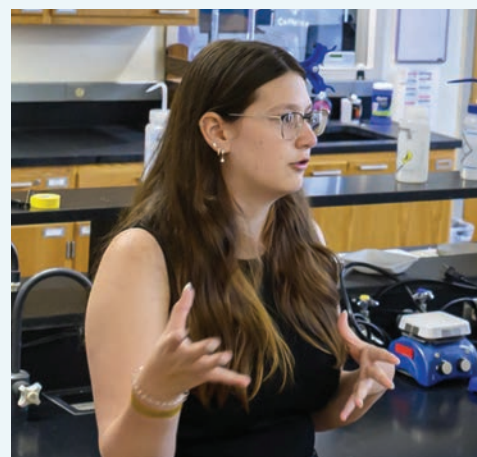
Devin Warner, a forensic chemistry major with a minor in chemistry, is investigating kratom — an herbal supplement derived from a Southeast Asian plant that has drawn attention for a rising number of associated deaths. Because supplements bypass standard FDA regulation, consumers often have little

idea how much active alkaloid — or how much of a more potent synthetic additive sometimes mixed in — they're actually consuming. Pennsylvania has not banned the substance, and Dr. Eikey noted it's sold openly at local smoke shops.

Warner's tool is high-performance liquid chromatography (HPLC), and her summer has been as much about equipment repair as chemistry: the manual injection port needed to be rebuilt, seals replaced, and the column swapped out entirely, requiring outside help from a technician — who herself had to call in retired engineers, since newer technicians had never worked on manual injection systems. After weeks of unreliable data, Warner hit a milestone: doubling the drug concentration in her samples produced a doubled peak area on the instrument, a sign the method is finally behaving as expected.

"A lot of people might not know what that could entail," Warner said of kratom's availability. "They might go in there thinking, oh, I'm just going to get another drink — that could be something quite worse down the line." Because the setbacks ate into her three-week timeline, her project will extend into a fall-semester independent study.

KATRINA PULS: TRACKING MENTHOL IN VAPE JUICE



Dr. Eikey's fourth student researcher, Katrina Puls, a forensic chemistry major heading into an independent second summer of research, is using gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS) to identify



menthol levels in vape juice — building on earlier department research into nicotine content. Unlike nicotine, which manufacturers disclose on packaging, menthol concentration is undisclosed and essentially unknown, forcing Katrina to develop her method from scratch: determining retention time, selecting ions to monitor, and building a calibration curve with no existing baseline for comparison.

Manual injection introduced its own variability, which was addressed by incorporating an internal standard — though early "impossible" percent-recovery numbers suggested the standard itself might be chemically suppressed. Katrina's menthol readings across three vape juice samples have ranged from 5 to 15 percent, with the highest figure still under scrutiny as a possible outlier. When the GC-MS's hard drive failed weeks before her project began, Katrina adapted by shifting her entire analysis workflow into Excel rather than the instrument's native software — a pivot her professor singled out as evidence of real independence in the lab.

A MODEL FOR UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

All four students are now working toward turning their findings into abstracts and posters for national conferences — the American Chemical Society's spring meeting in New Orleans is the goal, with the Pittsburgh Conference on Analytical Chemistry and Applied Spectroscopy, returning to Pittsburgh for the first time in roughly sixty years, as a backup.

For Dr. Eikey overseeing all four projects simultaneously, the summer has been as much about mentorship as chemistry. "There's always this thing in your mind that you wonder: is it the chemistry that's not working? Is it the instrument? Or is it me who's doing something wrong?" she said. "I would say that they've all demonstrated really amazing resilience... and to be independent, but yet also seek me out when they need help."

With four students sharing two labs, collaboration emerged naturally. When equipment failures sidelined Warner's kratom project for days at a time, she pitched in cutting and weighing clothing samples for Rodriguez's formaldehyde study. It's a dynamic Dr. Eikey says mirrors the reality of research at any scale: even in the largest labs, scientists learn to lean on each other, not just on the person in charge. "That's the spirit here at Chestnut Hill College," Eikey states. 🍀

Dr. Rebecca Eikey



From Curiosity to Career:

CHESTNUT HILL ALUMNI IN HEALTH AND MEDICINE

Founded as a dedicated women's educational institution, Chestnut Hill College opened in 1924, just four years after the historic passing of the 19th Amendment, granting women the right to vote. At that time, women's enrollment in higher education was growing, but its value was still in doubt, and the goal of educating women largely continued as a benefit of being a better citizen and wife.

But the Sisters of Saint Joseph not only valued the education of women as contributors to society, but they also valued their individual choices. Because of their educational philosophy that understanding the natural world was complementary to, not in tension with, religious life and faith, the Sisters of Saint Joseph created a strong science program from the very start, challenging conventional ideas that women were not suited for the sciences.

The outcome: nearly a century of incredibly successful alumni with careers in every corner of the sciences including jobs in hospitals and private practices, medical research labs, pharmaceutical companies, veterinary hospitals, dentists' offices, crime labs, and more. Below are just a few of the many talented men and women who have devoted their lives to science, who got their start at Chestnut Hill College.

The following is not an exhaustive list; there are many other talented CHC alumni working in health and medicine. If you'd like to tell us your personal story, please send it to: magazine@chc.edu



The first science major at CHC, **Anna Mag McDonnell 1929*** entered the Sisters of Saint Joseph after graduation and received the name Sister M. Philothea, SSJ. Sister Philothea taught Biology and Theology at Holy Family Academy in Bayonne for many years, earning the nickname "bugs," due to her love of the natural world.



Teresa DiGiacomo Garbarino 1935* earned her B.S. in Chemistry from Chestnut Hill College in 1935. She went on to inspire generations of students during her distinguished 37-year career as a chemistry teacher at Woodrow Wilson High School in Camden, New Jersey.



Catherine Schrader McFadden 1946* graduated with a degree in Chemistry and made history at Publicker Industries in Philadelphia as the company's first female chemist. She later advanced to become the laboratory's first female foreman, building a distinguished career in a field where women were significantly underrepresented.

Marie A. DiBerardino, Ph.D. 1948* was a trailblazing scientist whose brilliant mind left a lasting mark on developmental biology. She earned her B.S. in Biology before completing her Ph.D. in Development and Genetics at the University of Pennsylvania. A pioneer in amphibian cloning,



she became one of the first to clone frog nuclei at the Institute for Cancer Research (now Fox Chase Cancer Center). She devoted more than five decades to teaching and research, from the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania through to Drexel University College of Medicine, where she served as Emerita Professor of Biochemistry. A Fellow of the American

Association for the Advancement of Science, recipient of the Jean Brachet Memorial Award, and honored by the National Science Foundation and National Institute of Health, Dr. Berardino remained a proud and cherished member of the CHC family throughout her extraordinary life. She included an endowed scholarship for CHC students in need in her will.



After graduating with a chemistry degree from CHC, **Lea McGovern, VMD 1949*** became one of the first women to earn a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from the University of Pennsylvania in 1955.



From Chestnut Hill College to Brown University to the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania, **Elizabeth U. Laufer M.D. 1950*** pursued her education with purpose and distinction. Graduating from the Academy of Notre Dame de Namur in 1946, she received degrees — a bachelor's in 1950, a master's in 1952, and a medical degree in 1956 with a specialization in Obstetrics and Gynecology. She channeled that preparation into a flourishing Philadelphia practice where she cared for patients tirelessly until her retirement in 1986.



Anna O'Riordan 1953* first earned a bachelor's degree in chemistry, then received her medical degree from Hahnemann Medical College in June 1957. She completed a rotating internship at Nazareth Hospital, followed by a pediatric residency and a fellowship in pediatric cardiology at St. Christopher's Hospital for Children. In 1962, she earned a Master of Science

in Pediatrics from Temple University and was certified by the American Board of Pediatrics that same year. She achieved subspecialty certification in cardiology in 1963.



Regina Cuta, M.D. 1956* received a full scholarship to Chestnut Hill College where she majored in Chemistry. She was the first woman awarded the Philadelphia "Engineers Award" at the College. Regina won the only national competition for a fully paid scholarship into the Women's Medical College, received Honorable Mention by the National Science Foundation, and was

recognized with awards and accolades throughout her career. In 1961, she was the first woman, ever, to be admitted into a surgical residency at the prestigious Temple University Hospital in Philadelphia.

In her will, Regina left Chestnut Hill College a generous bequest that was enough to fund an endowed position. The position was named, "The Regina Cuta-Papa, MD '56 Distinguished Professor of Chemistry."



Joan Lunney, Ph.D. 1968

Because I was good at math and science, chemistry was a good match for me. Sister Mary Kieran was a strong model and my Chemistry Honors advisor.

After graduation, I taught Chemistry and Evolutionary Science at Camden Catholic High School. In 1969, I received a National Science Foundation teacher award at American University in Washington DC which included a part-time research position at the National Institutes of Health. That fall, I applied for graduate school and was accepted by Johns Hopkins University for a Ph.D. in Biochemistry which was awarded in 1976.

Now, I'm expert in veterinary immunology, genomics, and resistance to swine viral infectious diseases. My work focused

on basic swine immunology and targeted prevention and control of the most economically important pig virus, Porcine Reproductive and Respiratory Syndrome virus. I recently retired as a Distinguished Senior Research Scientist, Animal Parasitic Diseases Laboratory, Beltsville Agricultural Research Center (BARC), Agricultural Research Service, USDA. I advanced to supergrade level (above GS-15) in my 50-year career with the federal government starting at the National Institute of Health and 42 years at BARC.



Rosalie Marinari Akouka, M.D. 1968

I wanted to be a doctor from age eight. Inspired by Tom Dooley and Albert Schweitzer, I envisioned myself in Lambaréné, Gabon alongside Dr. Schweitzer – wow! I realized it was more realistic to practice here than in Africa. Sister Eva Maria Lynch was a guide and help to me until her death. She introduced me to her friend, Dr. Margaret Mahoney, who was a dermatologist. Dr. Mahoney helped me get a dermatology residency after my internship at Cooper Hospital. I retired in June 2015, after 40 years of private practice in dermatology.

