

EXCELSIOR

POST TRAUMATIC STRESS



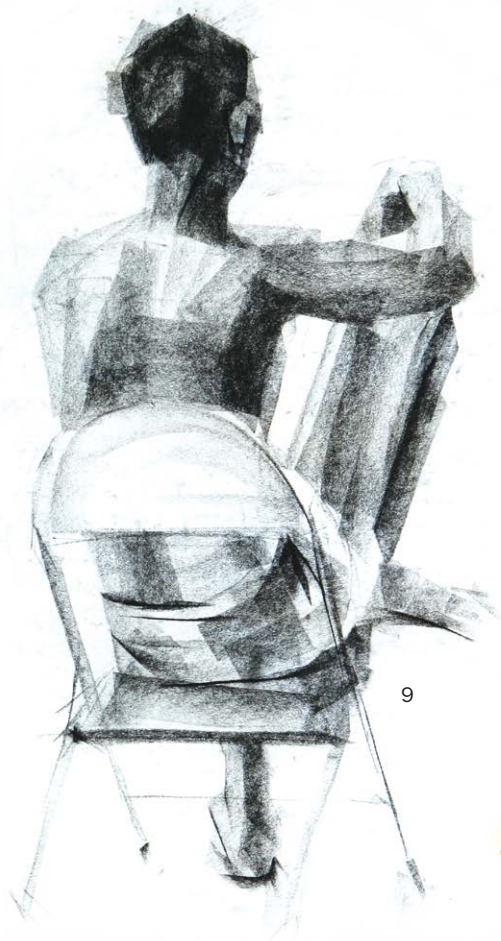
Post-traumatic stress can strike anyone after a life-threatening event,
but it's what you do next that can make the difference p. 16

SNAP SHOT

Mary E. Bowen '12, RN, OCN, CBCN, breast health navigator at St. Peter's Hospital in Albany, New York, was a featured speaker at a Breast Cancer Information Forum sponsored by Excelsior's Wellness Committee in October. Here Bowen shares information with academic advisor and breast cancer survivor Rosemary Durso-Malette. Also on the panel were other local education and resource experts as well as a male breast cancer survivor. Bowen, a graduate of the School of Health Sciences, is enrolled in Excelsior's Master of Science in Nursing and the Graduate Certificate in Nursing Leadership programs.

PHOTO: MIKE HEMBERGER





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ON THE COVER: The teal-colored wristband shows awareness of post-traumatic stress disorder.

PHOTO: MIKE HEMBERGER, PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: NICK KLERCKER



Dr. John F. Ebersole

As I prepare to enter my tenth year as Excelsior's president, I am gratified to see the College's progress and encouraged as I consider the journey still before us.

It is difficult to choose among the many achievements of the College over the past decade. Of those having the greatest impact, the restoration of Title IV financial aid in 2006 and reaccreditation by Middle States in 2012 certainly stand out. Following closely behind, and starting before my arrival, was the commitment to becoming an online provider of instruction, not just an aggregator and assessor of prior learning.

Now, the College is engaged in developing a long-term strategy for its growth and diversification. Leadership agrees the Excelsior of the future will be known for the following:

- The *quality* of what it does, whether developing degree maps, delivering instruction, or assessing learning. I have been asked many times how large we seek to become. My answer has always been the same: "As large as we can be while assuring the quality of what we do."
- The *diversified* nature of its offerings. The College intends to broaden its offerings, reach out to other sources of prospective students (veterans, community college graduates, employers, international institutions, etc.), and create "verticals" of instruction, such as health care, where students can expect both increasing levels of credentialing and continuing professional education over a lifetime.
- While not turning our back on younger students, we will continue to be first and foremost an *adult-serving* institution. Yet, in keeping with our history and mission, we will focus on, and advocate for, those not well served by mainstream higher education, regardless of age.
- We seek to be a *comprehensive* institution that meets the needs of students across a spectrum of professions and vocations.
- We aspire to be seen as both a *national and international institution*.
- Finally, we expect to continue as a *pioneering, pace-setting institution*. Others are doing today what we did through much of our history—aggregation, assessment, awarding degrees based on competency, not seat time, etc. We will continue our experimentation and work to remain a leader in service to adults and the underserved. We will push the boundaries of assessment, experiential learning, new pedagogies and approaches to instructional delivery, and the assembly of credentials—for employment or academic purposes.

Excelsior today is a model for the needs of the 21st century.

Ever upward,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Ebersole", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

EXCELSIOR

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NEW BLOG PROMOTES STUDENT SUCCESS

Success Files, a blog for Excelsior College students, was launched in August 2014. Here instructors offer tips for success in their courses, advisors provide guidance on degree planning and learning services, and students share strategies and resources with their peers.

Success Files has published timely and informative posts from over 20 instructors, advisors, and other staff members. Popular titles have included “Prepare for Exams with Content Guides,” “Courses or Exams?,” “Asking Your Instructor for an Extension,” “Using Zotero for Citations,” “Time Management in an Online Course,” and “Considering Course Registration?” The most recent headlines from the blog appear on students’ MyExcelsior home pages when they log on to the College’s website. Success Files is also publicly available at <http://advisors.excelsior.edu>.

Planning for Success Files began in late 2013 when the Advisor Writing Group explored new avenues for directly supporting student success through their work. Using Excelsior’s faculty blog Faculty Connects as a model, they received a strong endorsement for creating a student success blog from their advising colleagues during the annual Excelsior Advisor Retreat in June 2014.

“Success Files is an important part of our effort to make students more aware of the many resources

and services that are available at Excelsior College,” explains Glenn Braddock, executive director of the Student Success Center. It is an advising and engagement tool that allows faculty and staff across the College to share our collective wisdom with the students we serve.”

Contributions from all members of the Excelsior community are welcomed. If you have an idea for a blog post that will help students reach their personal, academic, or professional goals, submit it by email to successfiles@excelsior.edu. ■

Now Available: An MPA

The School of Public Service recently introduced its second graduate program. The Master of Public Administration curriculum is designed to help prepare students for leadership positions in government and nonprofit organizations. Courses in the 36-credit program cover economics, leadership development, nonprofit management, personnel management, public budgeting, statistical analysis, strategic management, and technology.

Students enrolled in the program will take 24 credits of core courses, generally beginning with Introduction to Public Administration Theory and Practice, to gain a graduate-level understanding of public administration. They must also complete 9 credits of electives and a 3-credit capstone course.

“The program reflects its development by both top academics and practitioners,” says Robert E. Waters, dean of the school. “The MPA will provide strong, relevant courses and opportunities for students to engage in simulations and other hands-on activities. The curriculum, experiences, and networking opportunities provided through the Excelsior MPA will enable students to accelerate their careers and contributions to society. I have been calling this a ‘next level’ degree because I believe it will assist students in meeting their next-level professional aspirations.” ■



Unprecedented Gift to Support Servicemembers and Military Families

A \$100,000 gift from a trustee will support U.S. servicemembers, veterans, or members of their immediate families who are enrolled or seek to pursue degrees at Excelsior College. Jack M. Lafield, chairman and CEO of Caiman Energy II LLC, based in Dallas, established the endowment fund in December to honor his father. It is the largest single endowment gift to Excelsior College.

Scholarships from the endowment fund will be awarded annually, beginning this fall, to enrolled and prospective students based on financial need. The funds can be used toward expenses for courses and exams as well as Excelsior College fees. Servicemembers and veterans who have already used their military benefits or assigned them to a family member are eligible for this assistance, as are their families.

The Colonel William C. Lafield Endowed Scholarship Fund recognizes Lafield's father William Clyde Lafield Jr., who served in the U.S. Army from 1943 to 1971, retiring as colonel. He was in his senior year

at A&M College of Texas, now Texas A&M University, when he and the other members of his class were pulled out of school to serve as officers during World War II. After the war, he was promoted to captain and stationed in France. Later, while stationed at Purdue University in 1955 as a professor of military science, he finished his bachelor's degree in



Lafield

chemical engineering. He taught military logistics at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and in his final post, served at the Pentagon as the chief of supply distribution, U.S. Army. After his retirement from military service, he returned to Texas A&M and earned a master's degree in computer science in 1973.

Of the more than 38,000 enrolled students at Excelsior, 30 percent are active military servicemembers and 10 percent are veterans.

"The new endowment is especially noteworthy because it recognizes the role families play in supporting those who serve," says Vice President for Institutional Advancement Cathy Kushner. "Without that family support, the sacrifices made to serve our country would be unbearable for many servicemembers." ■

NEW EXCELSIOR TRUSTEES

A. Frank Mayadas and Carol A. Vallone have been appointed to Excelsior's Board of Trustees effective January 1.

Mayadas is the retired founding



president of the Online Learning Consortium (formerly the Sloan Consortium) and retired program director of the Alfred P.

Sloan Foundation. He spent 29 years at IBM during which he headed IBM's West Coast research operation and served a term as secretary of the IBM Corporation Management Board. He began working with the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation on the Anytime, Anyplace Learning Initiative in 1992. He went on to found the Sloan Consortium and The Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks (JALN).

Vallone is CEO of Educate Online,



a company that partners with school administrators to improve academic success at all grade levels. She is a seasoned

technology executive with more than 30 years of experience in market-leading companies. Prior to Educate Online, Vallone served as board chair, president, and CEO of Wimba Corporation, a global leader in virtual collaboration software for higher education. In 1999, she founded WebCT Inc., a company that defined and delivered a premier e-learning solution for education.

Departing the board was alumnus Harry L. Staley, who completed his third term in 2014 after nine years of service, including a term as board treasurer. Also stepping off the board was Lyvier Conss. ■

Lawrence Named Dean of School of Business & Technology



Karl Lawrence became dean of the School of Business & Technology on November 1. Previously, he was associate dean. Since joining Excelsior in May 2014, he has led development of a competency-based bachelor's program in business and provided leadership in important curriculum changes in the undergraduate and graduate business degree programs.

Lawrence previously served as chair of the Business and Economics Department at Fort Valley State University. He was an assistant professor of finance at American University of the Middle East and Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University. From 1998 through 2002, he was a finance instructor at Florida State University.

A trained financial economist, Lawrence earned a BA in finance from Florida State University, an MBA from Florida International University, and a PhD in finance from Florida State University. ■

Timmons Leads School of Liberal Arts

George Timmons, associate provost of online education, learning and academic services, was named associate provost of learning and academic services and dean of the School of Liberal Arts, effective March 2. He most recently served as interim co-dean since April 2014. In his new position, he retains the role of associate provost of learning and academic services and will continue to oversee learning services.

Previously, Timmons led development and oversight of the College's online courses, student support services, comprehensive library services, and other academic resources as the associate provost for the Center for Online Education, Learning and Academic Services. He was one of 57 higher education leaders selected as an American Council on Education fellow for the 2012-2013 academic year. Timmons earned a doctorate in higher education administration from Bowling Green State University, a Master in Education from Old Dominion University, and a bachelor's degree from Norfolk State University. ■



COLLEGE FOOTPRINT GROWS

To keep pace with growing support and services, Excelsior recently expanded its physical space at its Albany, New York, headquarters. In the past year, the College purchased a third building, adding another 80,000 square feet to house the School of Health Sciences, the Office of Registration and Records, Financial Aid, Enrollment Management, Finance and Administration, the Office of Information and Technology Services, and the Center for Online Education, Learning and Academic Services. The College also leased another 20,000 square feet of space in the Columbia Circle Office Park building where the School of Nursing and Extended Education are now located.

