

LIVE & LEARN

EXCELSIOR COLLEGE MAGAZINE



Defining Her Purpose

A mother's quest
to help daughter
benefits thousands

p. 12

HOW WELL DID EXCELSIOR WORK FOR YOU?

Demonstrate your pride.
Give to the Annual Campaign.

Excelsior's innovative model continues to work for our students today. They have the potential. They just need the door opened. Your gift may be the difference.

WWW.EXCELSIOR.EDU/ONLINEGIVING

FEATURES

9 On Guard

As concerns about cyber threats continue to grow, Excelsior educates the cybersecurity leaders who will keep our information, and us, safe.

12 A Learner First

Linda Rozell-Shannon's quest to find treatment for her daughter's vascular birthmark produces far-reaching and life-altering impact.

16 Zombies Give Rise to Critical Thinking

A new course feeds on popular interests to engage students and encourage them to digest content on the human condition.

DEPARTMENTS

2 President's Perspective

3 Virtually Everywhere: News from Excelsior College

7 Upward

Practice makes perfect for a nursing student pursuing an associate degree.

8 Career Corner

Labor market information can help you prepare for and attain your career goals.

19 Alumni Connection

News about webinars, events, and strengthening the ties that bind.

22 Hats Off

News from and about alumni.

24 By the Numbers



12



9



6



7



21



16

ON THE COVER: Faculty member Linda Rozell-Shannon and her daughter Christine Shannon. Photo: Gary Gold.



Dr. John F. Ebersole

Today, as the bulk of higher education is awakening to the potential of competency-based credentials, especially for those in the workforce, America owes much to an unusual man with an unusual name, Ewald (Joe)

Nyquist. Indeed, it was his vision on how to convert experience and prior learning into college credit that is experiencing a resurgence today.

Sixty-two years ago Nyquist became New York's assistant commissioner for higher education. He moved through the chairs within the State Education Department and, in November of 1969, was named commissioner of education and president of the University of the State of New York. Just two years later in 1971, using funding provided by the Ford Foundation and Carnegie Corporation, Nyquist announced the creation of three highly innovative entities—Empire State College (to be a part of the State University of New York [SUNY] System), the Regents External Degree Program, and the National Program on Non-collegiate Sponsored Instruction, or “National PONSI.” Forty-plus years later, all three institutions continue to exist. National PONSI became the National College Credit Recommendation Service (NCCRS) and the Regents External Degree Program became Regents College and in 2001, Excelsior College.

All three were major departures from traditional higher education. Reflective of Nyquist's belief that learning occurs in a number of ways, each of the new entities was expected to become an assessor of instruction, experience, knowledge, and/or skills. As is the case today, Empire and Regents (Excelsior) awarded undergraduate degrees based upon what the student knew, not on where or how learned. The evaluation of non-collegiate instruction (by PONSI) preceded the better-known ACE CREDIT service of the American Council on Education by three years. Similarly, Regents examinations of subject knowledge served as a model for The College Board's CLEP Program.

Thanks to Nyquist, a man who ascended to the highest level of New York's nationally regarded system of education with only a bachelor's degree, American higher education continues to benefit from the many manifestations of his vision.

Most importantly, hundreds of thousands of graduates have been able to complete a degree and better their lives thanks to Joe Nyquist. Like the entities that he created, he is not well known today. However, as all of higher education moves to new ways of serving adults, the tools and institutions he created are increasingly in the forefront. As they become better known, it is hoped that our national debt to Ewald B. Nyquist* will be recognized, as well. We owe him much.

*Commissioner Nyquist died in July 1987.



Ewald B. Nyquist

Veterans Center Musters Support

Excel­sior College has a long history of serving the education needs of servicemembers and veterans. More than 65,000 members of the U.S. military and veterans have reached their educational goals with the help of Excelsior.

Now, the College expands its commitment by developing a comprehensive resource center for all veterans regardless of their connection to Excelsior. It will provide support for veterans seeking career, personal, or financial counseling; acclimating to the online educational environment; needing information about financial aid; and looking to connect with other veterans, as well as addressing other needs.