The photo is graduation day at Jefferson University 1972. I'm standing with Sister Eva Maria and Sister Miriam Elizabeth.



Elizabeth Arquin Walker, Ph.D., RN 1968

My mother encouraged me to pursue mathematics at Chestnut Hill, but my passion for biology soon overwhelmed my flirtation with math. I deeply appreciated the beauty of botany, zoology, and biochemistry; Jane Goodall became my role model. I was hesitant about a career path, but the supportive

CHC science faculty ensured I would be successful. Professor John Lukacs was especially enlightening in enlarging my world view in the liberal arts.

A Master of Arts in Teaching from the University of Notre Dame was achieved but while I was in awe of successful educators, high school was not my forte. Building on my foundation in biology, I pursued a nursing degree at Creighton University where my husband had become a professor.

My career in diabetes behavioral research as a nurse scientist and tenured professor of medicine at Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York was the culmination of what I had learned and experienced at Chestnut Hill College, the University of Notre Dame (MA '69), Creighton University (BSN '76), and the Catholic University of America (PhD '88). In retirement, I can appreciate that these deep wells of knowledge and life experiences are all inter-woven to form a beautiful tapestry; I am humbled and grateful.



Claire Cifaloglio, M.D., MPH 1970

I attended a small Catholic high school run by the Sisters of Saint Joseph. The nun who taught chemistry started me on my career path.

There were some chemistry labs in south Jersey, so my original goal was to work in one of those. Things changed in the summer of

'69 between my junior and senior years at CHC. My brother was killed in an auto accident, and my young uncle died of lung cancer a few days later. Those events changed my life. I naively decided to become a doctor to help save people.

At CHC, Sister Patrick Marie, Sister Eleanor Marie, and Sister Mary Kieran in the Chemistry Department were kind, helpful and very encouraging to me. I was accepted to the Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania (now Drexel Medical) and was accepted. I later learned that Sister Eleanor Marie had contacted someone on the admission committee on my behalf.

My first job after completing my residency in Philadelphia was in a clinic in southern West Virginia. I had met a Catholic nun in med school who was working there, and after I visited her, I decided to stay for a few years. It was there that I learned about the negative effects of poverty on health.

A few years later, I worked in Arlington, Virginia in the County Health Department. For almost twenty years, I worked with

many children from immigrant families. We provided physicals and vaccines to get children ready for public school, especially those who came to the US to find safer homes for their families. I saw first-hand how people struggled to improve the lives of their families. With a wonderful group of public health nurses, we tried to find medical homes for children to receive ongoing care.

I am retired now, living in the Hudson Valley of New York, building new friendships, and maintaining the old ones. In the process my husband and I have met many good and hard-working people who continue to amaze us with their efforts to make things better for their families and their communities.



Nancy Gore Saravia, Ph.D. 1970

I was born and raised in Fort Lauderdale. During my childhood, South Florida was still rather undeveloped, and we could explore the rivers and the undisturbed beaches. Marine "critters," seaweed and native plants like sea grapes, sea oats and cattails were abundant and caught my interest, leading to my fascination with biology and ultimately biomedicine and tropical diseases.

Looking back, CHC was both demanding academically and nurturing of our potential. I gratefully remember faculty of the Biology Department, Sisters Eva Marie, and Sister Paul Daniel, who were nurturing educators and Sister Miriam Elizabeth aka "MimLiz", a strict disciplinarian. I also remember with affection Sister Patrick Marie, our chemistry professor and good-humored hall monitor and administrator Sister Anne Stanislaus, whose wisdom was always kind, insightful and opportune.

In the process of achieving a well-rounded education at CHC, I had a semester at sea on the World Campus Afloat that provided a unique global experience, and senior year between semesters, I participated in a work camp building adobe houses in rural Argentina. These experiences motivated me to pursue a career in international health, obtaining a master's degree in environmental health and pathobiology from Johns Hopkins University followed by a Ph.D. in microbiology and immunology at Vanderbilt University. The development of my master's thesis in Colombia in 1971 investigating an outbreak of Venezuelan equine encephalitis in a rural community was the start of my international research career.

My first employment was as a post-doctoral position in the USNIH supported Tulane University International Center for Medical Research and Training (ICMRT) in Cali,

Colombia. In 1990, when the Tulane program ended, the center was established as a Colombian non-profit institution, Centro Internacional de Entrenamiento e Investigaciones Médicas (CIDEIM), and I was named Executive Director by COLCIENCIAS, the Colombian national Science and Technology entity. This center, devoted to research capacity building, and basic, translational, applied and implementation research on tropical and neglected diseases associated with poverty has been my "life project."

I have been "attached" to CIDEIM for approximately 50 years and am still dedicated full-time to what I have discovered to be my vocation and mission: to build conditions that enable world-class research by Colombian scientists to address unmet needs for the diagnosis, treatment, prevention, and control of transmissible diseases. My dreams are for the opportunity of current and future generations of Colombians to realize their dreams and potential here in Colombia.

Sallyann Bowman, M.D. 1972

In college, I favored sciences and chemistry was my choice. Sister Eleanor Marie signed me up for a seminar at Women's Medical College. I liked what I heard and applied to Penn State. When I graduated in 1976, Sister Eleanor Marie, Sister Patrick Marie, Sister Martin Therese and my family doctor, Mariam Shore, were all there.

Post med school, I trained in Internal Medicine and took fellowship in Rheumatology. My first job was an academic position in internal medicine at Hahnemann Medical College. My last position was Deputy Director of Student Health at UPenn.

I retired from medical practice in 2018. I accepted the nomination to the CHC Board of Directors in 2017 and was humbled to give back to the College and the SSJ's for all the support. My life would have been quite different without them.

Stephanie Olexa, Ph.D. 1972

In high school, I took an AP biology course with a terrific teacher, Mrs. Dugan. She cultivated my interest in biology, and was enthusiastic about me going to college. My father, who was a steelworker, died the summer before I went to college, and my mother was struggling with taking care of children. Fortunately, I got a scholarship, so I was able to go to CHC.

Sister Eva Marie inspired me. She was the person that I reported to for my student work, and I learned a lot from her assignments and from setting up the labs. She was a genius.

I felt supported at CHC in a variety of ways. One interesting way that I didn't appreciate at the time was how CHC structured your life. There were rules about behavior, what you

can and cannot do, and what you should wear. Freshman year, you were not allowed to go home the first six weeks, so on weekends you learned to build community and to spend time studying. The rules let me fit in; I wasn't seen as an outsider or a poor kid from the other side of the tracks. We were all equal.

After graduation, I applied to graduate programs. I went to Temple where I studied protein structures. A lot less was known about proteins back then and how they interact with enzymes. I studied one of the enzyme systems using the *Drosophila* fruit fly, because you could change the genes, and see different changes in the protein structure and the protein function.

Now, I'm doing consulting work, helping companies to set up boards of directors and I sit on three corporate boards myself. I had built a business years ago; I saw that there was a market need for high-quality independent testing, and so I started the business looking at different markets, environmental testing, water, wastewater, air quality, industrial hygiene, and eventually we added food testing and radioactive testing. I built it up for almost 20 years, and then sold the company in 2009.



Patricia Harper Petrozza, M.D. 1974

My parents, Frances McCarron Harper (CHC, Class of 1948) and Thomas B. Harper III (LaSalle College, Class of 1948) met at CHC at a meeting of the Foreign Relations Club. Their first date was to a St. Patrick's Day dance...hence my name, Patricia.

In 1963, my youngest sister, Mary Frances, was born with a serious medical condition: spina bifida with myelomeningocele.

By God's Grace, we were near to Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and Mary underwent multiple surgical procedures in the early years of her life. Despite trials, I came to see Mary's journey as filled with hope and I was attracted to the promise of medicine.

I majored in chemistry and participated in the Interdisciplinary Honors program spearheaded by Sister St. Pierre, whose high standards I admired. Sister Mary Kieran was my most notable support in Chemistry and Sister Mary Helen Kashuba and Sister Mary Julia were delightful and extremely knowledgeable guides to the vast world of knowledge outside of the Sciences.

I was accepted into Jefferson Medical College during my senior year. The good study habits and discipline that I had acquired at Chestnut Hill helped me with the workload. As time passed, my interdisciplinary studies gave me a way to stay

balanced during the arduous work hours of medical training.

In 2014, I retired from the Wake Forest University School of Medicine as an Emeritus Professor of Anesthesiology. Along the way, I had a two year experience as an active duty General Medical Officer in the US Navy, a residency in Anesthesiology and fellowship in Neurosurgical Anesthesiology at the University of Maryland Hospitals, and a 30 year career as a Neurosurgical Anesthesiologist, with a 10 year foray into academic administration as Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education.

I was fortunate to enjoy many blessings during my life, and it is with gratitude that I count my education at Chestnut Hill College as foundational to successful achievements in my chosen career.

Anne Rompalo, M.D. 1974



I became interested in chemistry in high school - my goal was always to become a medical doctor. I went to Nativity BVM High School, and our science teacher was Sister William Elizabeth, SSJ who was inspiring and believed in us.

At my first job, I worked as a chemistry lab technician at University of Miami and went to their medical school the following year.

I will be fully retired by July 1st after a gratifying career in Medicine and Infectious Diseases as a Professor of Medicine at Johns Hopkins. I hope to continue counseling students but to become a stellar grandmother to my five grandchildren.

Mary E. Brandt, Ph.D. 1976

I was always interested in science, encouraged by my father, who was interested in how the human body worked.

I had thought about medical school but was not that interested in the time commitment for training. During my college years, I had a summer job at a commercial clinical laboratory and became interested in that aspect of technology.

At CHC, Sister Eva Maria Lynch was always helpful to us (and was always willing to provide frank comments when she thought we were not working hard enough!)