With the addition of 3 Columbia Circle, Excelsior College now owns three buildings with a total of approximately 142,000 square feet of space to house more than 550 employees. The College also expanded its office in Washington, D.C., home to Excelsior's National Cybersecurity Institute as well as enrollment and military support personnel. ■

COURAGEOUS LEARNERS INSPIRE DOCUMENTARY

There are more than 60 million working Americans who do not have a college degree. Veteran Shawn Jaracz was one of them until he earned a bachelor's degree from Excelsior College in 2013, 26 years after beginning his studies. *Courageous Learning*, a documentary based on the book of the same name by John F. Ebersole, Excelsior College's president, and William B. Patrick (Hudson Whitman/Excelsior College Press, 2011), profiles Jaracz and two other adult learners—a single parent and a nurse—as they pursue their education. Educators and public policy experts weigh in on the challenges facing higher education and the 21st-century workforce. The video was produced by Excelsior College and may be viewed at <http://news.excelsior.edu/watch-courageous-learning/>. ■



Malone to Address Graduates as 2015 Commencement Speaker

Beeverly Malone, PhD, RN, FAAN, chief executive officer of the National League for Nursing, a membership organization that promotes excellence in nursing education, will be the featured speaker at Excelsior's 44th Commencement on July 10 in Albany, New York. She is among America's most vocal leaders in the national conversation about the nursing and nurse educator shortage, and the role of nursing in ensuring access to safe, quality, culturally competent care to diverse patient populations, domestically and globally.

In 2010, the year she was ranked 29 among the 100 Most Powerful People in Healthcare by Modern Healthcare magazine, Malone served on the Institute of Medicine's Forum on the Future of Nursing Education, contributing to the IOM's groundbreaking report, "The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health," and on the Advisory Committee on Minority Health, a federal panel established to advise the U.S. secretary of health and human services.

Malone earned a bachelor's degree in nursing from the University of Cincinnati in 1970. She combined further study with

clinical practice, a master's in psychiatric nursing, and a doctorate in clinical psychology, which she earned in 1981.

Her distinguished career has mixed policy, education, administration, and clinical practice. She has worked as a surgical staff nurse, clinical nurse specialist,



director of nursing, and assistant administrator of nursing. During the 1980s she was dean of the School of Nursing at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. In 1996, she was elected to two terms as president of the American Nurses Association (ANA), representing 180,000 nurses. In 2000, she became deputy assistant secretary for health

within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Just prior to joining the NLN, Malone was general secretary of the Royal College of Nursing (RCN), the United Kingdom's largest professional union of nurses, from June 2001 to January 2007. Malone was also a member of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). ■

COMMENCEMENT 2015

Celebrate the achievements of our graduates and share in the excitement of Commencement on July 10. The ceremony will be broadcast live at www.excelsior.edu/webcast.



College to Award Honorary Doctorate to Duncan

Mary Ellen Duncan, former president of Howard Community College, will be the recipient of an honorary doctor of humane letters at Commencement. She has 35 years of experience in higher education in New York, Connecticut, South Carolina, and Maryland. During her 17-year tenure at Howard, the college completed a \$14 million campaign, quadrupled the student body, and received a number of quality awards at the state and national level.

She now serves as a consultant with the Collaborate Brain Trust, a partner in Synergies Consulting Group Inc., and a leadership coach for Achieving the Dream. Duncan earned a bachelor's degree from St. John's University in English and Education, and a master's and PhD from The University of Connecticut. ■

The Student Becomes the Master: Excelsior Grads Sought for Faculty Positions

After earning a degree from Excelsior, some alumni return to the College—this time as full-time or adjunct faculty. There are more than 40 graduates who serve as faculty, and the College seeks to increase the number of alumni serving in these roles.

"Excelsior College alumni understand the competing priorities our students deal with every day. They understand the balance students must demonstrate to succeed in their academic pursuits, professional careers, and of course, family commitments," says James C. Lettko, interim vice president of human resources at the College. "Our alumni bring a set of skills to our team, learned from their experience as

an Excelsior student. These skills range from time management, prioritization, and academic diligence to understanding our student information and instructional delivery systems."

The desire for hiring alumni is particularly strong in the School of Nursing, as graduates know and understand the College's competency-based model of the associate degree program, and there are both full- and part-time faculty positions open.

Alumni who have thought about instructing might find a good fit at Excelsior. Visit jobs.excelsior.edu and check back often as needs frequently change, suggests Lettko. ■



Crystal Sands

Director of Online Writing Lab

Since Excelsior's innovative Online Writing Lab (OWL) was founded in 2014, it has been an immediate hit with students, faculty, and the general public and recognized with several industry awards, including most recently, the 2015 Award for Outstanding New Technology and/or Delivery System from the Instructional Technology Council. Crystal Sands, director of the OWL, responds to questions regarding the OWL's success.

Q. Are you surprised at how the OWL has taken off?

A. In some ways yes, but in some ways no. When we were working on the project initially, and our team began to develop the plans and ideas for what would make our OWL different, I was pretty sure we were on to something big.

Q. Are there any upcoming enhancements to the OWL you can tell us about?

A. We are wrapping up revisions on a brand-new Argument & Critical Thinking area, which includes sample papers,

logical fallacy instruction, rhetorical analysis, and use of evidence.

We are also in the planning stages of a faculty resource area that would provide support for faculty teaching writing courses as well as faculty who assign writing across the disciplines.

Q. The OWL has received many accolades. Why do you think it's receiving so much attention?

A. I think it's because our team decided to be brave and do something different. It was a risk for sure, but we decided we wanted to do our best to create a learning environment that was both practical and a little fun. Being a strong, rhetorically flexible writer is what we expect of students and graduates, but it is one of the most difficult tasks in the world. You have to be able to think outside of yourself, make inferences, know how to use models and when not to.

Q. There are other OWLs out there. What makes Excelsior's so special?

A. In addition to our warm approach to writing instruction, it's really our multimedia that helps us stand out. Other OWLs are primarily text based and often really difficult for students to navigate. We were also able to create quiz activities that give students a chance to interact and revise texts with errors.

All in all, I think one student user said it best: "It feels like the OWL is on our side." To me, that says it all. We are on students' side and want to help them.

Q. Are there any particular modules that students use more than others?

A. It really varies, and I have been surprised by that variation. We have students and faculty tell us they love Grammar Essentials but others love the Essay Zone. I think Locating Information & Writing with Sources and the Grammar Essentials areas might be the ones I see used most often. I can see how these can apply to so many different courses and so many different situations.

Q. In this era of 140-character Tweets, short-lived Snapchats, and texting lingo that makes up a lot of our contemporary communication, why are formal writing skills even necessary?

A. National research shows that companies across the country need employees who are strong, flexible communicators. I think now, more than ever, writing is a rhetorically demanding task because we have so many situations and so many styles of writing we have to respond to. First and foremost, the OWL is about teaching that rhetorical flexibility. It is key whether you are composing a Tweet or writing a formal report. ■





MIKE HEMBERGER

Baldwin Named VP and Chief of Staff

James N. Baldwin, an advocate for student learning, joined Excelsior College as vice president and chief of staff in September 2014. In this role, he oversees the operations of the Office of the President, provides guidance and support to members of the College's executive staff, and manages particularly high-priority or high-visibility undertakings.

Previously, Baldwin was CEO and district superintendent for Questar III BOCES, an educational service agency supporting 23 school districts in Rensselaer, Columbia, and Greene Counties in New York. He cofounded Tech Valley High School, a school in New York's Capital Region that, through a project-based learning environment, provides students with skills needed for success in the workplace and at institutions of higher learning. His prior positions also include chief of staff in the New York State Education Department and executive deputy secretary of state for New York.

He earned a BA from Union College, a JD from Albany Law School, and an EdD from Teachers College, Columbia University. ■

NOW AT EXCELSIOR LIFE

For more news, go to excelsior.edu/excelsiorlife

NEW ON COMMENTARY

What are the top higher education issues of 2015? Is the collective fear about talking about our own death causing more suffering? What can a Jack Nicholson movie teach us about games and education? Excelsior experts talk about the issues worth talking about.

excelsior.edu/experts

Graduate Spotlight: Felicia Haecker



Felicia Haecker '07 is a volunteer veteran mentor for the Center for Military Education. Hear how military life prepared her for academic success.

excelsior.edu/FeliciaHaecker

WATCH

From Ethical Hacking to Cyber Entrepreneur

DefSec Solutions cofounder and Excelsior graduate student Anna Truss '14 discusses ethical hacking, the benefits of joining the Excelsior "cyber club," and her vision for the future of her company.

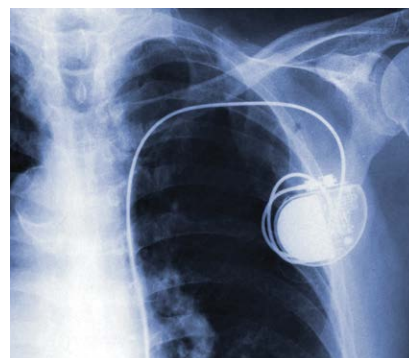
excelsior.edu/AnnaTruss



ED MORNEAULT: AGAINST ALL ODDS

Marine veteran Ed Morneault '13, a student in the MBA program, is facing his greatest battle—the failure of his kidneys—in a way few others could.

excelsior.edu/AgainstAllOdds

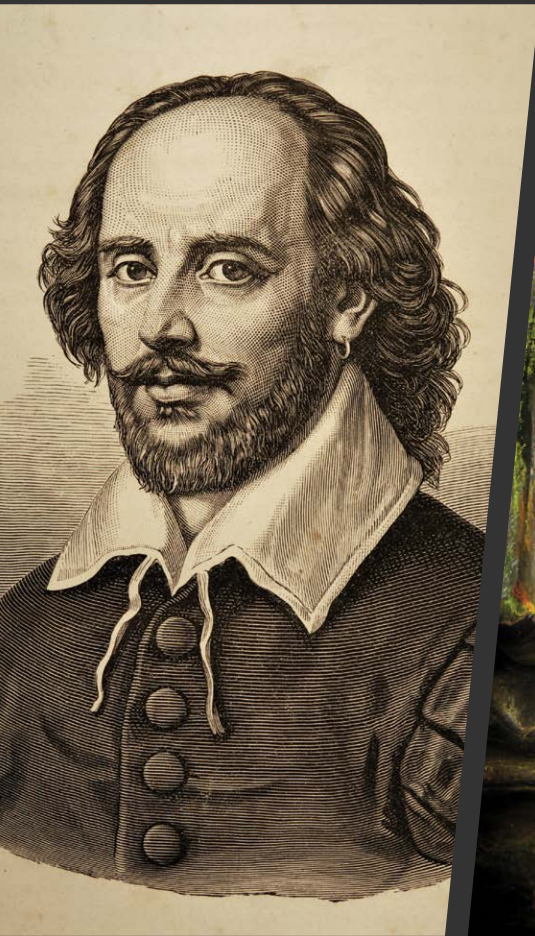


Can You Really Hack a Medical Device?

Hacking pacemakers. Ransomware. Cyber forensics. Science fiction? These are just a few topics explored in this new podcast series from the National Cybersecurity Institute at Excelsior College.

excelsior.edu/TodayinCybersecurity

What Course Had the Greatest Impact on You?



Education can be a transformative experience. A single class during your degree pursuit can often have a great impact, radically changing your perspectives, opening your mind to new ideas, or changing the course of your career. Gathered here are examples of just how life-changing a college course can be. Excelsior alumni, faculty, staff, and even the president, weigh in on the transformational power of learning.

Maribeth Gunner Pulliam,
Director of Career Services

Career Development Theories

INSTITUTION: THE COLLEGE OF SAINT ROSE

A graduate course entitled “Career Development Theories” served as a defining moment in my educational and career trajectory. Although many of my

applications, he taught me to question, compare, and examine all perspectives.

After completing this course, I knew that I had a passion for the field of career development. As passion often does, it empowered and motivated me to continue growth and mastery in the field, and helped me to establish a clear vision of my future professional direction. One course really can make a difference!

Shakespeare and probably did more to instill confidence in me than any other class.

I entered the class as a hesitant and rather shy (scared!) student. During one particular class discussion, I vividly remember the professor asking if he thought Shakespeare was serious in one of the passages we were reading or was poking fun through his language. Student after student felt it was serious; I gathered my courage, raised my hand, and said that I thought it

was very comedic—that I could hear Shakespeare’s humor coming through! The professor was thrilled and asked me to elaborate, at which point I knew I could be successful in this class.

His support and encouragement propelled my newly found love of Shakespeare out of that classroom and into so many other aspects of my education. This class was much more than a degree requirement. It was a total learning experience, from recognizing how to enjoy and interpret Shakespeare to realizing how to successfully and confidently contribute one’s opinions—in meetings, through advising, or in everyday relationships.