Plans for the veterans center quickly inspired two major contributions to the College from alumni who seek to honor the military service of their fathers. Their giving leadership represents the first naming gifts in Excelsior's history and are evidence of the level of support and interest the center raises.

When Excelsior College Trustee Bryanne Hamill '86 heard about the center, she was impressed by the range of planned counseling services and the importance placed

on mentoring. As the daughter of a career U.S. Air Force officer and from her own experience as a former psychiatric nurse, Hamill appreciates the College's plans to link veterans with mental health counseling among other services. She and her husband Thomas Hamill recently created an endowment fund with a leadership gift to ensure the College's support for veterans, and thus it bears her father's name, Lt. Col. Bryant A. Murray Jr. "This seems to be a fitting



Bryanne and Thomas Hamill's gift to the College honors her father, Lt. Col. Bryant A. Murray Jr. During his distinguished 20-year career in the U.S. Air Force, he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross many times for his actions during the Korean War and the Vietnam War.

way to honor him and all the veterans and military servicemembers in general, and in a way that gives back to the alma mater I'm so grateful to," says Hamill, who pursued a law career after Excelsior. She retired as a New York State Family Court judge (Kings County) in 2010.

As a veteran, James Lally '87 regards helping other veterans as a privilege. He joined Hamill to make a substantial gift to support the Lt. Col. Bryant A. Murray Veterans Center. "With each veteran that the center helps, we are helping those whose commitment and dedication in service give us the opportunity to live the lives we do," says Lally, DO, president and chief medical officer of

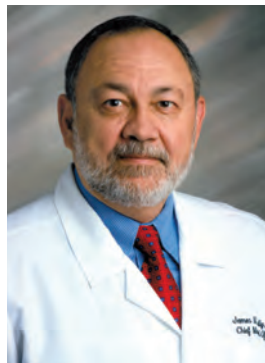
Why a Veterans Center?

- > More than 1.5 million Americans have served in Iraq and Afghanistan. With the draw-down of troops, the number of veterans returning to civilian life will be increasing rapidly.
- > The unemployment rate for veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan rose to 10.9 percent in August 2012. Members of the National Guard and Reserve face rates as high as 50 percent.
- > Veterans represent 20 percent of suicide deaths in the United States each year.

Chino Valley Medical Center. Like Hamill, Lally comes from a military family. His father, Sgt. Maj. John Gilbert Lally, served in the U.S. Army for 32 years; Lally enlisted after high school, served 15 years active duty, and was retired medically. "Without Excelsior, I could not have become a physician," says Lally. "Without the foresight of its leaders, I might not have even had the chance to be in a position to help others. Now with the College's focus on veterans and support of the veterans center, many more will achieve their goals and dreams." College leaders are working with Lally to identify a suitable naming opportunity to recognize his father.

Underpinning the Lt. Col. Bryant A. Murray Veterans Center is the belief that higher education can support successful reintegration into civilian life and career progress.

"Our country has millions of military veterans who have served all of us extremely well," says retired Brig. Gen. Jerry L. Neff '87, a College trustee who served 39 years in the Army National Guard. "I strongly encourage everyone to financially support the College's veterans center and our military." ■



It is James Lally's desire that the name of his father, Sgt. Maj. John Gilbert Lally, be memorialized in conjunction with the veterans center to recognize his valor during World War II. John Lally survived the Bataan Death March and was a prisoner of war for 42 months. He also served in Korea and Vietnam, and received many valor and achievement awards.

Admiral Mike Mullen to Speak at Commencement



**MULLEN WAS THE PRINCIPAL
MILITARY ADVISOR TO PRESIDENT
GEORGE W. BUSH AND
PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA**

technologies, championed emerging and enduring international partnerships, and advanced new methods for combating terrorism.

Mullen has deep experience in leading change in complex organizations, executive development and succession planning, diversity implementation, crisis management, strategic planning, budget policy, congressional relations, risk management, technical innovation, and cybersecurity. He is widely recognized as an “honest broker” in his key leadership roles as the trusted advisor to both President Bush and President Obama. He maintains strong relationships with leaders around the globe.