After I graduated, I worked in the microbiology department processing, analyzing, and reporting results on patient samples. When I was working on my M.S. degree at Jefferson in 1984, Dr. Helen Buckley came from Temple to give the lectures. She had graduated from CHC in 1956 and told me that if I wanted to work on a Ph.D., she would take me in her lab because I was a CHC graduate. She was my primary Ph.D. adviser, and my co-adviser was a younger faculty member named Ken Soprano. Many years later, I was reading the CHC Magazine and saw Ken's picture, to discover that he had accepted a faculty position at CHC. How amazing was that!

I retired from CDC in 2021 after 29 years of contributions to medical mycology and laboratory safety. Although I miss my Blackberry, I do not miss the emergencies!

Susan Kanehann Ahmad, M.D. 1977

I had a science teacher, Mr. Gozowski, who introduced me to frog dissection. I thought that dissecting frogs was interesting because their insides were all organized, not just mush, and I

thought the inside of people would be equally interesting. I was always good at math and science, so medicine was a natural for me. When I was thirteen, my father died of a heart attack at the age of 44, and that also cemented my desire to go into medicine.

I got a B.S. in science in 1977. I was inspired by all my science teachers at Chestnut Hill and I'm grateful for the love they had of helping me and all the other students learn, not just for the test but for our knowledge.

After that, I went to Loyola University, Stritch School of Medicine. When I finished, I started my residency in internal medicine and emergency medicine at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago. I took boards in both internal medicine and emergency medicine and passed them.

I'm glad I became a physician because I enjoy helping people. Not just with their medical issues but to assuage their fears. I always liked fixing things and the ER enabled me to do that.

Alice Gricoski Dachowski, M.D., F.A.C.S. 1977



I first became interested in medicine in elementary school while reading inspirational biographies of doctors such as Albert Schweitzer and Tom Dooley. When I graduated from CHC, my career goal was to become a physician. It combined my interests in scientific research and community service.

At CHC, my academic advisor and chair of the Biology Department, Sister Eva Maria Lynch, SSJ, was a great inspiration to me in discerning my career path. She encouraged me to apply to medical school. She sponsored my research project at CHC involving medicinal uses of extracts of marine species.

In my 37-year career as a rural general surgeon in a multi-specialty clinic, I performed a variety of procedures and was never bored. My goal was to help ensure that every patient received outstanding care and improved their quality of life. I was involved in the education of general surgery residents, medical students, nursing, and allied health students. I mentored many future doctors, including several nieces and nephews.

Since retirement from clinical practice, I continue to serve as a surveyor for accreditation of continuing medical education programs in Ohio and will begin my 25th year of service as a member of the Board of Trustees at the University of Rio Grande.



Stephanie A. King, M.D. 1979



I was interested in becoming a physician from a young age. My grandfather was a doctor, and I preferred the sciences.

The Sisters of Saint Joseph played an integral role in my

education from grade school to high school to college. Sister Mary Kieran was chair of the chemistry department and Sister Helen Burke was instrumental in helping me choose my thesis.

After graduating from University of Pennsylvania school of medicine, I completed a residency in obstetrics and gynecology and a fellowship in gynecologic oncology also at the University of Pennsylvania. Since 1990, I was full-time at University of Pennsylvania then transitioned to Jefferson University and then Drexel University. I am presently a full-time gynecologic oncologist at Temple University’s Fox Chase Cancer Center.

Therese M. Grau 1983

My paternal grandmother was a nurse at the long-gone Philadelphia General Hospital and my interest in medicine was sparked by her.

I have always been interested in living creatures. In high school I was interested in science and music, so it was natural to choose Chestnut Hill College.

During the summer, I worked at Wistar Institute I became interested in biomedical laboratory research. A researcher there who was a Penn professor, had told me I made a good choice with CHC for the biology department.



I was inspired by many faculty at CHC, but Sister Rosemary Scheirer was my biggest influence. She was encouraging and supportive and once told me that no matter what I did, I would be the best at what I chose.

My first position after graduation was as a laboratory technologist

performing immunoassays in a small private lab. My employer was impressed with CHC graduates and even hired another as my co-worker a few years later.

Currently I am a Clinical Trial Specialist – part of a clinical research team that manages drug trials in humans. One of my favorite aspects of my job is mentoring colleagues that are new to our role. My big career dream is to influence my grandchildren in pursuing a STEM education.

Charlene Zebrowski 1987



I was always fascinated with science. In the late 1970s, I was hooked on the medical mystery drama Quincy, which followed a medical examiner who solved crimes with his sidekick, Sam, a forensic chemist. The idea of using chemistry to solve crimes was fascinating.

A career in forensic chemistry was the reason I chose CHC. The program offered forensics-focused courses, along with internship opportunities at the Philadelphia Medical Examiner’s Office and the Philadelphia Police Crime Lab—and I completed both. However, I realized that bench work was not the right fit for me, and I began exploring other career paths.

I would not have succeeded without the guidance and encouragement of Sister Grace Banks, Sister Helen Burke, and Sister Mary Kieran. I was surrounded by so many smart, talented women, whose wisdom and leadership continues to be inspiring; and of course, my friends who were (and still are) my greatest supporters.

Currently, I am Executive Director, Business Development, ICON plc, who provides services to pharmaceutical clients. Two years ago, I shifted to a role in Business Development. This role is truly the culmination of the experiences and skills I have developed over the past 38 years since graduating from CHC.

I feel incredibly fortunate to have built a career in an industry where the work I do has a meaningful impact on the lives of so many. I’m living my dream.

Dawn Heath 1988



I was always drawn to the sciences, however, the pivotal moment for my career path happened during my junior year when my cousin passed away unexpectedly. I remember sitting at his bedside and speaking with the nurses. They were incredibly compassionate during such a difficult time. By the end of that year, I knew I was meant to go to nursing school.

While my educational foundation began with Biological Sciences at CHC, my career path ultimately evolved into nursing and healthcare administration. I began my career as a Registered Nurse in 1991. Five years later, I transitioned to Jersey Shore University Medical Center and spent 25 years there, growing through various roles. Over the years, my clinical experience has spanned the Surgical ICU, Trauma ICU, and Cardiac Surgery.

At CHC, Sister Rosemary Scheirer had an incredible gift for making me feel truly welcome and at home. She was a dedicated mentor with an open heart and an open door, always available for whatever we needed in that moment. She made us feel seen and valued, and her warmth left an indelible mark on my life.

Beyond the faculty, the greatest gift CHC gave me was the profound, enduring gift of lifelong friendship. We met as 18-year-old freshmen, and over the last four decades, these women have been my anchors. To celebrate our 60th birthdays this year, we are honoring the roots of the institution that brought us together by taking a pilgrimage to Le Puy, France, where the Sisters of St. Joseph were founded.

Currently, I am the Vice President of Nursing and Chief Nursing Officer at Southern Ocean Medical Center in Manahawkin, NJ. My goal is to continue advocating for our patients and to continually work toward providing the highest quality of care possible.



Tricia Cameron Esposito 1993

I graduated with a B.S. degree in Biochemistry and worked in pharmaceutical research for Johnson & Johnson for 15 years starting with a summer internship during my junior year at CHC. After relocating and staying home with my kids, I earned my B.S. in Nursing at Angelo State University in Texas. My nursing career consisted of occupational health and contract work for vaccination clinics.

Recently, I graduated from Texas Tech University with a degree/certification in Medical Laboratory Science. I am currently in the preceptorship and will finish in August and take the ASCP MLS Board of certification exam. I have been so blessed to have such wonderful opportunities to further my education and pivot in the healthcare field. CHC was the foundation that helped me to reach my goals.



Jillian M. Dimuzio 1995

I can remember wanting to be a doctor from an early age. I was drawn to that profession because of the profound impact I could have on other people's lives.

At CHC, I relied on the invaluable knowledge and advice of my professors and advisors, but I also gained quite

a lot of personal growth by studying alongside my classmates. Emulating our study group's preparation and habits inspired me to think more critically and to push myself further even when it was uncomfortable.

The summer after graduation, I was hired as an entry-level scientist at Merck. Because of the fundamentals I learned through my CHC curriculum and the hands-on experience from lab work, I was equipped with the necessary credentials to take on such a role. That "summer job" turned into an 18-year career at Merck where I gained exposure to multiple disease areas and therapeutic modalities and was privileged to be part of some truly amazing and impactful scientific endeavors.

Over the last 10 years I've expanded my scope and transitioned from the lab bench to leading teams, overseeing technological platforms, and managing strategic partnerships. At this moment in my career, I see myself continuing to pursue opportunities in the scientific strategy and business development space for the biotech industry. And, while I believe I am intentionally shaping the next chapter based on all I have learned, I am not certain it has been written yet.

Anna Bortnick, MD 1997



I have been interested in science since I was a child. My grandfather was an organic chemist. We would test the pH of his pool, and that's when I first learned about acid/base chemistry. He would bring me fun t-shirts and souvenirs from the American Chemical Society meetings. Now, I do that for my twins (Carter and Raquel, 12 years old) when I go to cardiology meetings!

I entered CHC as a Molecular Biology major. I added Biochemistry because Sister Rosemary Scheirer, my advisor, noticed that if I took a few more classes, I could double major.

My career goals became clear after I attended the first Biomedical Distinguished Lecture organized by Dr. Lakshmi Atchison. A prominent physician-scientist gave a lecture, and I became enthralled by the idea of a career in research and medicine after that. I joined his lab at the Wistar Institute for my honors thesis project and entered medical school after graduation, going on to earn my M.D. and Ph.D. in Cardiovascular Biology at Drexel University College of Medicine.

Many professors inspired me at CHC! Dolores Malecka, SSJ, M.A. taught me calculus and Dr. Grace Banks was a patient and clear teacher. Sister Carol Jean Vale was a major professional role model for all of us. Many in the Class of '97 could still recite a few lines from a memorable poem that she read to us in a campus speech: "Come to the edge...and she pushed them, and they flew".

In September, I am starting as the Director of Interventional Cardiology and Cardiac Catheterization Laboratories at SUNY Stony Brook University Medical Center. I am looking forward to serving as the Downstate Governor-elect of the New York State Chapter of the American College of Cardiology and completing my term as Chair of the Interventional Sectional Leadership Council of the American College of Cardiology.