Kathy Moran, Ombudsperson
World Religions

INSTITUTION: RUSSELL SAGE COLLEGE

When I was a sophomore in college I took a world religions course that completely changed my perspective. I was raised Catholic and had very little exposure to different religious beliefs. This course opened me up to not only different religions but also different cultures. It made me realize that there are many different views when it comes to religion and that everyone has the right to their own beliefs.

Jeremy Sherman, Academic Advisor, School of Nursing
Adolescent Psychology

INSTITUTION: THE COLLEGE OF SAINT ROSE

After finally coming to terms that a career in the insurance industry was not for me, I applied to The College of Saint Rose in hopes of earning a master’s degree

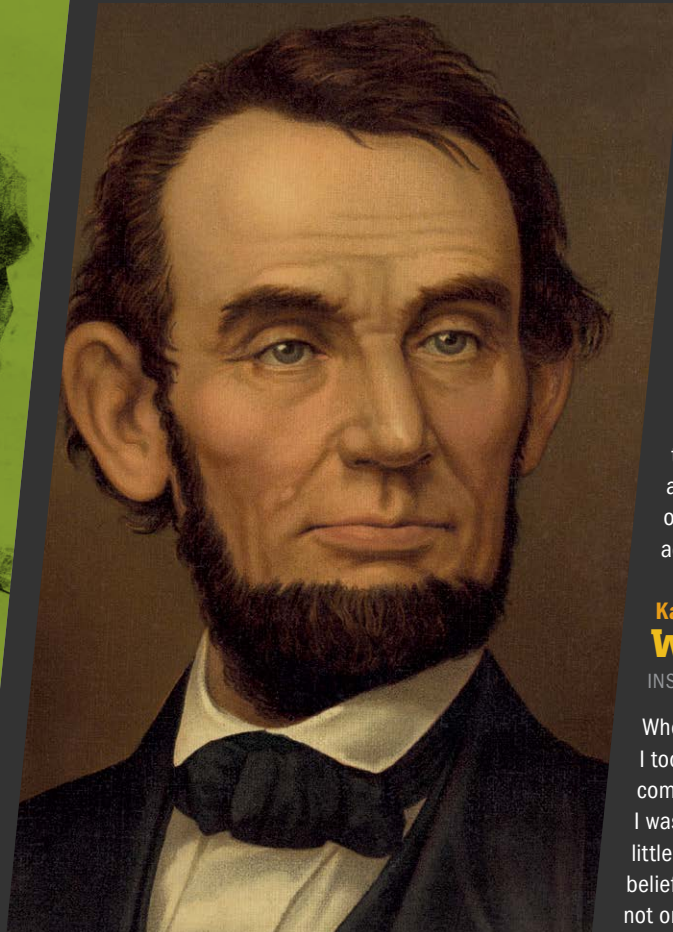
classmates expressed boredom with the course, I could not get enough. For me, the theories all made sense. They provided me with a rational foundation of perspectives and tools that could be used in practice, and serve as a valuable resource for counseling and guiding people who needed assistance in directing their future life paths.

As a bonus to my enjoyment of the career development theory course, I was also lucky enough to have a professor who was an extremely knowledgeable, creative, and supportive instructor. In addition to teaching me about the concepts and

Martha T. Garing, Senior Academic Advisor, School of Liberal Arts
Shakespeare

INSTITUTION: WESTMINSTER COLLEGE

There is no question which class in my undergraduate education had the greatest impact on me; it was a Shakespeare class, required for all English majors at Westminster College. I had put off taking the class as long as I could, since I was honestly terrified of it! However, this class totally changed my perceptions of



so I could become a high school history teacher. During my first semester, I took a course in adolescent psychology. I immediately immersed myself into the course content and the various identity development theories used to explain and understand the multitude of challenges that teenagers face in their transition to adulthood. As an openly gay man, I was extremely enlightened to learn about sexual identity development theories and gain a greater understanding of the struggles faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender teenagers in their coming out process.

I not only wanted to help guide young adults in their journey to achieve their dreams and academic goals, I also wanted to be an advocate for underrepresented students.

Now that I work in higher education, I continue to learn from colleagues and those who have a passion for serving underrepresented student populations. I find it to be a truly rewarding career. To this day, I am very thankful for taking that adolescent psychology course as it has laid the foundation for my career and the person I am today.

John F. Ebersole, President
American Civil War

INSTITUTION: UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

For me, the most impactful course was an undergraduate one at the University of Virginia on the American Civil War. I have attended some 14 colleges/universities in my academic life, from Long Beach City College to Oxford. What was so very different about this UVA course was the role of the instructor. Dr. Henriques (a name I remember from 1970) was without a doubt the most accomplished teacher, from depth of knowledge to presentation, that I have ever learned from. He could take on the persona of such important figures of the time as Lincoln, Davis, etc. and reveal their humanness, their failures and weaknesses, as well as the strengths that brought them to the history books. He was a teacher

with such a passion for his subject that he brought it to life for his students, having us anxiously awaiting the next week's class.

The impact of this course was to create a lifelong interest in one of the most tragic *and* transforming times in American history. I can trace my growing collection of rare and antique Civil War books to the interest that this exceptional instructor instilled in me.

Finally, I viewed Dr. Henriques' masterful performance as a model that I have tried to replicate in my own teaching. I have yet to rise to his level, but I intend to continue trying.

Michael Gladden, BS '05, MBA '10
Vice President, Technology, Chequed.com
Operations Management

INSTITUTION: EXCELSIOR COLLEGE

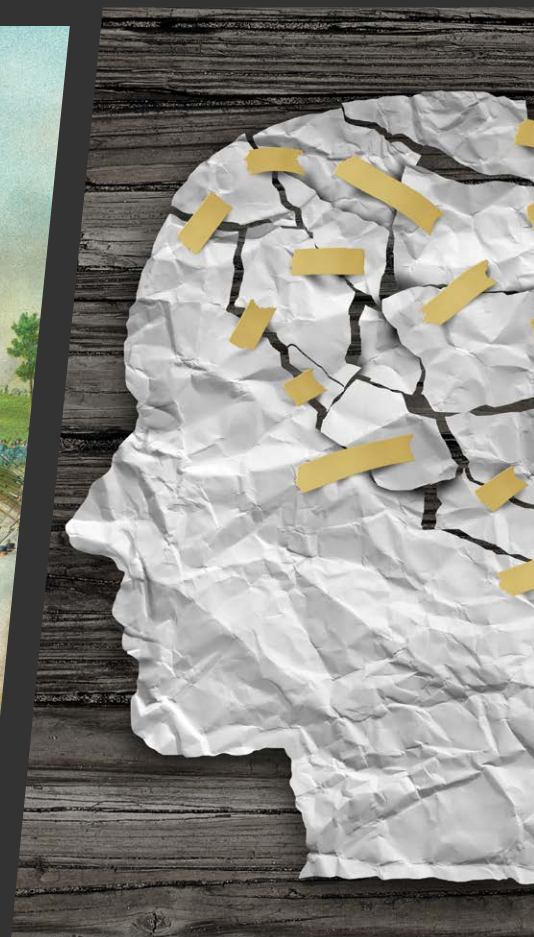
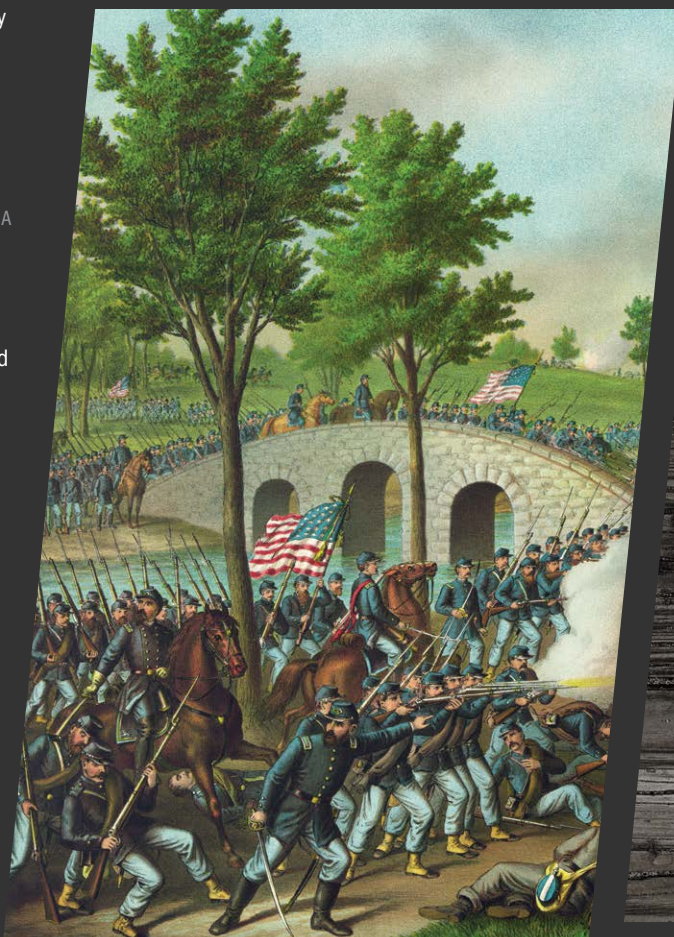
The material [in Operations Management] was new and challenging for me. It required going over and above the typical class and doing more than just reading the book

and doing the exercises. Since it was my most challenging class, I needed to do extra work and spend more time looking for ways to understand the material. At the time I participated in the class I regularly asked where and how I would ever use the material. As my career has grown, I have found many applications for how to apply the material. Learning the material has given me tools to use on the job that I would not have had before, [to] help others to understand complex prioritization of work, as well as provide additional insight that I can use to help younger people in their personal and professional lives.

Sandra Dutton, Faculty,
School of Liberal Arts
Life Drawing

INSTITUTION: INDIANA UNIVERSITY

At Indiana University, I took Life Drawing from William Bailey, who a decade later had one of his paintings featured on the cover of Newsweek. He was known as the



best artist in the department, but I also found him to be the best teacher I had in college. He stayed with his classes for the entire three hours, running drills like a coach. We would begin with 10-second gesture drawings, move up to 30-second, then graduate, eventually, to a two-hour drawing. ... Every line, he taught, had to have a purpose. If it didn't, it shouldn't be there. (It was a lot like writing, I realized later. Every word should be pulling its own weight.)

His critiques were tough but never sarcastic. ... He would first ask, after we'd tacked our drawings to the wall, "What do you see that you like?" We'd mention the curve of a hip or a long, sinuous line that had captured a certain pose, and then we'd go on to what could be improved. (As an English teacher, I run critiques of papers the same way, first asking students to find what they like, and then moving on to what can be improved.)

I think I learned more from him than from any other teacher I had in college. But it wasn't just drawing I learned:

I learned a method of working and critiquing that forms the basis of my teaching: a paring down of form to the essential.

Emilsen Holguin, BS '07, MBA '10,
Associate Provost of Academic Operations
Oral Communication

INSTITUTION: NASSAU COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Oral Communication class at Nassau Community College was a transformative experience. Throughout this class, I discovered the power of words, and the challenges of understanding each other. I came to realize how our cultural background and personal experiences give meaning to the words we use and turn them into the building blocks of our own world. This awareness has transferred to all areas in my life.

Christopher Davidson, Faculty,
School of Liberal Arts

Sociology 96:
Community
Internship

INSTITUTION: HARVARD UNIVERSITY

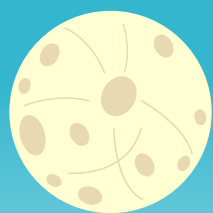
Sociology 96: Community Internship helped me make the connections between academics and daily life. I was a junior at Harvard College, and it was 1989 — a time when it seemed that the world as we knew it was crumbling along with the Berlin Wall. Even as the crowds from walled-off

Eastern Europe were embracing capitalism in Europe, I was volunteering at a nonprofit organization called Centro Presente in Boston where refugees from civil wars in Central America were taking refuge, learning English and applying for political asylum in cases that they were likely to lose because a conservative district court did not want to recognize them as victims of political violence by right-wing governments supported by the United States. My job was to help put legal cases together, but my goal in volunteering was to write a research paper on the life trajectories of Central American refugees, and to figure out why they had come to the United States. Well, it turned out that I was treading on dangerous ground, and my interviews with the staff and clientele at Centro Presente were considered intrusive and disrespectful. I lost my opportunity to volunteer there full-time over the summer because I had offended too many people, and I learned that when you do research, you have *got* to be careful that everyone you are studying is on board. However, I also developed a lifelong interest in qualitative research.