He and his wife, Deborah, remain staunch advocates for veterans and their families on a broad range of issues, including drawing public attention and institutional focus to the challenges of post-traumatic stress, combat-related brain injury, military suicide, care of the wounded, and veteran homelessness. ■

Admiral Mike Mullen, U.S. Navy (Ret.), the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from 2007 to 2011, will address graduates at Excelsior College’s 42nd Commencement on July 12.

As chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Mullen was the principal military advisor to President George W. Bush and President Barack Obama, as well as to two secretaries of defense. He led the military during a critical period of transition, overseeing the end of the combat mission in Iraq and the development of a new military strategy for Afghanistan. He advocated for the rapid development and fielding of innovative

Excelsior Helps Prepare Leaders for Nuclear Industry



With nearly 38 percent of the nuclear industry workforce eligible to retire by 2015, Excelsior is helping to develop the next generation of leaders in that field. Excelsior has joined with the Regional Center for Nuclear Education and Training, a consortium of colleges, universities, industry partners, and others working to ensure the demand for skilled nuclear technicians is met in a standardized way. Under the educational agreement, graduates of the more than 35 community colleges that belong to RCNET will be able to pursue, at a reduced cost, a bachelor’s degree from Excelsior’s accredited program in nuclear engineering technology or other technical areas. “... this agreement between Excelsior and RCNET will help produce seasoned nuclear leaders capable of navigating the industry through the many challenges that lie ahead,” says Jane LeClair, dean of Excelsior College’s School of Business & Technology. ■



2013 COMMENCEMENT

MARK YOUR CALENDARS! Celebrate the achievements of our graduates and share in the excitement of Commencement on July 12. The ceremony will be broadcast live at www.excelsior.edu/webcast. For more information, go to www.excelsior.edu/commencement.

CRITICAL THINKING

Literacy in America: Making Reading and Writing a Priority

It is becoming increasingly difficult to define literacy in America with so many literacies to master: computer literacy, visual literacy, and even social media literacy. It can be difficult to know which ones we should focus on, and it seems we have to be competent in all of them. But when people talk about a “literacy crisis” in the United States, they are generally referring to reading and writing.

In 2004, the National Commission on Writing released the results of an important study of writing in the U.S. workplace. The first of its kind, the study spanned a 10-year period, involved academics as well as business and industry professionals, and focused on writing outside of academia. The results were alarming! The findings showed that people in the workplace, even with college degrees, were not writing

well, and that businesses frequently had to send employees out for additional training in writing at a cost of approximately \$3.1 billion annually.

This information indicates the possibility of a disturbing trend in literacy as it relates to reading and writing. Recent surveys from middle and high schools indicate that most students are writing less now than they have in the past. Moreover, emphasis on high-stakes testing has led to writing instruction that involves formulas or students filling in blanks as opposed to having them engage in an authentic writing process.

The National Commission on Writing study also presented an important finding that gives hope: writing is essential in students’ everyday lives, especially in the day-to-day workplace. The study found that individuals who write well are more likely to be considered for a position, and once that job is secured, those good writing skills will increase the likelihood of promotions and raises.

Armed with this information, as well as additional research indicating

a need for more writing instruction and writing instruction across the curriculum, educators have set out to do more to improve student literacy, to give students opportunities that good reading and writing skills can provide.

We live in a culture where we are inundated with information, and strong literacy skills are more important now than ever before. We need strong literacy to be informed citizens, make good decisions about our children’s health care, spend our money wisely, and even choose the right college. It is not an easy task to improve the literacy levels of a culture one student at a time, but it is what we set out to do here at Excelsior and at schools across the United States. Students who read and write well have a distinct advantage, no matter their profession, and we must continue with our efforts. ■

—CRYSTAL SANDS

Crystal Sands is the project director for Excelsior’s Online Writing Lab (OWL). She has a PhD in rhetoric from Texas Woman’s University with a minor in library science and an emphasis in children’s literature.