Stacy McCrosson, M.D. 1997



I've always wanted to be a doctor, but I wasn't sure of the path forward. I considered nursing until my high school guidance counselor suggested trying "pre-med." So, I majored in biology primarily as a pre-med focus to complete any pre-reqs required for medical school admission. After graduating CHC, I took one year to prepare for/take the MCAT and apply to medical school.

Dr. Lakshmi Atkinson was my greatest support and had such faith in me. She invited me back to campus quite a few times after graduation to address students interested in medicine. As student body president, I spent a lot of time with Sister Carol Jean Vale, who taught me how to be a strong female leader. I learned so much from her.

After medical school at Hahnemann University hospital, I completed residency training at Thomas Jefferson University hospital. My medical school roommate was my friend and fellow CHC grad, Anna Bortnick!

I am a board-certified Ob/Gyn physician with a private practice for 20 years now. It's been my honor to care for generations of women in the same family. It brings me incredible joy to have the babies I delivered years ago return to see me now as young adult patients.

I currently reside in New Jersey with my husband of 25 years, our three great kids, and two dogs! I have been named as a "Top Doc" in Philadelphia Magazine every year from 2019 through the present, in addition to being named a "Top Doc" in South Jersey Magazine from 2008 - present.

Kate McGinley, D.O., M.P.H., F.A.C.O.S. 2000



I knew that I wanted to major in science since I was a little kid ... my mom recalls that I informed her at the age of seven that I was going to be a doctor!

During my years at Chestnut Hill, I had the opportunity to engage in original research (not the textbook/cookbook type of research I had been

exposed to in high school!) and then began to seriously consider a Ph.D. As my time at CHC began to draw to a close, I decided to enter the job market and gain more experience before committing to the next leg of my educational journey.

Dr. Bob Meyer was my advisor in Biology, and Dr. Grace Banks was my Chemistry advisor; both were talented teachers but also exceptional mentors. I was fortunate to work with Dr. Mary Anne Celenza during my time in student government. From her, I learned to have confidence in my ability to lead, for which I have become increasingly grateful. God bless Nancy Dachille! She was a never-ending resource for "Career Connections" and resume writing, always with an offer to help in any way. Distinct from the professors and staff at CHC, I was challenged and inspired by my classmates in the Interdisciplinary Scholars Program. My first internship was facilitated by my CHC roommate (Barbara S. Weikert, MA, EdD). During our second year, Barb connected me with her sister, Judy Belkowski, Ph.D., who was then a doctoral candidate at Temple. My work with Judy was the foundation for my Honors thesis in Biology; my work with her in the lab also enabled me to secure two more internships before completing my time at CHC.

My first job was as a Chemist in Biochemical and Investigative Toxicology at Merck. Dr. William Walker, whom I had come to know through my work on student government, facilitated my resume landing on his daughter's desk at Merck. After an



extensive interview process, I had the privilege of working for his daughter, Cathy, for three years (before transitioning into medical school).

I am a board-certified Urologist and fellowship trained Urologic Oncologist in upstate NY. My clinical work focuses on the surgical management of kidney, bladder, prostate, testicular, and penile cancers. I additionally serve as the System Chair of the Oncology Service Line for the Guthrie Clinic, work that enables me to lead multidisciplinary cancer care efforts for patients across our 11,000 square mile service area.

I am currently working on my MBA in Strategic Management with a Healthcare Concentration (from CHC!).

Kelsey Haugh 2014

When I was in high school, I wasn't sure what I wanted my career to be. But then everything changed one day in sophomore biology class, when we watched a documentary on viral pandemics. I was totally captivated by how tiny viruses have the potential to effect so much change on organisms and society, and my career goals became clear. I just knew I wanted a research career.

My goals crystallized over time, as I learned that there are different ways to have a research career (i.e., in academic labs, companies, government, and more). By my sophomore year at CHC, I was determined to pursue a Ph.D.

Dr. Kulkosky was instrumental in my choice to attend CHC. He was incredibly supportive of my career goals and introduced me to the opportunity to do my undergraduate research work at Fox Chase Cancer Center in a virology lab! I was also inspired by Dr. Karen Wendling and Sister Kathleen Duffy from the chemistry and physics departments, as they were also sources of continuous support.

After CHC, I did my Ph.D. in microbiology at Yale. My internship at Fox Chase played a big role in my grad school journey, because I did real biomedical research at a fully-equipped research facility that attracts people from all over the world to work in— something most small college research departments can't offer. My mentors at Fox Chase, Drs. Siddharth Balachandran, Richard Katz, and Anna Marie Skalka (Drs. Katz and Skalka are colleagues of Dr. Kulkosky), were incredibly supportive of me as well.

I've spent the past six years in the biopharma industry developing new drugs. I was drawn to industry early in grad school because the science is rigorous, but it's not just research; you're developing things that go out into the world, and the product development angle is incredibly satisfying. The fun part about the Ph.D. path combined with industry is that there's no

defined path and your career can take a variety of turns — it's impossible to get bored. I've worked on viral vectors, RNA therapeutics, cell therapies, and gene therapies for cancers and genetic disorders, but I've also learned business and product development skills. There is always something new to learn!

Kelly Lynn Dunlevy 2015



For as long as I can remember, I had been fascinated with how things like medications and cell signaling pathways worked. I felt a career where I would be able to explain these processes to others would be an ideal fit for me. When I started at CHC, I planned to teach high school biology. By the time I graduated though, I planned to pursue cancer research.

My advisor, Dr. Joseph Kulkosky, was particularly influential on my career journey. During my time at CHC, he suggested an Immersive Research Internship at Fox Chase Cancer Center. While at Fox Chase, I worked in the laboratory of Dr. Richard Katz mapping the functional domains of a previously unstudied protein, and putting the knowledge from my classes into practice. I continued working in Dr. Katz's lab, gaining skills that would allow me to continue my education at the graduate level, and producing results that led to a first co-author publication.

After graduation, I continued my studies at the University of Pennsylvania. During my time there, I worked in a cancer research lab on campus and earned a master's degree in Cell and Molecular Biology.

As my time in graduate school was coming to an end, I learned about medical writing as a career. It was an ideal fit for my interests, both keeping me up to date in science and allowing me to communicate it in an accessible way to others. I decided to join the American Medical Writers Association, completed my Essential Skills Certificate, and joined Red Nucleus as a medical writer in their Learning and Development division.

I am currently an Associate Scientific Director in the Oncology Center of Excellence at Red Nucleus, where I co-lead and lead content development on a variety of oncology-related projects. I aspire to reach the role of scientific director and eventually be able to mentor more junior writers.

Jade Wilson 2018

I've always been incredibly fascinated with how the human body works and disease pathophysiology, so majoring in Biology was a no-brainer for me. I joined the lab or Dr. Richard Katz at Fox Chase Cancer Center following my sophomore year at CHC and fell further in love with biology and research.

I had originally planned to become a cytotechnologist when I first started my bachelor's degree. However, after getting involved in research at Fox Chase Cancer Center and some other extracurricular activities, I fell in love with science and research and how they inform medicine. I just loved learning about how it all works.

The entire biology faculty at CHC were so very supportive and encouraged me to continue my training beyond my B.S./M.S. program. Not only did they believe in me, but they also provided me with networking and research opportunities that changed the trajectory of my life.

Major shout outs to Drs. Lakshmi Atchison, Joseph Kulkosky, Lisa McKernan, Ken Soprano, and Robert Meyer for imparting their wisdom, knowledge, and for all their encouragement and support over the years.

I am currently an M.D./Ph.D. student at Temple University. It is a long program (eight years), but I am hoping to graduate in 2029, followed by residency and fellowship training. My long-term career goal is to make a real impact on the lives of patients. Right now, and for the last decade or so, I've been interested in learning about cancer. I recognize that there is so much we have left to learn in science and medicine and I am excited to leverage all my training, past and present, to help people live the best and healthiest lives they can.

Christopher Dachowski Jr. 2019

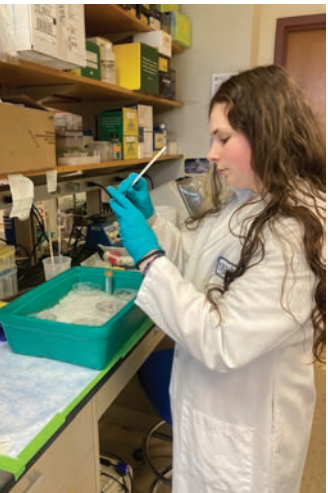


I was interested in medicine from a young age. I played multiple sports; I would sustain injuries often, so I decided to pursue a career as a doctor.

During my education, I decided to focus on pursuing a residency in general surgery, with aspirations to become a Trauma and Critical Care Surgeon.

Many members of the Chestnut Hill College community supported me in my academic career. Dr. Kulkosky, Dr. Soprano, and Dr. Wendling advised me as I applied to medical school. The student success advisors helped me create a schedule that promoted success. Lacrosse coach Mike Terranova generously worked around my busy schedule and all the Sisters of Saint Joseph encouraged me to serve the community I live in.

Now, I am a Ross University School of Medicine graduate '26, and I matched into a five-year General Surgery residency at St. Catherine's and Good Samaritan Hospital on Long Island, NY. This is the next step in my process to become a surgeon. I am excited to complete my goal of becoming a trauma and critical care surgeon.



Fiona Goeckel 2024

I have always been passionate about science and medicine and throughout high school, I volunteered at my local hospital and participated in several science clubs.

At CHC, amazing professors like Dr. Kulkosky and Dr. Wendling helped me develop a strong scientific foundation that has helped me further my career and get into graduate school.

One course played a pivotal role in shaping my career aspirations: The Cure: from Benchside to Bedside is a unique course taught by cancer researchers from Fox Chase Cancer Center. The course inspired me to pursue an internship there, which became the first major step toward my future career as a research scientist.

Following graduation, I joined Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM) as a Research Assistant. My current lab studies Spinal and Bulbar Muscular Atrophy (SBMA).