Gary McClain, Faculty, School
of Health Sciences
Developmental
Psychology

INSTITUTION: ALBION COLLEGE

I took a course in developmental psychology as an undergraduate at Albion College. I can honestly say that it made me fall in love with the subject of adult development. Fortunately, the professor was interested in life transitions. I ended up doing an internship in gerontology as an undergraduate and ultimately completed my doctorate in adult education, with a dissertation focusing on career transitions. It is fascinating to me how taking a class can open up a whole world of passion and possibilities. It's a reminder of how important our jobs are as teachers! ■



TAKE ME TO YOUR LEADER

Understanding the need to influence shouldn't be an alien concept—all can benefit from leadership training

BY DANA YANULAVICH



Leadership is a hot topic. Whether you're the CEO of a large company, the president of a college, responsible for a work project, or a parent, there are many benefits to gaining an understanding of leadership principles. Believe it or not, you need not be in an official position of authority to take advantage of leadership skills. The concepts that help a Fortune 500 company soar may very well be the same ones that guide your personal life and your professional success.

It's been a perennial concern in business, industry, and education, and investing in leadership training and development continues to be on the top of many an organization's to-do list. Research shows that high-performing companies spend more on leadership education, giving rise to the belief that investment in training pays off handsome dividends. According to the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM),

businesses with highly developed leadership programs are 12 times more effective at increasing growth compared to those with weak leadership programs. SHRM also reports that U.S. companies have increased their leadership development spending by an average of 14 percent for two years in a row. And with baby boomers vacating leadership positions at an increasing rate due to retirement, the need for effective, involved, and engaged leaders has never been greater.

With so much emphasis on the importance of developing leaders, it should come as no surprise that a plethora of courses and approaches also exist at the academic level. Excelsior College Magazine discussed the topic in depth with faculty members in the schools of Business & Technology, Liberal Arts, Health Sciences, and Nursing, and while there are many surprising similarities among the curricula, there is some content specific to each discipline. ►

Offering expert insight into the topic are faculty members Van Hartmann, School of Liberal Arts; Oscar Garcia, School of Health Sciences; Kathleen Morgan, School of Nursing; and Robin Berenson, School of Business & Technology.



We all can't be or want to be leaders, so why is it important to study leadership?

HARTMANN: If you're in a classroom, certainly with students, you're necessarily a leader at the moment and you need to be able to probably use some of the same principles you'd use if you're in the United Nations or president of the United States.

I think to some extent we all have a responsibility to be leaders in occasional spheres of life where we're called upon to influence others or to speak our mind, or to challenge some system or authority.

MORGAN: Every nurse should have to be a leader. Nursing needs to take a leadership role in the Affordable Care Act and in the future of nursing, and the future of health care. I think the major principles of nursing and leadership are the same if you are a nurse or in business; however, for nursing, I agree, a lot of nurses don't see their role as a leader, but what they have to realize is they have to be. They have to be a real advocate for patient care.

GARCIA: The more students that get exposed to that [leadership classes], the better the practitioner they're going to be, whether they're a formal leader or not.

BERENSON: We're all leaders, but we don't think we're leaders in many ways. Think about a family. In a family, the parents are really leaders. You may not want or aspire to be in a leadership position, if you will, but leadership's not about positions. It's the ability to influence. You may be tasked to chair a committee, whether it's a small committee or if it's a larger committee, so all of a sudden, you're put into this role that you have to organize all the people, find their strengths, and get a goal accomplished.



What do you see as emerging trends and challenges in leadership?

HARTMANN: I think one of the emerging trends in leadership has to do with the ability to be able to respond flexibly to different cultural values within your population. There's also been a shift ... to a fuller understanding of how you influence people but also how you teach people and how you bring people along.

GARCIA: It is critical to the quality of the decision we make; whether we are in a clinician role, supportive role, or a formal position of leadership.

Most people do not understand that leadership is indeed a specialty! Leadership roles have evolved significantly. Regulatory influence, pay-for-performance initiatives, and many other best practices drive the decisions that we make every day. Without undertaking formal leadership coursework, graduates are unaware of the drivers that impact the decisions they will have to make every day.

BERENSON: [Another emerging trend] is the multi-generational workforce. So we have generations that have different styles of behaving and different needs and different motivations for being there. That adaptability and flexibility is: The leader has to understand self but also has to understand that one style of leadership doesn't always work in every situation, that they have to understand their followers and how their needs contribute to how you lead, and they have to understand the situation.

MORGAN: I think you have to take into consideration what's going on in people's personal lives, [but] you don't want to be drawn into the drama of it.



How can we develop our inner leader?

HARTMANN: There's a triad, perhaps—first, it's to try to develop the courage to speak out, [second,] step forward, but not step forward mindlessly as a way of just promoting ourselves, but presumably to step forward from a position of self-knowledge, and third, to develop empathy, understanding, and compassion for others.

MORGAN: I think they can cultivate it ... You also need to give people you work with every day a clear vision of what you're going to accomplish today. If you don't do that, then people are just doing things and not understanding why they're doing it, and not feeling connected.

BERENSON: Part of it is constantly challenging yourself in also asking for feedback from others. It's the willingness to accept that feedback, I think. It may not be something you want to hear, but it's something that you need to self-reflect upon. You have to be open ...

GARCIA: Engage. Try to read, review real-life scenarios, real leadership. [Students should] ask questions of their instructors. Look for case scenarios where something went wrong and how it was overcome. How can I help you with this project (volunteer)? Embrace opportunities

to engage and to move up their career ladder, professionally or philosophically. Ask questions of why am I here.



What skills does an effective leader possess?

GARCIA: Leadership 101 is that no leader can do it on their own.... A leader stimulates others to follow them, promotes growth, helps people succeed.

BERENSON: Good leaders are humble. The best thing to happen to a leader is to fail, and learn from it. Jim Collins, author of “Good to Great and Built to Last,” talks about Level 5 leaders. The differentiator is personal will and humility. Collins also suggests that: You’ve got to get the right people on the bus, because once you get the right people on the bus, the bus will take off. Some buses aren’t meant for certain people, so you have to know yourself—what motivates you, what are your values, and how your values link to the organization’s values, and a lot of time we don’t do a good job of communicating that.

MORGAN: You have to have vision, you have to know where you are going, you have to be able to share that vision in a way that people want to help accomplish that vision and they know why they’re doing things. And I think, most of all, it comes down to respect. I think respect is number one.

HARTMANN: Leaders have to project some balance of both self-confidence and openness to the opinions of others.



Any additional thoughts on the importance of leadership?

MORGAN: I think number one, you have to be true to yourself and you have to make sure that you’re working at a place with a mission and vision that lines up with your own. Because if you don’t and you’re a leader and you’re trying to influence other people, it’s not authentic. People won’t believe you and it doesn’t ring true and you won’t influence toward that mission. So, number one, I think you have to make sure you’re in alignment with what you’re doing. And you have to be very respectful of that mission and I think you have to be very respectful of the people you’re working with no matter what their level is within the organization.

HARTMANN: The world is changing, both technologically and culturally, and I think that leaders have to know you can’t lead if you don’t keep on top of whatever

You may not want
or aspire to be in a
leadership position,
if you will, but
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— Robin Berenson

subject might be involved. If you’re perceived as lacking important knowledge, you’re going to lose the faith of your followers. And yet in this very complicated world, you can’t be an expert on everything. You also have to know how to delegate and [understand your] limits of the knowledge, but you do need to keep fundamental knowledge in place, and I think that’s becoming a more complicated process.

GARCIA: I think that the most valuable skill is knowing the basic need of being respectful and being professional and not just with your clients but with the people you lead.

I think the most important skill you will learn from formal leadership courses is how to treat those you lead! It is important to understand that there is a fine line between people who underperform and the overachiever. Understanding people, and the tools required to lead, is important. You must understand that at a minimum there are tools for you to be an effective leader from that perspective—managing the human resource. Learn how to lead people and if people follow you, I think that’s the greatest tool you can have.

BERENSON: You need to have a mission and vision which can be enacted and espoused.... I also use the example of a symphony and an orchestra. The leader’s sort of like the conductor. We all have this sheet of music, we all have different parts, we all have different roles, but somehow I have to make this beautiful music come out. ■



Mending this psychological *injury* begins with awareness of its prevalence and impact



BY DANA YANULAVICH

“I just thought I was losing my mind.”

That’s how Jenny described her symptoms. Simply putting one foot in front of the other seemed like an insurmountable task. Yet to many, her life may have seemed from outward appearances to be enviable. After all, she was a doctor’s wife who worked side-by-side with her husband of 28 years.

But what most didn’t know, including for a time Jenny herself, was that she was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). One of the triggers for this condition is exposure to a traumatic, life-threatening event, and while it is often associated with military servicemembers and veterans, there are non-combat situations that can contribute to developing this disorder.

Take Jenny, for example. Her name may not be real, but her situation is. A pseudonym for an actual upstate New York individual, Jenny bravely agreed to share her story with students in Excelsior’s course, PBH 346 Post Traumatic Stress Disorder: A Gathering Storm, which launched in March 2014.

Post-traumatic stress disorder is an anxiety ailment, according to course designer Craig Owens, a licensed clinical social worker. An incident that threatens an

individual’s life or the life of those who the person cares about can be the catalyst to an onslaught of debilitating symptoms. “There’s any number of ways a person can develop it, because there’s so many things that threaten someone’s life,” Owens adds.

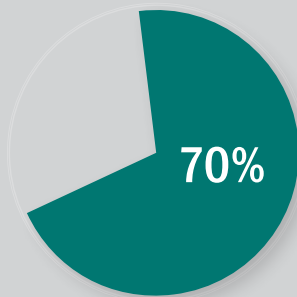
PTSD is diagnosed if two key conditions are met, according to Anna Zendell, faculty program director in the School of Health Sciences, who also helped design the course. “One is that a person needs to be exposed to or witness a traumatic event, and that event needs to be something that there’s a perception, a very strong perception, of impending death, injury, or harm to oneself or to others. The other [condition] is basically [the] feelings that go along with it—the feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, and inability to cope or to deal with the event and the outcome,” she explains. The genesis of the course came from a class that Zendell was teaching on chronic illness. Here 25 percent of students chose PTSD as a chronic condition to research further, giving her an indication of just how prevalent and pervasive the condition can be.

In the United States alone, more than half of all Americans will be exposed to at least one traumatic event in their lifetime. These situations can range from events ripped from the front-page news such as military battles and large-scale natural disasters to more individualized events such as car or industrial accidents, or sexual assaults. Children and teens aren’t immune to PTSD

either; statistics show that three to five percent of girls and one to six percent of boys exposed to a traumatic event may develop the disorder. In Jenny's case, it was her husband's constant threat of committing suicide that led to the classic PTSD symptoms of re-experiencing the traumatic event, avoidance of things that reminded her of the incident, and living in a state of hyper arousal.