MICHAEL HEMBERGER

Excelsior College recently expanded its Online Writing Lab (OWL) to include the English as a Second Language Writing Online Workshop (ESL-WOW). ESL-WOW, a free resource available to the public, guides non-native speakers of English through each stage of the writing process. Geared toward students and working adults, the ESL-WOW was developed over three years by experts in the teaching of English as an additional language and educational technology. It was supported by the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE), a program of the U.S. Department of Education that provides grants for innovative educational reform projects.

Howard Pomann (left), director of the Institute for Intensive English at Union County Community College in Elizabeth, N.J., and one of the experts involved in the project, spoke at Excelsior in December 2012 about teaching English language learners. He was joined by David Seelow, director of writing programs and the online writing lab in the School of Liberal Arts, and Claire Siskin, the ESL-WOW project director.

Endowment Giving Rises

Gifts to Excelsior College endowment funds in fiscal year 2012 totaled over \$107,000, more than doubling gifts to endowments in 2007. Such funds are one of the most personal ways to support Excelsior and its students. When creating an endowment fund, donors can make an initial gift in the amount of their choice, designate how their dollars will be used, and contribute to their fund over time until it reaches the \$10,000 threshold. In 2012, 101 donors made a combined total of 412 gifts to endowment funds as compared to 31 gifts from 14 donors just five years ago.

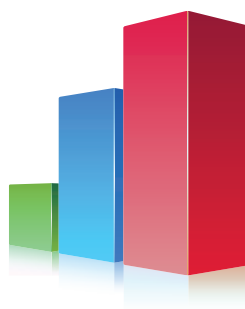
Creating an endowment secures the future of the institution and provides a reliable source of funding for scholarships, the development of new degree programs, and other partnerships that benefit Excelsior's adult learners. Endowments also ensure long-term support of the College through stewardship and portfolio management. ■



“I was surprised how easy it was to start an endowment—the upfront investment was within reach and my continued regular contributions help grow the fund quickly. And, I got to support something that was most meaningful to me!” –D.Y., N.Y.

VIDEO GAMES: A GAME CHANGER FOR HIGHER EDUCATION?

An upcoming panel discussion explores the role of video games in higher education and whether games lead to greater student engagement and success. Watch the discussion [VIA THE WEB ON MAY 17](#) from 10 a.m. to noon. For more information and to register, go to <http://bit.ly/ExcelsiorGaming>.



Enrollment, course registrations, revenue, grants, and giving all increased in fiscal year 2012. These accomplishments made for a fitting conclusion to the College's two-year 40th anniversary celebration.

See the *Report to the Excelsior College Community* (www.excelsior.edu/annualreport) for the 2011–2012 annual report, Honor Roll of Donors, and a special wrap-up on the anniversary.

JOHN R. WETSCH '84, THE LONGEST SERVING TRUSTEE IN EXCELSIOR'S HISTORY, COMPLETED 11 YEARS on the College's Board and was designated a trustee emeritus in January. The first president of the College's Alumni Association, he received the Excelsior College Founders Award in 2001. In addition to his BS from Excelsior, Wetsch (left)—the epitome of a lifelong learner—also earned additional degrees at other institutions, including a bachelor's, two master's in astronomy, and a PhD in information systems. “His dedication to the College, despite many other professional demands on his time, has led me to respect him as a valued member of

our Board,” says Chair Richard Yep (right). “He was always willing to pitch in and help, as well as provide his perspectives based on his considerable professional and technical expertise.” Wetsch, an IT director for the North Carolina Department of Revenue, observes, “With its growth, Excelsior has also maintained a high-quality and well-respected degree despite increased competition from larger online institutions with bigger marketing budgets as well as from increased competition from traditional brick-and-mortar institutions that have moved into online learning. I certainly believe that the College lives up to its name Excelsior; that is: Ever Upward.” ■



MICHAEL HEMBERGER

Practice Makes Perfect



Lisa Joyce knows it's ideal to use a human when practicing nursing skills, but it's not easy to find study partners for middle-of-the-night study sessions. Her day job at the Life Care Center of Attleboro, a short-term rehabilitation facility in southeastern Massachusetts specializing in orthopedics, necessitated that she work on her studies late into the night.