The experiences and opportunities I gained through Chestnut Hill College have led me to pursue a Ph.D. in cancer research. I am proud to have been accepted into the Cancer Biology Ph.D. Program at Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, where I will begin my studies this fall. 🍷

*deceased

Splendor AND COMPLEXITY

By Sister Mary McFadden, SSJ 1976

“...and no doubt it delights God to see splendor where He only looked for complexity.”

This line from *A Man for All Seasons* alludes to Sir Thomas More’s political dilemma.

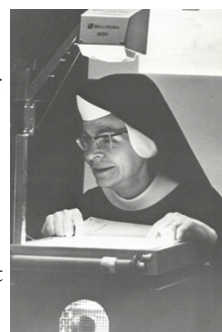
But it can easily describe the foundation offered to CHC science students over the years. For many years, Sisters of Saint Joseph staffed the Biology, Chemistry, and Physics departments at CHC from the college’s opening in 1924.

Professional, highly credentialed scientists in their own right, these Sisters offered their students deep insights into the complexities of science while always drawing them to recognize the unified splendor of all the sciences together.

Complexities learned through such activities as specimen dissections, gas chromatograph studies, campus tree identifications, electrical circuit experiments, and time viewing the heavens in the observatory eventually yielded to awe as CHC science students came to see the integrated splendor of the natural sciences.

But integration and splendor often come only as a result of rigorous work beforehand...and in the company of learned and wise teachers and mentors. CHC science students of the past will remember both the rigors and their SSJ teachers. They may recall:

Sister Paul Daniel’s reminder at the bottom of her rather challenging exams – *Never lose your sense of wonder!* – or Sister Eva Maria’s knowledge of and respect for the tiniest of creatures in her microbiology and virology classes.



Sister Paul Daniel

Who can forget Sister Miriam Elizabeth, Sister John Gertrude, Sister Florence Edward or Sister Rosemary Scheirer’s (Sister Sheila Marie)

classes and having to demonstrate to them the dissected anatomy of a fetal pig, a cat or a shark’s cranial nerves.

In chemistry lab with Sister Eleanor Marie, Sister Patrick Marie, Sister Raymond Joseph, and Sister Helen Burke, it seemed that the more advanced the class, the more complicated it was to build the apparatus setup for the experiments that often ran for days with condensers, flasks and Bunsen burners.

And science students of the past will likely remember their physics classes with Sister Edward Leo and Sister Kathleen Duffy learning about circuits, forces, lenses, lasers, and acoustics. Awe-filled astronomy visits to the observatory were always special.

Women who graduated CHC as scientists were ready to break glass ceilings having been educated by SSJs who themselves had broken through barriers and obtained Doctoral and other advanced degrees. Many CHC science graduates entered the fields of research, medicine, education and more ensuring that the scientific complexity ingrained in them in a few years at CHC grew even more splendid over many more years.

My own mom, Catherine Schrader McFadden, CHC class of 1946, graduated with a degree in chemistry. I grew up hearing her CHC stories of being educated in science and being infused with confidence that as she entered a post WWII world, her CHC education would make a difference to



Sister Eva Maria



her and to that world. Soon after her graduation, she interviewed for a chemist position at Publicker Industries in Philadelphia. She described entering the waiting room for the interview with the other applicants, all men. When she met with the head chemist, he took her folder and after a quick review, said to her: “So you graduated from Chestnut Hill College? With a degree in chemistry? You are hired.” Not only was she hired as their first female chemist, she was made foreman of the lab. Another first. And every time my mom recounted that story, she gave all the credit to her CHC education.

Thirty years after my mom’s graduation, I also graduated from CHC with a degree in science, mine in biology. Blessed with some of the same teachers who had taught my mom, I was also fortunate to be taught by the new generation of SSJ science teachers.

Though my vocation and career path moved away from direct involvement in the world of science, my framework for thinking and viewing the world, steeped in analysis and awe, was shaped and sharpened by my CHC education. And like my mom, and true for many CHC science graduates, I give the credit to my CHC education and especially to my SSJ science teachers.

I think Sir Thomas More got it right about splendor and complexity...and God’s delight. Those of us with a CHC education, especially in the sciences, spent our college years immersed in the complexity of our fields of study. Little did we know how much splendor and delight would follow as we integrated that CHC education into our lives. 🌸



Sister Patrick Marie

The Bridge from Student to Professor: AN INTERVIEW WITH SISTER ROSEMARY SCHEIRER SSJ



DESCRIBE YOUR CHC EXPERIENCE AS A STUDENT...

In 1954, I enrolled at CHC as a history major. Included in my freshman roster was a required general science class which was taught by Sister Miriam Elizabeth. That General Science class changed my college path...and my life.

Sister Miriam Elizabeth introduced us to Teilhard de

Chardin and I was immediately attracted to his work. I approached Sister Miriam Elizabeth after class one day asking how I could learn more about Teilhard. She told me to go to the library and if I couldn’t find what I was looking for, to return and she would share some of her personal resources with me.

Of course, I returned to her. Among her treasures, Sister Miriam Elizabeth had a photo of herself with Teilhard taken at a convention in New York in the early 1950s where she had gone to hear him in person. By the end of my freshman year, I changed my major to biology.

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR MEMORIES OF YOUR SSJ SCIENCE TEACHERS AT CHC?

Sister Miriam Elizabeth, Sister Paul Daniel, and Sister Eva Maria were the biggest influence in my CHC education. It was not so much what they taught that was influential, but how they taught. I always left class wanting to know more; they were always forward thinkers.

Not only were they thorough and grounded in their subject area, but they were up to date on the latest in their field. Though they themselves were not active in science research, they had connections to researchers in top institutions and leveraged those contacts to make connections for their students.

I remember each of them emphasizing: “You [students] are here to learn; we [teachers] are here to prepare you for your future.” And that they did.

The SSJ science teachers always kept up with new scholarship and advances in their respective fields by reading and studying, always anticipating what their students would need to learn for their futures.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE TO BE A STUDENT OF BIOLOGY AT CHC?

During my years at CHC in the mid-1950s, I could feel the shifting of the study of biology from a sort of overview of life science to a deeper curiosity regarding the underlying molecular basis for life; this curiosity was passed on from teachers to students.

CHC biology students were expected to visit (followed by written reports) many of the local resources in the Philadelphia area, e.g. Wistar Institute at Penn, Philadelphia Zoo, Morris Arboretum, Philadelphia Flower Show, Mütter Museum, introducing students to biology research in the region and moving study from the classroom to the wider world.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE AS AN SSJ SCIENCE TEACHER...

After teaching high school science for a total of 10 years in two different high schools, I was assigned to CHC in 1971. Immersion into this higher level of biology teaching – college level vs. high school level – brought me to a new awareness. Just as the “framework” for understanding biology shifted to a more molecular basis when I was a college student – DNA had been decoded by Watson and Crick in 1953 – I sensed another shift on the horizon in how biology was understood and needed to be taught. This was a shift to a more evolutionary understanding of life and the intimate connection among all forms of life including the environment.

That shift affected how I taught biology at CHC and led me, full circle, into a fuller immersion of the work of Teilhard, my first attraction. This opened me, and hopefully my students, to recognize biology, and all the sciences, as dynamic and changing rather than as fixed and fully knowable.

CAN YOU SHARE ONE LASTING MEMORY FROM YOUR TIME AT CHC?

That would have to be Sister Paul Daniel always reminding her students: “Don’t miss spring!” 🌸

Interview with Sister Rosemary Scheirer SSJ (Sister Sheila Marie)

Conducted by Sister Mary McFadden SSJ Friday, May 15, 2026

Athletics



Photo by Jim Reese

#GRIFFINNATION



Spring 2026 SPORTS HIGHLIGHTS

By Bob Heller, Director of Athletic Communications
Photos by Jim Reese, Gabby Hassler and Aareon Monroe



Preston Page



Adam Daley



Daniel Myers



Jake Ballerini

The Chestnut Hill College Athletics program completed its 99th season of sports in the spring of 2026 with several teams competing in post-season action.

A total of eight teams competed in their championship segment during the spring with six of those seeing post-season action, led by the men's lacrosse program.



Men's Lacrosse

The men's lacrosse program reached the Central Atlantic Collegiate Conference (CACC) championship game for the seventh time in eight seasons hoping for their fifth conference title. Chestnut Hill was led by CACC Rookie of the Year **Preston Page**, CACC Goalkeeper of the Year, **Adam Daley** and top defender and first team All-CACC **Daniel Myers**. The Griffins, however, came up short against the top seed Wilmington University squad, falling to the Wildcats 9-5 in a contest that matched up two of the top five defenses in the country.



Women's Lacrosse

The women's lacrosse team reached the post-season for the first time since 2019, finishing the year with an 8-7 record under the steady hand of second year coach **Liz Martin**. Martin was named the CACC Coach of the Year for her efforts this season. Freshman **Samantha Martin** (33 goals, 43 points) and graduate student **Elizabeth Deal** (23 goals) led the CHC offense. The duo had their best game of 2026 in their final regular season contest with Martin scoring six goals and Deal adding five in a big win over Felician, securing the Griffins' first winning season since 2018.



Will Duddy



Samantha Martin



Elizabeth Deal



Michael Pascoe



Wyatt Spinks



Noah Cutting



Caroline Croteau



Caliyah Brown



Raquelle Dandy



Baseball

Over on the baseball diamond, the Griffins qualified for the conference playoffs for the second consecutive year and won their first post-season game since the 2021 season, defeating Jefferson University 10-8 in game one of a three game series. Junior **Michael Pascoe** earned the win on the mound and also starred with the bat, moving to the designated hitter slot after seven innings. Pascoe blasted a solo home run late in the game, breaking the school's single season record with nine on the year. He also finished the season with a single season school record 56 RBI and with twenty career home runs, another school record.

The Griffins finished the year with a 23-22 overall mark and a 19-14 conference record. Pascoe was named to the all-conference team as a second team honoree for the third consecutive year. Joining him on the all-conference team was junior outfielder **Wyatt Spinks**. Spinks led the team and was second in the league with a .393 batting average.