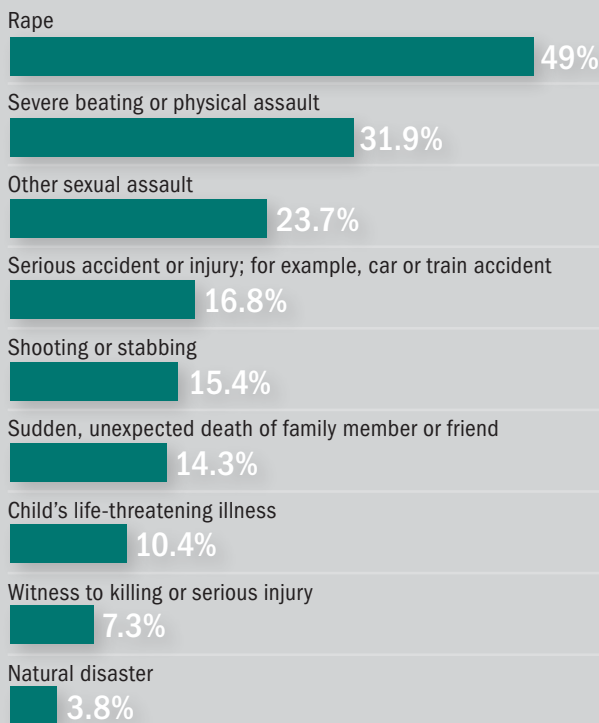
"In 2000, my husband of 28 years tried to commit suicide for the first time, and he continued to try different methods until 2002 when he completed suicide," explains Jenny. "And it is a very traumatic thing, not only for me, [but also for] my family, my children; it is just a very stressful time. I didn't really know how to deal with it."

"PTSD can really strike anyone. It doesn't respect cultural lines, socio-economic status; anyone can get it." - ANNA ZENDELL



An estimated 70 percent of adults in the United States have experienced a traumatic event at least once in their lives.

The estimated risk for developing PTSD for people who have experienced the following traumatic events is:



SOURCE: THE PTSD ALLIANCE - WWW.PTSDALLIANCE.ORG

While Jenny was consumed with the fear that her husband might take his own life, she was terrified that he might take hers as well. Living under the veil of her husband's constant threats of self-harm took its toll on Jenny's psyche. "... I was driving up a one-way street the wrong way and I just started crying... I knew what I was going through, but I wasn't sure how I was handling it."

For Tanya Whitney '86, '91, of Sorrento, Louisiana, it wasn't a single traumatic event that led the retired Army master sergeant to develop PTSD. "In the span of three years I deployed seven times on short notice. A couple of those, I received a phone call and was on an airplane within 2-3 days overseas. In talking with health care providers, it seems as though the nature of my deployments, the missions being conducted, some of which continue to be classified, and the events surrounding personnel I worked closely with culminated in the condition," she explains.

As the National Guard's fixed wing maintenance supervisor, Whitney worked on a daily basis with deployed units and personnel who were wounded or killed. Her 27-year military career included being on high alert from the events of 9/11 to the day she retired in 2010. "So basically for 10 years I was dealing with events that required extreme focus, awareness of death and destruction, and a constant 'adrenaline high,'" she recounts. In a span of six months, two fellow soldiers committed suicide, three were injured when an aircraft was hit with enemy fire, and she also knew three of 12 soldiers killed when a helicopter was shot down.

Research has shown that PTSD is different for men and women. Women, for example, are more than twice as likely as men to develop it in their lifetimes. And the symptoms may present themselves differently, too. According to the National Center for PTSD, men have more trouble controlling anger than women and are more likely to have trouble with alcohol and drug abuse. Women, on the other hand, are more prone to experience

anxiety and depression, and to feel jumpy and have trouble feeling emotions. “In my case, symptoms manifested outwardly as intense anger, anxiety, impatience, lack of sleep, and panic attacks,” explains Whitney. And inwardly, she suffered with severe depression, nightmares, solitude, despair, and thoughts of suicide.

“PTSD can really strike anyone. It doesn’t respect cultural lines, socio-economic status; anyone can get it,” observes Zendell. And that fact helped shape the course’s broad view of the subject, which ranges from theoretical perspectives to PTSD caused by natural disasters and interpersonal trauma to cultural influences and societal impact, as well as effective treatments. The course attracts many servicemembers, with the average class roster comprising 98 percent active-duty or veteran students according to Zendell. Though only one module comprehensively covers combat-related PTSD, the course integrates the military perspective throughout.

Military students, however, sometimes struggle with the concept that civilians can experience PTSD, explains Owens. He says they ask, “Can someone really get post-traumatic stress who hasn’t had a gun in their face or watched a friend be blown up, or lose their limbs?” But through the depth of the curriculum, they learn that there’s more to it. “It takes them a while, but then, they get there, and they’re like ‘wow, I can see this now. I can see why an auto accident could cause the same long-term effect,’” Owens adds.

With 5.2 million adults suffering from PTSD each year, according to the National Center for PTSD, raising awareness is an important mission. “It can be such a debilitating thing for an individual and family to deal with, and it doesn’t have to be,” Owens says, noting there are many top treatments available to help alleviate symptoms. And one of the most important steps is to offer help early on, an attribute he calls psychological first aid.



▲ During more than 27 years in the U.S. Army, Excelsior graduate Tanya Whitney was an aircraft maintenance repairer and supervisor. She served in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom, and her experiences contributed to a diagnosis of PTSD.

◀ Whitney began volunteering as a track and field coach at her daughter’s high school in Louisiana as a form of therapy, and is passionate about helping teenagers reach their potential. Here she assists two students with finding the grip on the pole for a vaulting drill.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF
TANYA WHITNEY

First-responders such as police and firefighters have specific roles to play when confronting a trauma-inducing disaster: EMTs tend to the injured, firefighters put out fires, police provide crowd control, for examples. Yet the victims can often be left hungry for information. That's where bystanders or other concerned individuals can administer psychological first aid, reassuring those affected that help is on the way and measures are being taken to handle the situation. "Those kinds of supportive interventions immediately following a traumatic event can make a big difference in the number of people who are able to recover without long-term symptoms," explains Owens.

"I consider PTSD an injury, an emotional and physiological injury. It's more like getting a broken bone or getting hurt in an accident. Because if we consider it an injury, then we can get treatment, and we can get help for it." - CRAIG OWENS

Early interventions and psychological first aid can be preemptive, but what happens to those who can't benefit from those first-line resources? Treatment options and pharmaceutical approaches also exist for those who develop PTSD. According to Owens, there are three widely accepted therapies (in addition to or in lieu of medication management) that have been proven to help: cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), prolonged exposure therapy, and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR). CBT is a means for the patient to work together with the therapist to set goals and actions in addressing a problem. Here the relationship between thoughts and feelings is examined and a plan is developed to address and mitigate the negative feelings. Prolonged exposure therapy is used in a controlled, safe setting, where the patient is gradually re-exposed to the event by talking about it. By continually going through different levels of exposure, the goal is to take away the power of the event. In EMDR, the newest option, bilateral eye movement is employed as the individual recalls the traumatic event, helping them to reprocess the situation and reduce its impact.

In addition to formal treatments, individuals with PTSD may find help through support groups and other

activities. Even so, the road to recovery may not always be a straight path, as Whitney discovered. Once retired, she found that her civilian job was also contributing to her PTSD, so in consultation with her husband, she left that position. "I began slowly volunteering with different veterans groups and at my daughter's high school. As I became more comfortable and my medications started balancing out my symptoms, I started enjoying getting out more," she explains. She also became active with groups such as the Wounded Warrior Project and Team RWB. While she still weathers some rough patches, she has found help through private Facebook support groups and through mental health resources. "Knowing someone is always there to help or listen if needed is sometimes enough to get through the bad days," she says.

Just as medication was one avenue that helped Whitney, Jenny found support there, too, as well as through counseling and volunteering with the Suicide Foundation. "It is a very long journey. I don't think I have completely healed, but I can deal with it, and I am in a better place in my life than I was before," she says.

Even though proven therapies exist, sometimes one of the biggest challenges is admitting you have a problem and reaching out for help. "People often tend to internalize it and assume that they're the problem and not realize that that's where the issue comes in," explains Owens. And the stakes are high: untreated symptoms can lead to family breakups, job loss, homelessness, and drug and alcohol abuse. In the military, especially, those who may be experiencing symptoms need to break through the stigma of being seen as weak or the negative feelings associated with mental illness.

Fortunately, in recent years PTSD has received increased awareness, acceptance, and treatment support. While disorder is the accepted name for PTSD, Owens argues for a more hopeful terminology, one that promises treatment and recovery. "I consider PTSD an injury, an emotional and physiological injury," he asserts. "It's more like getting a broken bone or getting hurt in an accident. Because if we consider it an injury, then we can get treatment, and we can get help for it."

Zendell offers her support to a hopeful paradigm. "People who have PTSD are not helpless; they may feel helpless at times, but they're not," she asserts. "People can live very successfully with PTSD, even if it doesn't go away permanently for some people—and it doesn't for everybody. The symptoms can be managed, and people can live productive lives and they really can thrive." ■

The PERFECT PITCH



BY MARIBETH GUNNER PULLIAM

HAVE A MINUTE? That's all you need to deliver an effective elevator speech, a personal branding statement that highlights your professional background, knowledge, and skills. Typically no more than 30–60 seconds, it quickly and clearly identifies who you are, why you are unique, and what benefits you can offer—in short, why you are the ideal candidate for a desired position. ►

A well-honed elevator speech can leave a memorable first impression and open the door to your next job or career.

The term “elevator speech” earned its moniker based upon the scenario of a chance meeting in an elevator in which you encounter a key individual who could be the conduit for your next job or career. How would you best promote your exceptional value to this captive audience while sharing a short elevator ride to the top floor?

Being prepared with a polished elevator speech is a perfect way to spotlight your experience, skills, and accomplishments anytime, anywhere—not just in an elevator. This persuasive pitch is a useful, versatile job search and networking tool that can be leveraged in a variety of settings. Professionally, it can be used when meeting with leadership in the workplace, conversing at networking events, or introducing yourself at a job interview. Personally, there are also ample opportunities to use your speech through casual conversations at the gym, kids’ sports events, or at a neighborhood gathering. Your personal infomercial can be used with virtually any individual who may have the ability to assist you in landing the perfect position.

Before you can soundly convince someone that you are the ideal candidate, you’ll need to prepare. Use these tips to help craft a successful, customized elevator speech:

- ▶ Know yourself. Draft an inventory of your best personal attributes, key strengths, and accomplishments. Define what contributions you can make, and what problems you can solve.
- ▶ Identify your unique selling proposition. Determine your competitive advantage in the workplace. What do you offer that others do not?

▶ Know your purpose. What is your goal? Are you seeking a new job, changing careers, or in search of advancement?

▶ Tailor your speech. Focus your message on the needs of the potential employer or targeted industry. Your audience will want to know what’s in it for them.

▶ Format your speech. Draft a written version, using these suggested guidelines:

- ▶ Introduce yourself. Identify your current field and/or position.
- ▶ Explain why you are interested in the company or industry.
- ▶ Illustrate your unique selling points, your strengths, experience, education, and proven accomplishments. Describe how these will benefit the employer.
- ▶ Wrap up your speech with a call to action. Express your purpose in relaying your information, be it a request for a referral, a future meeting, or a job interview.
- ▶ Provide your contact information and thank them for their time.

▶ Practice. Read your pitch aloud. Your delivery should be natural, conversational, and sincere. Try rehearsing in front of a mirror, or with a friend or family member. Ensure your speech is within the 30–60-second parameter.



A well-honed elevator speech can leave a memorable first impression and open the door to your next job or career. Be ready with your elevator speech when the opportunity presents itself. Remember, too, as your career progresses, you’ll want to update your speech to reflect your most current experience and credentials. ■

Maribeth Gunner Pulliam, MS Ed, is the director of career services at Excelsior College. She can be reached at careerinfo@excelsior.edu.



Excelsior.edu/career



Facebook.com/ECCareerCenter

LAYING IT ON THE TABLE

Motivated to help his community, Tommy Hays '13 follows his passion and develops a surgical technologist training program at his local hospital



COURTESY OF THE CHEROKEE NATION

BY DANA YANULAVICH

What would drive someone to quit his job and use the majority of his life savings to gain the knowledge necessary to fulfill his dreams? *Passion.*

At least that's how Tommy Hays '13 describes it. Hays resigned from his position as a surgical technologist in 2008 after 12 years at W.W. Hastings Hospital in north-eastern Oklahoma. He then traveled around the United States to educate himself so he could realize his vision of helping others. Within a year of making this bold move, Hays designed and wrote the curriculum for the surgical technologist training program at Hastings and welcomed students to its first class. His efforts were recognized in 2014 when he was named New Instructor of the Year by the national Association of Surgical Technologists.