So, she called upon Lucy—a mannequin always ready to have her vitals checked—as her practice patient.

Lucy was a good fit with the other study aids Joyce used on her way to earning an Associate in Science in nursing in November 2011. Her boyfriend Matthew Vito had provided the nudge that spurred her, then a licensed practical nurse, into starting the associate degree in nursing program in 2009. He also provided the steadfast support that encouraged her through the challenges of preparing for and completing the Clinical Performance in Nursing Examination. Vito practiced positive thinking with his girlfriend by referring to her as Lisa Joyce, RN. He would quiz her on exam content during evenings at their home in Mansfield, Mass., and the two added some fun to the study sessions with lively games of “RNopoly.” Vito

not only invested his own time, but also hired a private tutor for Joyce.

The couple developed some creative study aids together, devising a “clinical lab” in their home office to aid Joyce in honing her patient care skills. Vito even obtained a bed, attached side rails, and purchased a sink so Joyce could practice the aseptic hand-washing skills required prior to entering a patient’s room.

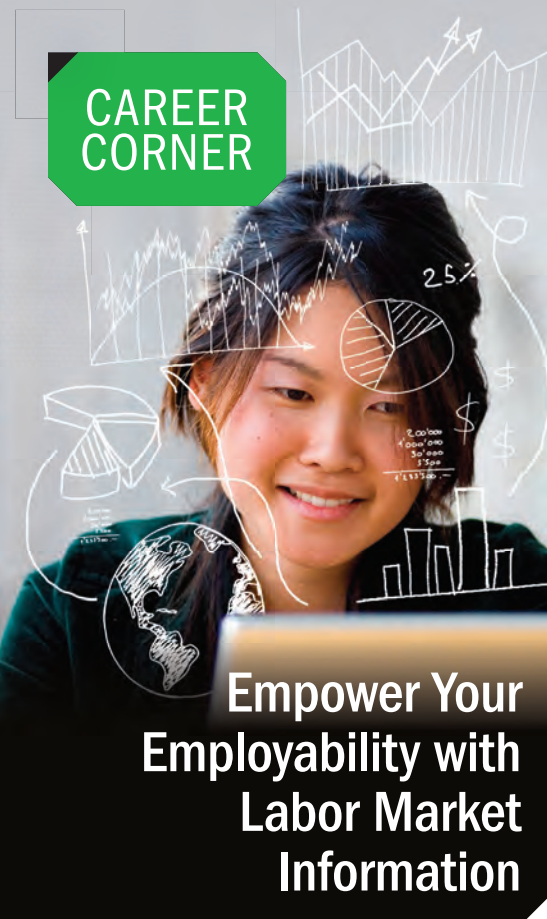
“I don’t think I would have passed if I had not set up the lab station,” says Joyce, who became licensed as a RN in February 2012. “The lab station facilitated my learning experience.” She’d use the lab station to practice the critical elements assessed during the CPNE. Joyce set a kitchen timer so she kept within the time allotted for each station, and she used Lucy the mannequin to practice comfort care, patient safety, and range-of-motion exercises, among other patient care skills. In the mornings, Joyce’s tutor would critique her as she assessed her patient.

Passing the CPNE proved to be a challenge for Joyce. But with Vito’s encouragement to “give it one more shot,” she was able to pick herself up and give the CPNE another try. “I figured I had nothing to lose but everything to gain,” she recalled. On the day of the exam,

After working from 3 to 11 p.m., Lisa Joyce '11, practiced assessments at home, using a mannequin named Lucy to develop proper patient care habits. Her boyfriend Matthew Vito supported her efforts to prepare for and pass the CPNE. PHOTO: WEBB CHAPPELL PHOTOGRAPHY

she entered the hospital with a can-do attitude, and steeled her resolve with a “failure is not an option” approach. After the 2½ days of intense testing, Joyce passed the CPNE, telling Vito, “I never would have been able to make it without you. It’s our victory.”