Men's Tennis

Men's tennis saw success in their first year as a member of the Pennsylvania State Athletic Conference as the team reached the post-season, falling in the semi-finals to Edinboro University. Graduate student **Noah Cutting** was named the PSAC Men's Tennis Athlete of the Year. Cutting went undefeated in conference singles play and finished the season with a 14-1 overall singles mark. He earned his 100th career win (singles and doubles) this season and finished his career with a 106-48 record.

The team finished the season with a 7-8 overall mark and a 5-1 conference record.



Track and Field

The track and field teams struggled with numbers during the season but had three individuals qualify for the conference championship meet with all three scoring points for their respective team. **Michael Lopez-Zabala** closed out his career with a third-place finish in the javelin throw, breaking the school record with a toss of 46.26 meters. On the women's side, **Gabby Hassler** closed out her career with a sixth-place finish in the 3,000-meter steeplechase with a time of 14:06.97 while **Soleil Casseus** finished seventh in the same event with a time of 14:19.18.



Women's Flag Football

Making their debut as the Griffins' 19th sport was women's flag football. The team won three games in their inaugural 16-game season. **Caliyah Brown** was named as a first team all-conference defense player and **Raquelle Dandy** garnered second team defense honors. Dandy also shared quarterback duties on offense with **Caroline Croteau**. Dandy threw for 473 yards while Croteau had 925 yards passing.



Softball

The softball team fielded a young squad in 2026 and struggled to win games. Eleven freshman and four sophomores were part of the 21-person squad this season. Injuries throughout the season also took a toll on the team as they came away with just five victories.



Griffin Awards

The season wound down with the fifth annual Griffin Awards Show in May. Major award winners included Coach of the Year **Liz Martin** (Women's Lacrosse); Athletes of the Year (**Sara Tamoun** -- women's basketball and **Alejandro Redondo Cybak** -- men's basketball) and Athletic Director's Award (Liz Deal --women's lacrosse and Daniel Myers -- men's lacrosse).



Michael Lopez-Zabala



Gabby Hassler



Soleil Casseus



Sara Tamoun



Alejandro Redondo Cybak

Coach of the Year



Liz Martin

MOVING TO LEARN

EXERCISE SCIENCE AND ITS CAREER PATHS

By Michelle Budenz Presnall, Director of Annual Giving & Editor of the Alumni Magazine

For many students, the appeal of exercise science begins with a natural curiosity about how the body works. That curiosity — about muscles, metabolism, movement, and performance — is what draws a number of our Griffins into this exciting work.

At Chestnut Hill College, students in EXSC 305 – Exercise Testing and Prescription, start with lectures on Tuesdays and hands-on labs on Thursdays, where the students put theoretical knowledge into practice. In the lab, students learn how to use heart rate monitors, measure blood pressure, and lung function.

On a particular day in the spring under the guidance of Pasquale Succi, assistant professor of exercise science, students conducted studies of VO₂ max testing, which is the measurement of the volume of oxygen consumption (VO₂) of a test subject while running on a treadmill.

The first test subject is junior, Nasir Moore. As a sprint football player, Nasir is used to running in short bursts of speed.

As Nasir straps on a heart rate monitor and a large mask connected to a computer, the other students prepare to record the findings. After warming up with a light jog, Nasir's test begins. After a few minutes, a classmate holds a chart in front of Nasir as he runs, which is a rating of perceived exertion (RPE), designed to measure how strenuous the exercise feels to him. The chart ranges from “very, very light” to “very, very hard.” Nasir – who can't speak because of the mask – points to “very light,” indicating everything is okay for the moment. As time goes on and the treadmill's speed and incline increase, Nasir's work gets harder. Soon, he points to the words, “very, very hard” and the test stops around the 15-minute mark.

“By progressively increasing the treadmill speed and incline, students measured Nasir's maximal capacity to consume, deliver, and utilize oxygen for energy production — a direct indicator of his endurance performance,” says Dr. Succi.

In addition to VO₂ max and RPE, students also measure Nasir's heart rate, blood pressure, and respiratory exchange ratio (RER), which is the ratio of carbon dioxide production / oxygen consumption. These additional variables help confirm that the subject on the treadmill – Nasir – gave a maximal effort.

This kind of data can be used by athletes and coaches to guide training sessions, monitor fitness, and quantify improvements.



Associate Professor of Exercise Science, Dr. Paquale Succi, speaks to the class while student, Nasir Moore, undergoes test number 1 on the treadmill.



Junior Nasir Moore is aiming for a career as an occupational therapist.



Classmates help with the testing: Sofia Rodriguez-Contreras (left) administers the specific testing protocol through the metabolic cart; Rachel Mace (middle) records the values; and Michelle Baker (right) measures the “rating of perceived exertion” or RPE.



Junior Ryan O'Hara, a long-distance runner, straps on the equipment for test number 2.

As Nasir starts to cool down, students help the next test subject, a junior named Ryan O'Hara, who is on the College's cross country team, put on the monitoring equipment, and get ready to start a new test.

The students in Succi's class understand that exercise science is not just about tending to sports injuries. The career pathways for exercise science majors are broad. Graduates go on to become physical therapists, strength and conditioning coaches, clinical exercise physiologists, cardiac rehabilitation specialists, and researchers. Others enter the rapidly expanding world of corporate wellness, sports analytics, or occupational health.

When asked about his career path, Nasir said he chose the major as the first step toward becoming an occupational therapist. He hopes to work with people recovering from injuries tackle the mental and physical hurdles that could keep them from returning to their daily lives.

Exercise science majors can also go into public health and policy careers. Chronic diseases like heart disease and type 2 diabetes are growing health issues, and researchers and clinicians who can design evidence-based exercise interventions have the potential to help many people.

Changing lives through the study of the physical body and its processes is a major component of what exercise science is all about, and it's often a factor why students choose this major. When asked what drove him toward a path to become an occupational therapist, Nasir answered simply, “I want to help people.”

Another great Griffin on a path to helping others. 🦋

THE H.O.P.E. SCHOLARSHIP: CLOSING THE DISTANCE TO A DEGREE

For many adult students, the hardest part of earning a degree isn't the beginning — it's the end. Life happens. Financial obligations can pile up. A semester or two of classes can stand between years of hard work and a diploma that changes everything.

The HOPE Scholarship exists for that exact moment. It provides critical, last-mile funding for adult learners who are within reach of graduation but need help crossing the finish line. Your gift doesn't just cover a class — it turns years of sacrifice into a completed degree, a new career, and a promising future finally within reach.

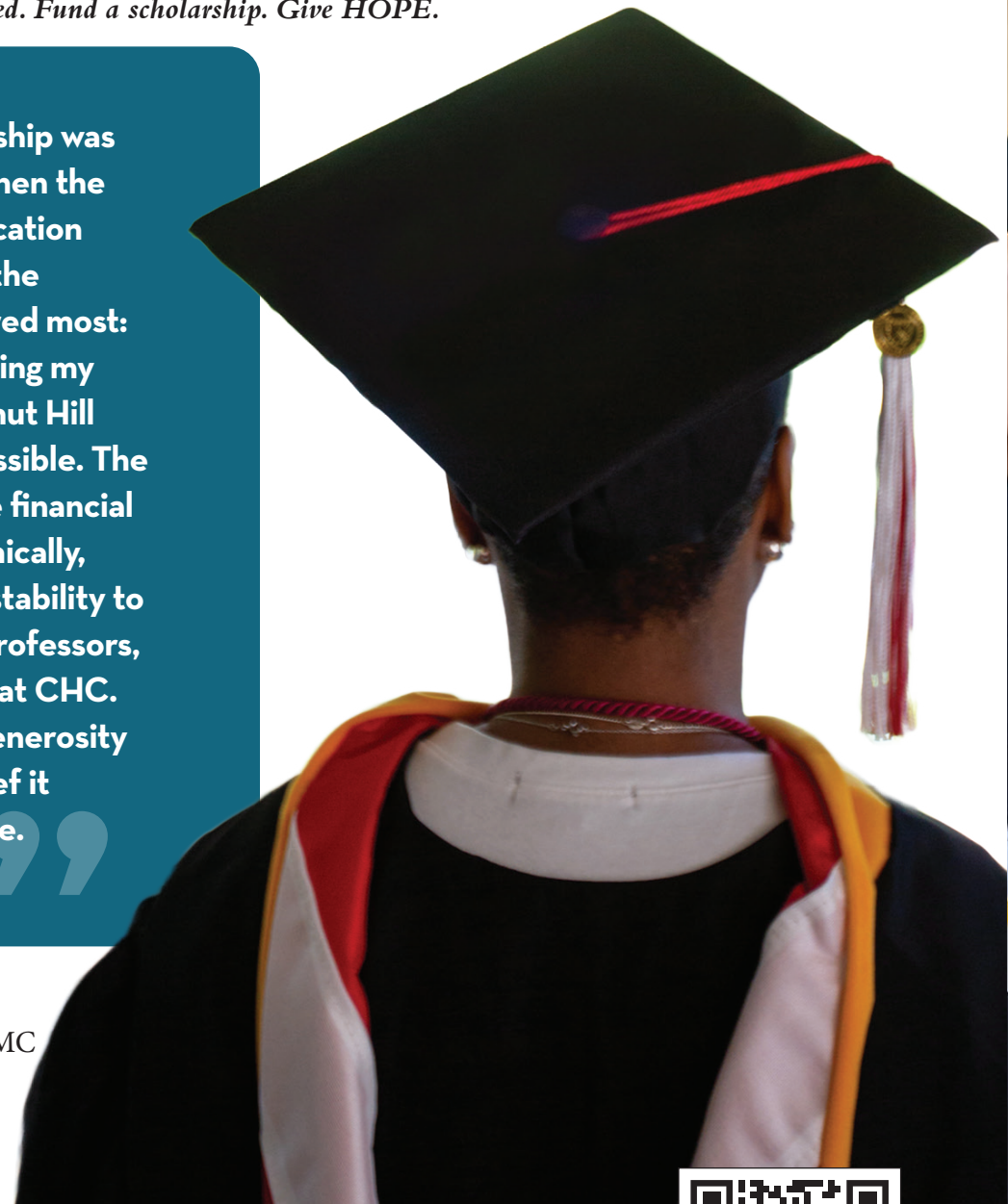
Help a student finish what they started. Fund a scholarship. Give HOPE.