Located in a rural area in the foothills of the Ozark Mountains, Hastings Hospital has 60 beds and four operating rooms. The facility, once a government-run Indian hospital, now operates under the direction of the Cherokee Nation, which took ownership in 2008. Located in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, a small city of nearly 16,000 and the capital of both the Cherokee Nation and the United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians, the hospital serves primarily Native Americans. Hays grew up in Tahlequah, and although he moved to Tennessee at age 12, he returned to his roots at 25.

Hays admits he took a risky path to start the program. "It literally could have gone under for me, but I had such strong passion and desire to do this for my Native American people—the Cherokee—and it's been a success." He was also honored with a Cherokee Nation Health Services Outstanding Achievement Award in 2014.

Surgical technologists play a vital role in the hospital—they prepare operating rooms, arrange equipment, and pass instruments and supplies to surgeons during an operation. With advanced training, they may also manipulate tissue, cauterize, or help suture. While initially studying to be an RN at Bacone College, Hays began his health-care career as a hospital orderly and then as an LPN at Muskogee Regional Hospital in Muskogee, Oklahoma, before his love of anatomy and pathology directed his sights on the operating room.

“I have known Tommy since '97, and he's always been very passionate about surgical technologists,” explains Patti Sumner, director of Hastings' Surgical Technology Program. “We both work at the hospital together and we noticed there was a problem with getting people to come to this rural area to be surgical technologists, and so he came up with the idea of educating Cherokee people to take care of Cherokee people.”

Hays takes pride not only in the training program, but also in the knowledge that he's exposing students to the health sciences and starting them on a path to a profession. Hays explains, “One of the most important things is that I'm Native American—I'm Cherokee—and I remember back in the day when we would have to hire outside help to work in our Indian health facility. I always had this dream and this passion, this vision of ‘how come I can't educate my own people to fill this operating room’ so that's what really got me started in creating this program.”

The training program at Hastings admits 10 students a year. Hays teaches microbiology, anatomy, surgical techniques, surgical anatomy, and the lab where mock surgeries are performed. The program has charted successful outcomes, and Sumner shares that every student from the past two classes became AST National Honor Society recipients and earned impressive results on national certification exams.

“Mr. Hays has put many days, even nights, into this program to make it as perfect as possible for us students,” says one of the more than 20 students he has successfully guided through the program. “He has gone completely out of his way to teach us anything and everything we will need to know, and more, to become successful in this field.”

Sumner adds that Hays brings passion to the program, and a depth of knowledge. Attesting that he's one of the smartest people she knows, she observes that his knowledge is complemented by a caring attitude—one

that encompasses both people and procedures. “A lot of times in the world, people are there for the paycheck; he's not. He's there because he cares about people and he cares whether things are done correctly or not.”

This care extends beyond his immediate sphere of influence as a surgical technologist instructor. Hays also served on the Oklahoma State Assembly of Surgical Technologists and its board of directors where he helped lead the drive to pass a mandatory certification bill to regulate surgical technologists. According to Hays [and as of publication], there are 12 states that require certification, and Oklahoma has yet to pass that legislation.

A disabled veteran, Hays served as a rifleman in the Marine Corps. He used his military education benefits to complete a Bachelor of Science in liberal arts at Excelsior. Learning about the College was a family affair for him—his mother, Wanda Brown, graduated in 1989

with an associate degree in nursing. Initially, he planned to follow in her footsteps and earn a nursing degree but decided instead to work toward a bachelor's degree. In 2020, he explains, all surgical technologists programs will lead to an associate degree, and in order to teach at that level, a bachelor's degree is required.

Hays points out that a surgical technologist's job can be physically demanding, and coupled with two knee surgeries from an injury sustained in the Marine Corps, he had to come up with a new way to share his occupational passion. Teaching, then, was a great option. “I put 18 years on that table and it puts a lot of wear and tear on your body,” he explains. “It's not only mental, it's physical, too. It was time for me to get off the table and do something different, something that would allow me to keep working.”

While instilling passion in his students, Hays emphasizes the role of the patient. A surgical technologist is a patient advocate. “The patient's the customer and they want the optimal care, the best care; everybody does,” he says. Sumner backs up this notion, adding, “We always tell our students that you need to look at those people that are laying on the OR bed as family members and how you would want your family to be treated.”

While Hays admits a surgical technologist's job may be stressful, he also finds it fulfilling. “It's rewarding to know that you can change somebody's life. Anatomy fascinates me, and it's such an honor and privilege to be able to work inside a human body. Where else could you do this for a living? It's such a cool job. You're on the front lines of trying to save a soul.” ■

“It literally could have gone under for me, but I had such strong passion and desire to do this for my Native American people—the Cherokee—and it's been a success.”

TOMMY HAYS

The User's Guide to

being the best networker, tweeter, Facebooker, donor, cheerleader, promoter, recruiter, mentor, supporter, overall **most Excelsior-est alum ever!**



BY RENEE KELLY,
ALUMNI AFFAIRS &
ANNUAL CAMPAIGN MANAGER

I recently attended a conference on alumni engagement presented by one of the foremost organizations in higher education. After three days spent brainstorming with like-minded professionals about a field we're all incredibly passionate about, I returned to the College energized, eager, and full of new ideas. Out of 120 colleges and universities there, Excelsior was the only distance learning institution and, as such, the sole representative of distance learning colleges everywhere (no pressure!). The brick-and-mortar institutions, many of which now offer some online courses for select programs, had a lot of questions about Excelsior's alumni affairs model.

Really, no alumni house?

No homecoming?

No reunion weekend?

Nope. Nope. And nope.

But mostly, what they wanted to know was how do you engage alumni you've never met. ►

The answer is pretty simple, I think. We create opportunities for our graduates to engage with the College in ways that work for them, just as we do for our students.

If you're a graduate of The University of the State of New York, Regents College, or Excelsior College who wants to be involved with the College—whether just a little or a whole lot—here are some possibilities:

AT THE VERY LEAST ... CONNECT

- Do we know where you are? If we have a good email address for you, then we can let you know about webinars, events, career services, publications, and an array of other information and opportunities. You can choose to participate—or not—as you please.
- Read the monthly alumni e-newsletter. It's a sure thing; sent to your inbox on the first day of every month.
- Make Excelsior Life one of the stops on your daily Web tour. (Yahoo, LinkedIn, Excelsior Life...)
- Get social—like us, tweet us, link with us. Why Grumpy Cat and not your alma mater?



SO MANY POSSIBILITIES ... ENGAGE

- **Commencement**—When you're ready to celebrate your milestone accomplishment, meet us in Albany for the pomp and circumstance. Each year, approximately 300 graduates travel to the capital of New York for Excelsior's Commencement ceremony. Nothing else will make you feel as connected to the College as taking that all-important walk across the stage in your cap and gown. We understand that life sometimes gets in the way, so if you're not able to attend Commencement the year you complete your degree, you can walk another time; when career and family commitments allow, when you return from deployment, when you retire, whenever... Details about the current year's Commencement ceremony are posted in March of each year at www.excelsior.edu/commencement.
- **Regional Alumni Events**—Coming to a city near you! Each year, the College hosts alumni events around the country where local graduates and students gather with staff and faculty to network and share stories about their Excelsior experiences. Upcoming events (and photos of past events) are posted on www.excelsior.edu/alumnierevents.
- **Alumni Notes**—Did you recently earn a promotion, accept a new job, enroll in a degree program, or complete a professional development opportunity? What about personal accomplishments, such as community service and awards? We want to know what's going on with you. www.excelsior.edu/alumninotes
- **Alumni Awards**—We know you're doing great things...have you considered applying for an alumni award? www.excelsior.edu/alumniawards

TRY A LITTLE MORE ... GIVE

- That's right. Joining the Excelsior family of alumni donors can make you feel connected to other philanthropic grads—even if you choose to give anonymously. There's solidarity in knowing that, together with your fellow Excelsior alumni, you are supporting students who are following in your footsteps, while helping the College that helped you.
- Gifts of every size help. Donations to the Annual Campaign provide scholarship support for deserving students and contribute toward faculty resources, academic programs and innovation, and technological and media resources—all the things that make up the Excelsior experience. Contributions are put to use immediately where they are needed most.

- **Career Services**—Excelsior is here to support you, no matter where you are in your career, with webinars, resume and cover letter critiques, career counseling appointments, and EC JobLinks. www.excelsior.edu/career-center
- **Excelsior College Online Writing Lab**—Access the Excelsior College Online Writing Lab (OWL), a highly interactive lab designed to support those seeking to advance their skills beyond introductory writing classes or programs. Whether you're looking for academic writing support while you pursue an advanced degree, or assistance with business writing, the OWL is here for you. <http://owl.excelsior.edu>
- **Industry-Specific Webinars**—You are welcome to participate in professional webinars, sponsored by various schools and programs. Check the Excelsior Life calendar to stay informed of upcoming presentations. <http://news.excelsior.edu/events>
- **Innovative Centers and Institutes**—Have an interest in the expanding field of education games and simulations? Excelsior's Center for Game and Simulation-Based Learning provides blogs, podcasts, and presentations with information about this transformative learning environment (www.gameandsimulationbasedlearning.org). The National Cybersecurity Institute, housed in the College's Washington D.C. Center, is an academic and research center dedicated to helping government, industry, military, and academic sectors meet the challenges in cybersecurity policy, technology, and education (www.nationalcybersecurityinstitute.org).
- **Professional Journals and Publications**—Are you an expert in your field? Consider submitting your work to one of the College's journals. The peer-reviewed National Cybersecurity Institute Journal covers a variety of topics with a particular focus on education, training, and workforce development (www.nationalcybersecurityinstitute.org/publications/journal). Nursing in the 21st Century (N21) is a journal published by Hudson Whitman/Excelsior College Press to stimulate conversation about the field of nursing (<http://hudson-whitman.com/n-21>).
- **Hudson Whitman/Excelsior College Press**—Excelsior's press publishes "books that make a difference" in areas that support the academic interests of

Excelsior College: nursing, health care, business and technology, cybersecurity, criminal justice, and alternative education. Check out the book list here: <http://hudsonwhitman.com/books>.

- **Excelsior ReView**—The Excelsior ReView is an online art and literature publication showcasing the artistic talents of Excelsior College's creative global community. It is produced by a dedicated staff of Excelsior College volunteers and submissions from alumni are always welcome. <http://review.excelsior.edu>

LEND A HAND ... VOLUNTEER

- Sign up to be an Alumni Ambassador: www.excelsior.edu/alumniambassadors
- Share your Excelsior experience with prospective students by providing a testimonial that the College can use in its marketing materials.
- Promote the College's various social media campaigns to your personal networks.
- Offer to provide information and advice about your field of study or career to prospective and current students.



- Promote upcoming alumni events to others in your region via email and phone.
- Offer advice on venues and suppliers for potential alumni events in your region.
- Coordinate or host activities and events for alumni and students in your area.
- Submit news or developments about alumni from your region to our office (i.e., newspaper articles, etc.).
- Advocate for particular academic programs, as requested by the College.
- Serve as a mentor to veteran- and military-affiliated students.
- Engage alumni and students who work for the same employer as you.

- Connect the College with potential business or academic partnership organizations.
- Consider applying for a seat on the Alumni Advisory Board: www.excelsior.edu/alumniadvisoryboard.

So, while there's no homecoming and no reunion, there are lots of ways to interact with the College and your fellow alumni. If you have other ideas, tell us what you'd like to see by emailing alumni@excelsior.edu. Ever upward!

ELECTION2015

Visit www.excelsior.edu/alumni to meet the 2015 nominees for the Alumni Advisory Board and vote on the proposed slate. The Alumni Advisory Board is the leadership of your Alumni Association. Voting will be open from May 1 through May 7, 2015.