In recognition of his assistance and encouragement on a graduate’s quest to a degree, Vito received the Student Support Award at the Awards Convocation in July 2012. By that time, Joyce had started her first course in the College’s Master of Science in nursing program and the ever-patient Lucy had been enlisted to help one of Joyce’s friends prepare for her clinical exam through Excelsior College. Joyce has since gone on to take additional courses toward her master’s degree. And after helping to produce successful outcomes, Lucy’s awaiting her next study partner. ■



Empower Your Employability with Labor Market Information

BY MARIBETH GUNNER PULLIAM

Whether you're looking for a new job, contemplating a career change, or seeking an internal promotion, life-changing choices like these require careful forethought. After taking an honest inventory of your skills, interests, and values, and choosing a general career direction, the next step in your fact-finding quest is to conduct extensive research on related occupations and current labor market conditions.

Labor market information includes data about prevailing and projected employment trends—by occupation, industry, earnings, location, demographics, unemployment, as well as labor supply and demand. It also incorporates the impact of the current economic, social, political, and technological trends. For example, new technological advances may affect what type of skills and knowledge are required for your industry. Changes in government regulations and shifts in demographics can also significantly influence what jobs will be prosperous or in decline. In fact, the current increased demand for health care professionals in the United States has been significantly impacted by new health care legislation and a growing senior population.

ACCESS USEFUL RESOURCES

Investigating occupations, companies, and industries in your field and researching local and national trends in the job market can help you to identify suitable career tracks, negotiate a lucrative salary, and navigate next steps in your career.

A major free, online source that can kick start your research is the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) within the U.S. Department of Labor's Market Information System. The BLS is the primary federal agency commissioned with measuring and monitoring labor market activity, working conditions, and price fluctuations in the economy. It collects, analyzes, and disperses relevant, timely, and accurate economic information on state and national levels.

Here are a few of the BLS publications that offer valuable insight for career exploration and planning:

- **The Occupational Outlook Handbook** provides over 300 occupation profiles that include information on working conditions, education, training, salary and job outlooks for the next decade, and more.
- **Occupational Employment Statistics** produces employment and wage estimates annually for over 800 occupations at the state and national levels.
- **Occupational Outlook Quarterly** contains multiple articles about finding, applying for, and choosing jobs. It also covers new and emerging occupations.

Another essential research tool from the U.S. Department of Labor is CareerOneStop, a website with abundant resources on current employment data and career options. Some resources include: **State Job Banks**, which assists in searching job listings from state employment agencies; **America's Career InfoNet**, which boasts extensive data on employment growth, wages, skills, and abilities required by an occupation; and **Occupational Information Network online (O*net)**, a wellspring of information on occupations, including descriptions.

There are also many private sources of labor market information. Vault.com and Glassdoor.com provide company reviews, approval ratings, salary information, and insider views of organizational culture. Payscale.com and Salary Search/Indeed.com

compare salaries by type of job and location. Memberships to professional associations, trade publications, and conversations with seasoned professionals in your field are other potential sources for labor market intel.

BE A SAVVY CONSUMER

- **Ensure the online, print, or professional labor market references you use are current and reputable.** Compare information from various sources and identify any commonalities or disparities.
- **Interpret statistics carefully.** Although a job labeled "fastest growing" may appear to be very promising, be aware that a fast rate of employment does not always translate into an abundance of new jobs if the field is relatively small. For example, biomedical engineering prospects are projected to grow 62 percent through 2020 but will only account for 9,700 new jobs. In contrast, retail salespersons have a slower projected growth rate of 17 percent, but as a larger occupational group, this equates to over 700,000 jobs in the next decade.
- **Seek your career with purpose and passion.** Don't pursue a job or career solely because it is projected to be "hot." Not all hot jobs have longevity. Remember, too, your skills, interests, and values play an important role in job satisfaction.