“Receiving the H.O.P.E. scholarship was truly life changing. At a time when the financial burden of higher education felt overwhelming, it gave me the ability to focus on what mattered most: my education. Without it, earning my bachelor’s degree from Chestnut Hill College may not have been possible. The scholarship didn’t just ease the financial strain; it opened doors academically, giving me the confidence and stability to fully invest in my studies, my professors, and the incredible community at CHC. I am forever grateful for the generosity behind this award and the belief it represented in students like me.”

- Jamie Peterson, student

Questions?

Contact Elaine R. Green, Ed.D., PHMC
Grant Coordinator,
SCPS Administration,
green@chc.edu



SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR OUR STUDENTS BY
MAKING A GIFT TO THE H.O.P.E. SCHOLARSHIP!



Alumni
RELATIONS

Reunion Weekend Recap

Reunion Weekend 2026 welcomed back classes ending in 1 and 6, with a special spotlight on our newest Golden Griffins—the Class of 1976—as they celebrated their 50th reunion milestone.



Class of 1976 gathers for the traditional Rotunda stairs class picture.

Held this year in April, the weekend marked a fresh chapter for a cherished tradition, blending new energy with the spirit that makes CHC feel like home.

Festivities kicked off on Friday, April 24, with the Young Alumni VIP Party, held in collaboration with CHC's Spring Fest. Alumni from the past 15 years gathered in the East Parlor for an evening of connection, conversation, and celebration, bringing together recent graduates in a lively and welcoming atmosphere.

Current CHC students pose before Spring Fest!!



On Saturday, April 25, the day began with a special lecture from professors Dr. David Contosta and Dr. Tyler Rockey. Their talk on American Independence traced 250 years of history through the lens of Philadelphia, offering both insight and reflection. Alumni had the opportunity to engage further during a thoughtful Q&A session that followed.



Dr. Contosta and Dr. Rockey engage the crowd during a special lecture

The celebration continued with the annual Reunion Luncheon, featuring beloved traditions like class photos in the Rotunda and the spirited Calling of the Classes—complete with the iconic waving of napkins. The Alumni Awards ceremony also recognized three outstanding CHC alumnae, honoring their achievements and impact.

Karen Murphy Harris 1988, Charlene Zebrowski 1988, and Cecilia Haenn Turner 1988



Young Alumni Award recognizes an alumnus for outstanding service, advocacy and contribution to the alumni association and/or the College by living out the mission in their daily life. **Michaela Uttley 2019** was the winner of the **2026 Young Alumni Award**.

Michaela is a therapist and co-founder of Whole Hearted Healing, a trauma-informed practice. She expands access to mental health support through mentorship, community collaboration, and education, while promoting awareness and reducing stigma. Her work emphasizes empowerment and connection, including the use of equine-assisted therapy to support healing. She was nominated and presented the award by her friend/fellow classmate **Darby Pistili 2019**.

This year's **Eleanore Dolan Egan Alumni Award for Outstanding Service to Chestnut Hill College** went to **Margo Mongil-Kwoka 1980**. She was nominated by multiple Griffins and her friend **Cissy Pazzanna 1977** bestowed the award.

Serving as Alumni Board President and member for over 20 years, Margo is consistently dedicated to Chestnut Hill College. Her friendly face and willingness to help with anything – from playing Mrs. Claus at Breakfast with Santa to cleaning out closets in OIA – makes her the perfect choice for this award. Margo was inducted into the Chestnut Hill College Athletic Hall of Fame in 2025 for the 1979 Championship Volleyball Team. She is also dedicated to our SSJs, taking her time to frequently visit with a few Sisters while she is in Philly. Cissy Pazzana says, “She is the living embodiment of this award”.



Lifelong friends Cissy Pazzanna 1977 and Margo Mongil-Kwoka 1980

The final award for the luncheon was presented by Director of Alumni Relations Maureen McLaughlin. The **2026 Distinguished Achievement Award** was given to **Reverend Michelle Simmons, 2008, 2011 SGS**. Rev. Michelle Simmons is the founder and Executive Director of *Why Not*

Prosper, a non-profit supporting women after incarceration through housing, job training, mentoring, and long-term reentry services. Drawing on her own lived experience with incarceration, she built the organization to help women rebuild stability, independence, and family connections.

All three women are an encapsulation of the very best of Chestnut Hill College Alumni and community.



Alumni Award recipients Margo Mongil-Kwoka 1980, Michaela Uttley 2019, and Michelle Simmons 2008, 2011 SGS

The weekend concluded with the annual Reunion Weekend Mass in the Motherhouse Chapel on Sunday April 26th. Then alumni were welcome to a wonderful brunch in the cafeteria with the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

The weekend was a great success and true testament to a dedicated alumni base. The college is proud of all who walked through these halls and chose to follow the mission of the college, while here and beyond. The purpose is to make the world a better more just place.

Thank you to all who attended and volunteered for the Reunion Weekend. We are looking forward to celebrating with all of you again in the Spring of 2027 – April 30, May 1 & 2. We will be highlighting the classes ending in 2 and 7, and welcoming back all Golden Griffins. We hope to see you there! 🍀



Roseanne Duzinski 1971 shows off her class yearbook with President Brian McCloskey

SAVE THE DATE! REUNION WEEKEND 2027: APRIL 30- MAY 2

Class Notes

Congratulations to **Christina Csicsek Talbert 2013**! She was the Wilder Elementary School Campus Teacher of the Year and Sumter School District top three Teacher of the Year Finalist for the 2025–2026 school year.



Photo with Principal Michael Riggins at the district finalist announcement.



Robert F. DeFinis, Ed.D. 2005 SGS was selected to receive a Fulbright Scholarship. Congratulations!

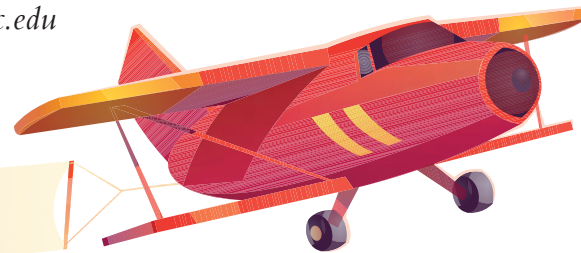
Donated to CHC, the diploma of M. Eileen Burke, Class of 1937, Mount Saint Joseph College. Thank you to her daughter, M. Eileen McGill Meko, for making this treasured gift to us.



Congratulations to **Cristina Diaz Achuff 2015** and her husband, Matthew. The couple welcomed Serena Ryan Achuff on April 25, 2026.

To submit a Class Note, please send an email to: magazine@chc.edu

GRIFFIN CONNECTIONS



Did you meet a CHC alum somewhere unexpected? Tell us about it!



At the 60th Anniversary event of the Community College of Philadelphia, several CHC staffers ran into Cicero Lemmon, the father of Nya Lemmon 2025, a CHC graduate who is pursuing her master's in education at CHC.

Back row: Lynise Moore from the Greater Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce; Cicero Lemmon; Dr. Brian McCloskey, president of CHC. Front row: Danny Luu, Associate Director of Transfer Admissions; Chanel Young, Senior Associate Director of Admissions; Rouseline Emmanuel Frenel, VP Student Life/Title IX Coordinator at CHC.

President of Chestnut Hill College, Dr. Brian McCloskey, met alumna **Ann Marie Arment 1996** when they attended the same wedding in Houston, Texas in March 2026!



Alumni Bookshelf

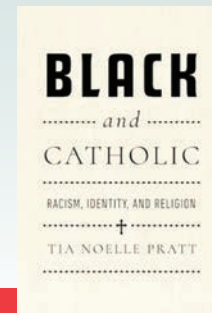
The Alumni Bookshelf features books written by or about our graduates. Find your next favorite book!



With more than 25 years of experience in engineering, software and systems leadership, and digital transformation, author **Renee Kruzits Borrero 2000** focuses on making emerging technology understandable and useful without overwhelming non-technical audiences. Renee is also a creative professional whose work bridges technology, storytelling, art, music, and everyday life.

My AI is a thoughtful and accessible exploration of how artificial intelligence is already shaping everyday life. Rather than focusing on technical complexity or fear-driven narratives, the book examines the human side of AI through real-world observations, humor, and practical insight.

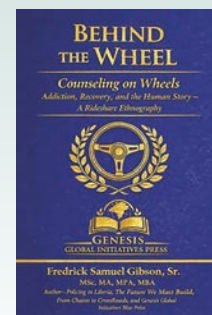
FIND THIS BOOK:



Tia Noelle Pratt, Ph.D. 1999 has researched and written about systemic racism in the Catholic Church in the U.S. and its impact on African-American Catholic identity for more than twenty-five years. Her first book, *Black and Catholic: Racism, Identity, and Religion* was published in September 2025 by University of Notre Dame Press. Using ethnography and in-depth interviews, Dr. Pratt studies the Roman Catholic Church as an institution, providing needed sociological analysis of race and religion.

Dr. Pratt is Special Assistant to the Vice President and Director of Mission Engagement and Strategic Initiatives in the Office for Mission and Ministry, Assistant Professor of Sociology, and Editor of the Journal of Catholic Social Thought at Villanova University.

FIND THIS BOOK:



Fredrick S. Gibson, Sr., MSc, MA, MPA, MBA 2009 SCPS wrote and published *Behind the Wheel: Counseling on Wheels – Addiction, Recovery, and the Human Story: A Rideshare Ethnography*.

Drawing on more than nine years of rideshare driving and over 35,000 passenger interactions in the Greater Philadelphia region, Mr. Gibson has developed a unique ethnographic lens into the everyday realities of addiction, emotional trauma, instability, and social disorder.