Update Your Email Address (and mailing address and phone number, too) — Log in to MyExcelsior, Go to My Profile, Update

Subscribe to the monthly alumni e-newsletter — Log in to MyExcelsior, Go to My Profile, Select Subscribe to "Excelsior College news broadcasts via email"

Like us on Facebook — www.facebook.com/AlumniAssociationatExcelsior

Follow Us on Twitter — @ExcelsiorColl

Connect with Us on LinkedIn — Excelsior College Alumni Association Community



2014-2015

ALUMNI ADVISORY BOARD

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VICE PRESIDENT

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Serving 2013-2016
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ALUMNI EVENTS

Meet the Dean in the Nation's Capital

Hill Country Barbecue Market,
410 Seventh St., NW,
Washington, D.C.

MONDAY
APRIL
27 6-8 pm ET

Meet Robert E. Waters, dean of the School of Public Service, at this alumni reception in Washington, D.C. Join us to hear an update on the College while networking with local alumni and students. Registration required by April 22.

Dinner with 12 Strangers

Atlanta, GA

SUNDAY
JULY
7 6-8 pm ET

Alumni Association Annual Meeting

<http://acpro.excelsior.edu/aab>

FRIDAY
JUNE
10 10-10:30 am ET

The annual meeting of the Excelsior College Alumni Association will be broadcast live online. The meeting takes place at the College on the morning of Commencement. This is a great opportunity to catch sight of your Alumni Association leadership and hear inspiring stories from graduates. If you're not able to view the meeting live, look for the recorded version on the alumni website and watch at your convenience.

For the most up-to-date information about events, visit www.excelsior.edu/alumni/events. Alumni events are open to alumni and students. Online registration is required: www.excelsior.edu/AlumniEventReg

WEB CHATS

Networking – Opening New Doors in Your Job Search

MONDAY
MAY
18 7-8 pm ET

Join us for an interesting and interactive discussion about how to tap into the hidden job market through a variety of networking strategies.

Land Your Next Career Opportunity with EC JobLinks

WEDNESDAY
SEPTEMBER
23 7-8 pm ET

We will show you how to navigate the job postings, extended job search network, employer directory, resume and cover letter builder, secure electronic portfolio, and mock interview tool.

All chats are open to alumni and students. Registration is required: www.excelsior.edu/AlumniChatReg

Alumni Event Recaps

WHAT: Dinner with 12 Strangers

WHEN: October 30, 2014

WHERE: University Club of Chicago, Chicago, IL

WHO: Excelsior alumni gathered in the Windy City for an intimate dinner hosted by Excelsior alumnus and trustee Garry Jaunal, BS '92. The group, none of whom had ever met, are not only Excelsior graduates, but also donors to the College's Annual Campaign. Excelsior College Provost Mary Beth Hanner attended the dinner to provide an update on the College. This was the first event of this type the College has hosted.



WHAT: Central Texas Alumni Reception

WHEN: November 19, 2014

WHERE: Marriot Courtyard Killeen, Killeen, TX

WHO: More than 40 alumni, students, and staff gathered for a cocktail reception hosted by CSM Richard Hernandez, U.S. Army (Ret.), BSL '06. The event took place on the eve of the annual Fort Hood commencement ceremony, affording the opportunity for alumni and students to meet some of our newest graduates who serve in the military. Attendees included former Alumni Association president John Amidon, BA '99, and Alumni Ambassadors Frank Cash, BS '13, and Eugene Cuthbert, BS '13.



WHAT: Pizza Party

WHEN: December 25, 2014

WHERE: Brooklyn, NY

WHO: Alumni Ambassador Esther Stiel, BS '13, answered the call for Organization Ambassadors in the last issue of Excelsior College Magazine by hosting a pizza party at the childcare facility where she works. A proud Excelsior grad, she provided information about the College's academic programs to four interested colleagues/prospective students.



ALUMNI NOTES

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY

Douglas Johnson, BS '90, of Chesapeake, Virginia, see School of Liberal Arts.

Michael L. Randol, BS '92 of Topeka, Kansas, was named director of the division of health care finance for the Kansas Department of Health & Environment. Randol previously served as the director of program finance and informatics for the Division of Health Care Finance. Prior to working for the Division of Health Care Finance, he worked as the state veterans services manager for the Kansas Department of Commerce. Randol has also worked for U.S. Bank as the vice president of relationship management and as the deputy budget director for the Missouri Department of Social Services.

SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS

Douglas Batson, AA '80 and BS '82, of Arlington, Virginia, received the 2014 Meredith F. Burrill Award for excellence in geographic research and place names standardization from the Association of American Geographers. He credits a GRE subject test in geography that led to a second concentration in his Excelsior (then Regents) bachelor's degree with helping him successfully navigate a midlife career change that led to the Burrill Award recognition. Batson spent two decades working in human resources. He retired from the U.S. Army Reserve in 2004, after having been on active duty since 9/11. He explains, "An interviewer of the U.S. Intelligence Community, keen on my foreign language skills, asked in passing, 'And do you have a degree in geography?' With a wry smile, I replied, 'Yes, I do.' So began a midlife career change in which I have thrived as a human geographer, writing books and articles on the role of land tenure and property rights in rebuilding Afghanistan and United Nations peacekeeping operations." Batson also earned a Master of Education from Boston University in 1984.

Erik F. Ohman, BS '80, of Warsaw, Indiana, is senior pastor at Warsaw Evangelical Presbyterian Church. He also earned a Master of Divinity at Fuller Theological Seminary in 1983 and a doctorate in executive leadership at Denver Seminary in 2013.

J. Keith Gary, BA '84, of Sherman, Texas, is the sheriff of Grayson County, Texas. Previously, he was a U.S. marshal before being elected sheriff, a position that he's held for 18 years. He also earned a bachelor's degree from Lamar University and a Master of Arts from Texas A&M University at Corpus Christi. He writes, "I think of Excelsior with great fondness and for the great opportunities for individuals to earn college degrees in a manner which affords much flexibility."

Gregory J. Prickett, AS '86, BS '96, of Irving, Texas, earned a JD from Texas A&M in December 2014 and sat for the bar exam in February 2015. He was a member of the Phi Delta Phi Legal Honor Society and on the board of directors for the Texas A&M Federalist Society. Prickett previously worked in law enforcement for more than 20 years as a police officer and sergeant. He retired from the U.S. Air Force Reserve as a captain in 1999.

Douglas Johnson, AS '87, of Chesapeake, Virginia, is a distinguished researcher in high performance computer integration at the University of Dayton's Research Institute. He retired in 2014 after more than 30 years as a senior electronic engineer/program manager at the U.S. Navy's Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center Atlantic.



David Ellis, AS '89, BS '90, of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, is a training delivery manager for the University of Farmers, Farmers

Insurance's training program. He writes, "When I left the Air Force I was able to utilize my degree in gaining employment and have been with Farmers Insurance over 22 years." He has two daughters and enjoys classic vehicles and vintage items.



Andrew P. Russell, AS '91, BS '92, of Vienna, Virginia, is president and CEO for Mid-Atlantic Federal Credit

Union (MAFCU) based in Germantown, Maryland. As CEO, Russell also serves as chairman of the board of directors for Mid-Atlantic Financial Partners, LLC's Credit Union Service Organization (CUSO). A former member of the U.S. Navy, U.S. Army Reserves, and a seasoned veteran of the private banking industry, Russell is enrolled in Excelsior's MBA program. He also earned a master's degree at Troy State University.

Kenneth J. Thomas, BA '91, of Poulso, Washington, was appointed in January to the Poulso City Council. A retired Navy officer, Thomas previously served on the city council in Goodyear, Arizona.

Arthur Soule, BS '92, of Miami, Florida, became a Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE) in January 2014. The CFE is awarded by the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, the world's premier organization for anti-fraud training and education, and is based on demonstrated knowledge through testing and evaluation of education and credentials. Soule writes, "My degree from Regents College contributed significantly to obtaining this highly sought-after credential."

Travis P. Shook, AS '00, of Muldrow, Oklahoma, works for Union Pacific Railroad. He also earned a Bachelor of Science in Organizational Management from John Brown University in 2005.

David William West, BS '00, of Riviera Beach, Maryland, retired from the National Security Agency in March after 32 years of service as a facilities planner, senior electronics engineer, global vulnerability analyst, technology security designer, telecommunications manager, computer systems specialist, and general engineer. His government service also included 12 years in the military reserves as a midshipman for the U.S. Navy, aviation officer candidate for the U.S. Navy, biomedical

equipment specialist for the U.S. Army, combat engineer for the U.S. Army, and outside plant cable systems technician for the U.S. Air Force.

Kevin L. Dillon, MA/LS '06, of Fairfax, Virginia, was honored in 2013 by the Irish Echo newspaper as one the Irish Labor 100 for his past work as an executive vice president of the Air Line Pilots Association. The Irish Echo recognized leading Irish-American men and women in today's labor movement while at the same time reflecting on the work of those historical giants who paved the way to labor's central role in contemporary American life. Since graduating from Excelsior, Dillon has remained active as a certified mediator/mentor in Virginia, associated with the Northern Virginia Mediation Service (NVMS). He has also served as treasurer on the NVMS board of directors and as a board member of the Commodore John Barry Charitable Trust.

Michael Greco, AS '12, of Pomona, New York, was nominated by President Obama to serve as U.S. marshal for the Southern District of New York. Greco serves as lieutenant in the New York State Police, a position he has held since 2007, and in which he serves as the New York State Police interagency liaison in New York City. He has served with the New York State Police since 1982; prior to being named lieutenant, he served as a senior investigator, investigator, station commander, sergeant, and trooper. Greco was a first responder on 9/11.

Marnen Laibow-Koser, BA '12 of Somerville, Massachusetts, earned a Master of Music in contemporary improvisation from the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston in December 2014. He has played piano and organ in Opera Brittenica's recent productions and served as musical director for its innovative production of "Turn of the Screw" this fall. He performs with the band The Flying Romans.

Denise Boroughs-Fitch, BS '14, of Woodland, California, is enrolled in the Patten University MBA in Health Care program.



A Military Leader

DANIEL A. DAILEY, BS '11, became the 15th sergeant major of the Army on January 30 at a ceremony at the Pentagon. Previously, he was command sergeant major for U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command. In this position, Dailey played a key role in shaping the Army's plans for leader development and Soldier 2020, an initiative to set standards for specific Army professions.

The sergeant major of the Army serves as the Army chief of staff's personal adviser on matters affecting the enlisted force. The exact duties vary depending on the chief of staff, though much time is spent traveling throughout the Army to observe training and talk to soldiers and their families.

The sergeant major of the Army recommends quality-of-life improvements to Army leadership and sits on councils that make decisions affecting enlisted soldiers and their families. The sergeant major of the Army also routinely testifies before Congress on these issues. Dailey will be the public face of the U.S. Army's Noncommissioned Officer Corps, representing the corps to the American people in the media and through business and community engagements.

"Command Sgt. Maj. Dailey epitomizes the competence, character, and commitment we require of our Soldiers and Leaders. I have every confidence in his ability as a visionary leader to help guide our Army through this time of great complexity and rapid change—he is a trusted Army Professional," said Army Chief

▲ Sgt. Maj. Daniel Dailey, BS '11, has his new rank insignia put on his shirt after becoming the 15th sergeant major of the Army during a swearing-in ceremony at the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, on January 30, 2015. Helping to put on his new rank is Dailey's wife, Holly, and Gen. Raymond Odierno, chief of staff of the Army.

PHOTO: CARLOS BONGIOANNI. COURTESY OF STARS AND STRIPES.

of Staff Gen. Raymond Odierno in a U.S. Army news release.

Dailey enlisted in the Army in 1989 and his initial assignment was as a radio telephone operator and rifleman with 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division, Schweinfurt, Germany. He rose through the ranks, and is a graduate of the U.S. Army Sergeants Major Academy and the Command Sergeants Major Course. Dailey is a combat veteran with four deployments to Operation Iraqi Freedom and one in support of Operation Desert Storm.

His awards include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal with Valor, Bronze Star Medal (3rd award), Meritorious Service Medal (3rd award), Army Commendation Medal (7th award), Army Achievement Medal (10th award), and Good Conduct Medal (7th award), among many others.