TRACK THE TRENDS

Labor market information is useful for all occupational fields—at every stage of your career. Staying apprised of new initiatives in your field and tracking market trends can help guide your future employment decisions, command a competitive edge in the workplace, and enhance your career trajectory.

Access more labor market resources and additional career-related links at www.excelsior.edu/career. The Career Center is also on Facebook at [Facebook.com/ECCareerCenter](https://www.facebook.com/ECCareerCenter).

Maribeth Gunner Pulliam, MS Ed, is the career services coordinator, Center for Online Education, Learning, and Academic Services, at Excelsior College.

>ON GUARD

Degree and certificate programs prepare leaders to combat cyber attacks

We rely on the Internet to help us pay our bills, shop at our convenience, and connect with friends. We benefit from government agencies and private companies using the Internet to provide electricity to our homes, maintain safe and secure water systems, and facilitate other aspects of our way of life. Still it's a double-edged sword: As we try to make our lives easier, cyber threats to these industrial control systems have been identified as an area of growing concern. ►



“People don’t generally think of cyber[security] when they think of terrorism, but they need to because it’s going that direction in a large way,” says Daniel Elfin, an FBI special agent based in the Albany, N.Y., office who focuses on cyber crime. Today cyber crime encompasses cyber terrorism, counter intelligence, and cyber attacks, Elfin said during a recent event on data privacy at Excelsior College. With power grids, water systems, and other critical infrastructure connected to the network, foreign nations could access systems in the United States and launch cyber attacks.

“What are we actually doing by putting all these things online?” asks Elfin. “We’re making lives easier for ourselves, but what are we giving our adversaries? What capabilities are we giving them when we’re giving ourselves convenience? Sure, I can check into my work computer from home, fix some things, grab some files, but who else can get in there?”

These are good questions to ask.

...the National Security Agency validated that Excelsior’s courses meet all the elements of the Committee on National Security Systems National Training Standards ...

Since 2006, the Center for Strategic & International Studies has recorded 120 of what it describes as significant cyber incidents: successful attacks on government agencies and high-tech and defense companies, or economic crimes that result in losses of more than \$1 million. These attacks range from the January 2013 denial-of-service attacks against U.S. bank websites to the 2006 hacking of the Department of State’s networks and the downloading of trillions of bytes of information, and indicate that events in cyberspace are changing the look of terrorism.

Cybersecurity has become an increasingly hot topic for government and the private sector, as well as for individuals. Security risks and challenges are present wherever data is shared or stored, whether through a company’s computer systems or an individual’s mobile device. A recent study finds 85 percent of government IT professionals rank cybersecurity a high priority, reflecting an increasing dependence on information technology systems to deliver services.

During his career in information technology, Ken Desforges ’10 has seen cybersecurity and the protection of sensitive information become an increasingly important aspect of his job. Desforges, who earned a bachelor’s degree in information technology from Excelsior, worked in health care information systems in the late 1990s when the Heath Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) came into effect. HIPAA set standards for the security of electronic records of personal health information, and Desforges was an early implementor of HIPAA-compliant software, policies, and procedures at affected entities. Later, in his career in government, he has responded to security incidents and data breaches caused by hackers ranging from those known as Script Kiddies to attackers sponsored by nation states.

As director of information systems for the City of Diamond Bar, Calif., he reports there are typically more than 5 million attempts annually on the systems of this city of 56,000 people located 27 miles east of Los Angeles. And he adds, putting the number of attempts in perspective, that Diamond Bar is a relatively small city by California standards.

“As networks have expanded, it has become more and more important that we can trust those transactions, that they are secure,” says Desforges. The need for trust feeds into one of Desforges’ concerns for the industry — the education of the next generation of cybersecurity professionals. “The first thing that everyone needs is a solid base in this field, and that is something that will serve them throughout their career,” he says.