Born in Gibson Town, Tappita, Lower Nimba County, Liberia, Mr. Gibson is a distinguished criminologist, political and economic analyst, author, and social justice advocate whose work spans criminal justice reform, addiction recovery, public safety, economic development, and international policy. His other works include *Policing in Liberia: Reform, Responsibility, and a New Republic*, *The Future We Must Build*, and *From Chains to Crossroads: The Slave Trade, the American Colonization Society, and the Unfinished Story of Liberia*.

FIND THIS BOOK:



In Philadelphia, where she built her career and raised her family, the demands of medicine shaped the rhythms of daily life.

Growing up as one of six children in the shadow of her mother's long hours and quiet intensity, **Catherine O'Riordan** learned early about responsibility, ambition, and the unseen costs of a life devoted to others. Only later did she begin to understand how closely her own path echoed her mother's.

Spanning more than eight decades, *Layers of the Heart* is a daughter's story and a mother's legacy — a discovery of love amid a daughter's search to understand her mother's complex and layered life.

FIND THIS BOOK:



To submit your work to be featured in the Alumni Bookshelf, send to: magazine@chc.edu

Sisters of Saint Joseph Celebrate Jubilee

This past spring, 32 Sisters of Saint Joseph, residents at Saint Joseph Villa, celebrated milestone years as members of the Congregation. Among the 32 who were honored are four SSJs who served for numerous years at CHC. From the entire Chestnut Hill College community, we express our gratitude for your many years of dedicated service to the College. What an incredible accomplishment!



Celebrating 75 Years

SISTER ANNA LOUISE SCHUCK, SSJ
Former CHC Board of Directors



Celebrating 70 Years

SISTER BARBARA ELIZABETH NOLAN, SSJ
Professor Emerita of Political Science



Celebrating 60 Years

SISTER MERILYN ANNE RYAN, SSJ
Professor Emerita of Mathematics



Celebrating 60 Years

SISTER EILEEN M. LYNCH, SSJ
Former Adjunct Faculty, Mathematics

If you'd like to send a card of congratulations to a Sister, please send to:
St. Joseph Villa, 110 W. Wissahickon Avenue, Flourtown, PA 19031

In Memoriam

Alumni deceased since last publication | (Notified between Jan 1, 2026 – June 30, 2026)

Charlotte Maley Hall 1945	Jean Williams Harris 1957	Regina Ventresca Creedon 1971
Helen Beatty 1946	Roxanne Talley King 1957	Suzanne Schulz Dressler 1971
Margaret Bloomenthal Forst 1948	Mary Ann Gillen Steele 1957	Bonnie Wydick Oldham 1971
Frances McCarron Harper 1948	Miriam Fenerty Sullivan 1957	Margery King Roby 1972
Janet Smith Murphy 1948	Rosemarie O'Brien Cleaver 1958	Lynn M. Martin Trocky 1974, 1989 SGS
Dolores Neels Maras 1949	Patricia Burke DeLucia 1958	Lorena Landucci 1975
Lea McGovern, VMD 1949	Joanne Ryan Luecke 1958	Sherry Waples Benica 1976
Elizabeth Laufer, M.D. 1950	Margaret Walsh Shubnell 1958	Lisette Maldonado-Soto 1977
Veronica Petrusky Suppa 1950	Helen Gleeson Wachendorfer 1958	Terese Marie Applegate 1986
Bernadette Power Barnhurst 1951	Henriette Horchler Leanos, Ph.D. 1960	Sheila Brown 1991
Joan Amberg Kineke 1951	Mary McElvenny Owen 1960	Anita Lawler 1991 SCPS
Margery Smith MacDonald 1951	Kathleen M. Wagner 1960	Jennifer Ruggiero Aierstok 1992
Bernadette Fortune Pettine 1951	Barbara Donovan 1961	Ellen Walsh 1992 SGS
Lorraine Mariani Albanese 1952	Barbara Schaefer Lamont 1961	Sheryl Bird 1996
Joan Mathers Eaves 1952	Helen Giorgi Logue 1961	Frances Clayton Matthews 1996 SGS
Mary Alexander Graham 1952	Miriam Gibbons Mandell 1961	Lee Morgan McDonough 1996
Marie McDermott Keeley 1952	Sara Ann Warren, M.D. 1962	Bonnie Shay 1996
Eileen Haviland Finegan 1953	Carol Scudo Delgado 1963	Marilyn Della Pia 1998 SGS
Rosanne Bonner Kendra 1953	Sheila Duffin Gray 1963	Jane Swartz Devlin 2001
Lillian Nash, M.D. 1953	Mary Joan McGonigal Hofmann 1963	Clarissa Vinson-Paramore 2001
Anna Connor O'Riordan, M.D. 1953	Evelyn Galla Bratton 1964	Haidy Krueger Kerber 2005 SGS
Eileen O'Rourke Atkinson 1954	Katherine Magee 1965	
Rose Ann Baron Clarke 1954	Bernadette Bennis Marshall 1965	

Mary Juel Rockwell Boast 1955



Mary Juel Rockwell Boast passed away on April 4, 2026. A member of the Class of 1955, Mary was a steadfast donor to Chestnut Hill College, giving every single year since she graduated. One of her last requests to her daughters was a final donation upon her death. Thank you, Mary Juel! We are so grateful. Rest in peace.

Marlene Segrich Haggerty 1954	Dolores B. Metzke Mitchell 1966	SSJ Deaths January 1, 2026 – June 30, 2026
M. Carol Snyder Collins 1955	Mary Delia Tye Neuman, Ph.D. 1966	Patricia Ann Ash, SSJ
Gwendolyn Feaster Trautwein 1955	Mary Grimley Cornelius 1968	Theresa Cargan, SSJ
Janet Rutan Bowers 1956	Mary Beth McKeon Dacey 1968	Catherine Corrigan, SSJ
Lorraine Sukalski McGlynn 1956	Barbara Hrabrick McQuillen 1969	Saint Herman D'Uve, SSJ
Claudette Marinier Zarra 1956	Judith Lee Rieder 1969	Jane Field, SSJ
Marie Meaney Adolph 1957	Nadine Morse Noble 1970	Clare Halloran, SSJ
		Geraldine Kent, SSJ
		Rosemarie Lorenze, SSJ
		Margaret Ann McFadden, SSJ
		Kathryn Frances McTague, SSJ
		Marie Olwell, SSJ
		Marguerite H. Rivello, SSJ
		Alma Rose Schlosser, SSJ
		Josephine Wade, SSJ

The Institute for Religion and Science

AT CHESTNUT HILL COLLEGE

By Kathleen Duffy, SSJ, Ph.D., Professor Emerita of Physics

Although I loved studying physics in graduate school, its lack of engagement with the spiritual, with the Divine that I experienced during those years left an empty space in my heart. So, when I began teaching at CHC, I kept my eyes and ears open for opportunities to fill the gap, to learn how to make the connection. In the late 1990s, I encountered the Metanexus Institute, a newly-formed organization in the Philadelphia area, founded to help stimulate a dialogue between science and religion. When a friend invited me to serve on its Board, I was delighted. This was the dialogue I longed for and, by attending their sponsored conferences and events, I came in contact with some of the major players of this burgeoning science and religion dialogue. As time went on, I began to dream about establishing such an Institute at Chestnut Hill College and began inviting scholars involved in the dialogue to lecture at the College. The response was wonderful.

In 2010, when Metanexus decided to move its headquarters, the Board felt the need to continue its tradition of providing lectures in the Philadelphia area. This was my chance to allow my dream to come true. The rest is history.

With generous institutional support from Chestnut Hill College and a substantial donation from Metanexus, the Institute for Religion and Science at Chestnut Hill College was launched on May 25, 2011 with a formal dinner and a brilliant lecture by Dr. John Haught, Professor of Theology at Georgetown University. Its Mission: to establish as a Regional Society to promote a dialogue that is both interfaith and multi-science, one that nurtures a “constructive engagement” of Religion/Spirituality and Science/Technology.

Over the years we have offered over 60 lectures with opportunities for attendees and students to interact with the speakers. Most lectures are recorded and can be still found on our YouTube channel.

INSTITUTE FOR RELIGION
AND SCIENCE WEBSITE



OUR LECTURES CAN
BE FOUND HERE



Our monthly Reading Circle is designed to encourage more engaged study of the issues. We read scholars such as Ilia Delio, John Haught, and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, SJ. And my position as president of the American Teilhard Association encourages easy access to co-sponsored events, retreats, and Reading Circles. A weekend conference, “Love at the Heart of the Cosmos,” organized in collaboration with the Omega Center drew 150 participants. Patrick McCauley, Ph.D., Professor of Religious Studies, Chestnut Hill College and Michelle Francé, Ph.D., Professor Emerita of Chemistry, Bryn Mawr College continues as members of the Institute’s Advisory Committee.

Recent Institute events include a series of lectures on Artificial Intelligence with Noreen Herzfeld, Anne Foerst, and Phil Hefner; “Green Saints for a Green Generation” with Libby Osgood, Ph.D. and her coauthors; A tea party to celebrate Michelle Francé’s popular book, *Steeped: The Chemistry of Tea*; “Teilhard and Einstein” with Mickey McGrath, OSFS.

Please join us at 6:30 pm ET on September 23, 2026 for the Howard Kenig Memorial lecture in honor of one of our generous donors. Rabbi Bradley Artson promises to engage us with his lecture, “God of Creation, God of Process: A Jewish Perspective.” 🍷

REGISTER FOR THIS EVENT



Students in the science labs, circa 1940. Photo courtesy of CHC Archive.

The digital version of this magazine is available on the College website at CHC.edu/NEWS

Printed copies of the magazine are mailed to all current and former board members, Hallmark Society members, and any individual or organization who has made a donation to the College in the last three years.



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FOLLOW CHC ON SOCIAL MEDIA
#GRIFFINATION

INAUGURATION WEEKEND EVENTS

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25TH AND SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26TH

Inauguration of the Eighth President

Brian McCloskey, D.M., MBA



SCAN THE CODE OR VISIT [CHC.EDU/INAUGURATION](https://chc.edu/inauguration)