— DANA YANULAVICH



Dana Ross, BS '14, of Tampa, Florida, was promoted to director of professional services at Sage, a \$2 billion company with

more than 6 million customers worldwide. Since he enrolled at Excelsior, he was promoted several times. He writes, "There's no doubt that my recent accomplishments of earning my degree, and in the aggressive fashion I completed it and with a GPA of a 3.54, contributed to my rapid rise in the ranks."

SCHOOL OF NURSING

Linda S. Blankenship, AAS '93, of Walton, Kentucky, works at Cincinnati Children's Hospital in Cincinnati, Ohio. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing at the University of Cincinnati, graduating magna cum laude. Blankenship writes, "Regents gave me the opportunity to earn my associate degree in a non-traditional setting.... I never could have earned this degree if I would have had to attend classes every day for two years.... I never thought I would be able to earn my RN, but Regents made it possible, and for that I am so grateful.... I am looking forward to retirement in a few short years, but I will always remember that feeling of hope I had when I learned of Regents College and how I actually had a chance to earn my nursing degree!"



Arnold Facklam, AAS '00, of Pittsford, New York, was conferred a fellow of Hospital Medicine by the Society of

Hospital Medicine. Facklam, MSN, FNP-BC, FHM, is chair of the Advanced Practice Providers Committee and voting member on the Medical Executive Committee of Kaleida Health WNY.



Eva Daniel, AS '03, of Sarasota, Florida, works at Your Home Advantage. She also earned a Bachelor of Science of

Nursing in 2011 and a Master of Science in Nursing-Family Nurse

Practitioner in 2014. She's enrolled in a doctor of nursing practice program at the University of South Florida. She writes, "Excelsior College provided me with a great foundation in my nursing studies and prepared me well to advance my nursing career. I am very proud and glad that I had chosen Excelsior College for my AS in nursing.... It served me well as I advanced my career as a family nurse practitioner."

Charlene Clark, AS '06, of Saulsbury, Tennessee, works at Hardeman County Community Health Center as a primary care provider. She also earned a Bachelor of Science in Nursing at the University of Memphis and a Master of Science in Nursing (family nurse practitioner) at Kaplan University. She writes, "I am pleased to be an Excelsior alum. I recently achieved national certification through the American Association of Nurse Practitioners as a family nurse practitioner."

Karen Bryson, BS '13, of Hicksville, New York, is enrolled in the Master of Science in Nursing program. She writes, "I did consider going to a traditional college for my master's, but Excelsior has them beat by the convenience and the excellent learning content offered." Bryson teaches RN students at New York Presbyterian Hospital at Columbia University. Karen (right) celebrated with daughter Amy Bryson (left), BS '14, at Commencement 2014 when they



walked across the stage together. Mother and daughter will celebrate Amy's 30th birthday with a trip to Costa Rica in May.

Jared Rice, AS '13, of Eastlake, Ohio, has been accepted to make two presentations at the FOCUS Spring 2015 conference for respiratory therapists and sleep technologists. His topics are Inhaled Corticosteroids—Powerful Drugs—What's Their Place? and Unresponsive Asthma Exacerbation in the PICU. Employed at UH Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital, he also has an AS and BS in Respiratory Care and a MBA in General Management and International Business.

Share Your News
www.excelsior.edu/AlumniNotes

A Nursing Entrepreneur

ROBERT FREEMAN, MS '14, a clinical nurse specialist for medical surgical quality at Mount Sinai Beth Israel in New York, is used to going the extra mile. He was, after all, a Division 1 cross-country runner and track star prior to hanging up his shorts and spikes for scrubs and crocs.

So it didn't come as a surprise to many that shortly after being honored with Mount Sinai's "Novice Nurse of the Year Award" in 2011, he used the honor's stipend to develop Nurse Net, one of the first educational resource apps designed specifically for the nursing community, and for a period, one of iTunes' most popular health care apps.

Freeman, who earned a Master of Science in nursing at Excelsior College, isn't ready to rest on his laurels, though. He already has his sights set his next entrepreneurial venture: Nursing Handoff, an app that began and was piloted at Mount Sinai Beth Israel as part of his capstone course at Excelsior, which he completed in 2013.

This new app aims to improve patient safety by assisting nurses with conveying critical patient information to one another during shift changes. It pulls medical records, highlights key points, and presents the content within the Situation Background Assessment Recommendations (SBAR) framework, an industry best practice for structuring information during the nursing shift transition period. Planning is underway to

expand use of the app to additional hospitals within the Mount Sinai Health System.

Both ventures presented Freeman with the opportunity to give back to a profession he initially fell in love with after volunteering within a heart transplant unit at a local hospital while an undergraduate at the University at Albany. "I watched the nurses, seeing what they do, how they interacted with patients...and the impact that they had on people's lives," said Freeman.

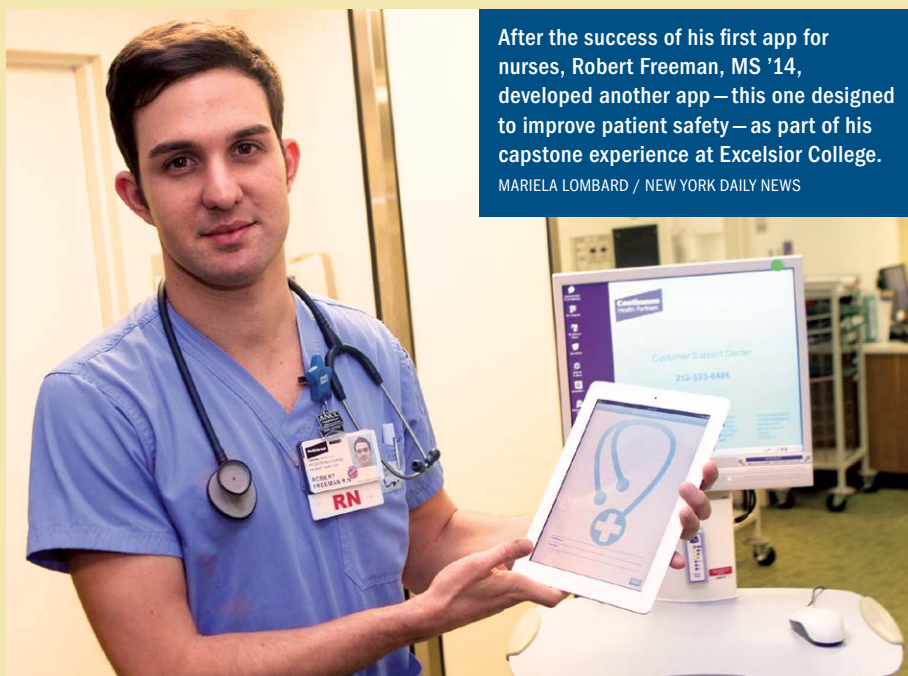
During his senior year, he continued to juggle his studies and athletic commitments with his passion for nursing, accepting a position as a nursing assistant in the respiratory unit at St. Peter's Hospital in Albany, New York. There he worked on a per diem basis whenever he could—summer vacation, nights, weekends, and holidays—to learn the nursing field from the ground up.

Freeman credits the hands-on experiences at St. Peter's as invaluable to his growth within the profession and patient care.

After graduating from nursing school in 2009, Freeman accepted a position at Mount Sinai Beth Israel. He was by no means slowing down with his educational pursuits, however. In 2011, he enrolled in Excelsior's Master of Science in Nursing program.

"In health care and especially in nursing, anything at the leadership level requires a master's (degree)," said Freeman. "Nurses are lifelong learners."

— MICHAEL LESZINSKI
 Excerpted from Excelsior Life.



After the success of his first app for nurses, Robert Freeman, MS '14, developed another app—one this one designed to improve patient safety—as part of his capstone experience at Excelsior College.

MARIELA LOMBARD / NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

BY THE

#S

10 YEARS

The Presidents' Forum — a collaboration founded by Excelsior College that now includes more than 150 accredited adult-serving institutions and programs — marked 10 years of advocating for adult learners and distance education in 2014. Its largest initiative, the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement, had 20 states (at press time) committed to broadening access to accredited online degree programs and ensuring consumer protection. Expectations are for continued growth.

60 Million+

More than 60 million employed adults have not earned an academic degree, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that 50 percent of all new jobs created by 2018 will require a post-secondary credential. Excelsior's Center for the Assessment of Post-Traditional Instruction, Training, and Learning, introduced in 2014, seeks to address that gap. It promotes degree completion efforts for working adults by providing academic credit assessments of workplace training and a credentialing program that maps to degree programs at Excelsior College.

The percentage of graduate students in 2014 who are Excelsior alumni. This was a slight increase over the number of alumni enrolled as graduate students the previous year. And what are they studying? The majority of all graduate students age 25–59 are enrolled in the School of Business & Technology — mirroring trends of 2013 — and enrollments in the School of Health Sciences have skyrocketed over the previous year for students in that same age range.

57%



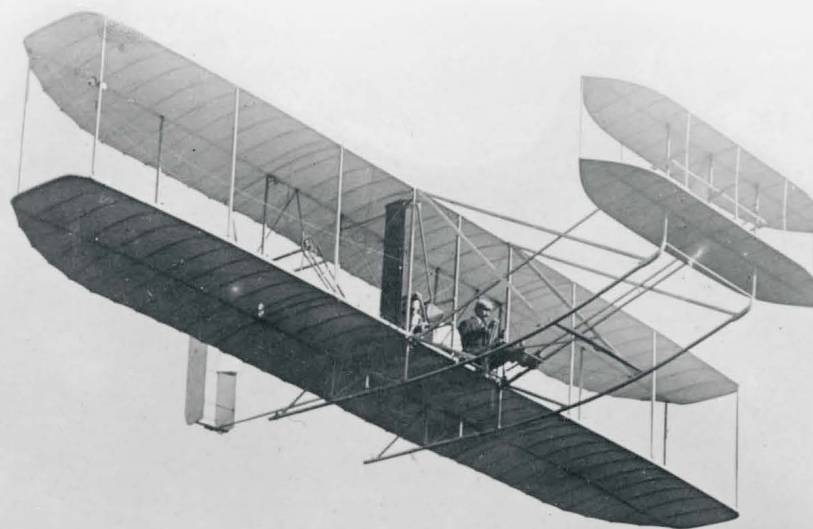
29,982

That's the number of followers on Excelsior's LinkedIn for Education page as of late February. Visitors to the page can stay current on Excelsior news and activities, ask questions about programs, see career outcomes of students and alumni, and view profiles of notable graduates. They can also learn more about Excelsior through peer reviews posted by users or by networking with students and alumni. LinkedIn asked Excelsior to participate in the beta program for these pages, which includes testing new features as they're introduced. "We want to remain connected with our students and alumni," says Jeremy Miller, Excelsior's social media and engagement manager. "LinkedIn offers us an opportunity to do so, which is why we encourage users who are attending or have attended Excelsior College to add us in the Education section of their personal profiles. We welcome their involvement and participation in the college's community."



603

The number of enrolled students who took advantage of academic partnerships with Excelsior College to transfer course credits during the 2014 fiscal year. They transferred 27,639 credits from Excelsior's academic partner schools.



Your support can
help a student
Soar

The Wright brothers didn't just fly. They achieved a dream held in their hearts. It took persistence, ambition, and a will to succeed—qualities our students possess, too, as they work toward their dream to earn a college degree.

With your contribution to the Excelsior College Annual Campaign, you help the dream of a student to take flight. Your gift propels another, offering encouragement to persevere.

100 percent of your contribution goes to scholarship funding that alleviates students' financial burdens. Your gift makes it possible for them to fly!

www.excelsior.edu/giving
888-647-2388 ext. 145



Cyber Matters

A webinar series from the National Cybersecurity Institute at Excelsior College focuses on issues that keep business leaders up at night: preventing data breaches, staving off operating system attacks, examining the implications of Internet governance on operations, and more.

To learn about upcoming webinars and other cybersecurity multimedia initiatives, visit NationalCybersecurityInstitute.org.