In 2011, Desforges developed the introductory class for Excelsior’s undergraduate certificate in cybersecurity. The certificate program focuses on the techniques, policies, and operational procedures that identify threats and seeks to secure information. The certificate course topics include security fundamentals, cybersecurity defense, large-scale cybercrime and terrorism, white collar crime, and cybersecurity investigations. The program prepares students for careers in security vulnerability analysis, incidence response, and cybersecurity investigations.

Demand for Cybersecurity Professionals

Jobs for security analysts, who ensure a company's information remains safe from cyber attacks, are expected to grow by 22 percent through this decade, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics. This rate is faster than the average for all occupations, perhaps reflecting the growing need for preventing and protecting against cyber attacks. In January 2013, *The Washington Post* reported the U.S. Department of Defense plans to expand its cybersecurity workforce from about 900 employees to approximately 4,000 in response to growing cyber threats against critical U.S. assets.

Excelsior administrators considered the positive job outlook when developing its cybersecurity programs. In addition to the undergraduate certificate in cybersecurity, the College offers an undergraduate concentration in cybersecurity technology, a Master of Science in cybersecurity, an MBA with a concentration in cybersecurity management, and a graduate certificate in cybersecurity management. The programs were developed with the input of experts in the field, and enrollment has steadily increased since their introduction in August 2011.

"Excelsior works closely with industry partners to prepare students for jobs that are in high demand," says Lifang Shih, associate dean of Excelsior College's School of Business & Technology.

Excelsior's cybersecurity programs are designed to give information technology professionals, law enforcement officials, military servicemembers, and others the skills and experience to prevent, detect, recover from, and respond to network and systems-related attacks on government and critical infrastructure. The curriculum covers strategies, policy, ethics and legal compliances, operational processes, techniques, and technologies that secure and defend sensitive information and information systems. "We're sharing information in our discussions that is really happening—in real time, and I think that is highly valuable to students," says Desforges, who has developed several of the College's courses and also teaches at Excelsior.

In December 2012, the National Security Agency validated that Excelsior's courses meet all the elements of the Committee on National Security Systems National Training Standards for such positions as information systems security professionals, senior systems managers,

system administrators, information systems security officers, systems certifiers, and risk analysts.

"This certification invites Excelsior College into an elite fraternity of academic institutions certified by our government's highest national security agency," says Jane LeClair, dean of the School of Business & Technology. "Web attacks cost businesses \$114 billion annually, and with attackers targeting both people and technologies, it is essential we develop the next generation of cyber technicians and those who can lead them." ■

Cyber Safe

Increased use of home computers and mobile devices combined with growing numbers of cyber attacks and risks to privacy create a need for more security.

Here are tips from the Department of Homeland Security to help minimize your vulnerability to cyber criminals:

- > Set strong passwords, change them regularly, and don't share them with anyone.
- > Keep your operating system, browser, and other critical software optimized by installing updates.
- > Maintain an open dialogue with your friends, family, colleagues, and community about Internet safety.
- > Use privacy settings and limit the amount of personal information you post online.
- > Be cautious about offers online—if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Source: The Stop.Think.Connect. Campaign





A LEARNER FIRST

One Woman's Dedication to Helping Daughter Benefits Thousands

BY DANA YANULAVICH

“Just like anything you teach, you should be a learner first,” explains Linda Rozell-Shannon, faculty member in Excelsior’s School of Health Sciences. This sage advice, a modest statement by any means, has been lived to the fullest by this one woman *tour de force*.

Dr. Linda, as her students call her, was blessed with the birth of a daughter, Christine, in 1994. However, her beautiful daughter was diagnosed with a hemangioma, a benign red mass of extra blood vessels that developed on Christine’s lower lip. At first, her daughter’s pediatrician told her not to worry about it, claiming the hemangioma would dissipate on its own as Christine grew. But, to Rozell-Shannon’s dismay, the tumor did not shrink; as a matter of fact, it tripled in size until it was as big as a golf ball.

“When I realized my daughter had a hemangioma I felt like God gave her to me so He would help me solve the problem as to what to do,” Rozell-Shannon recalls. “I never thought for a moment that He would not bring a solution. However, I did not realize that from her hemangioma a worldwide organization would start that would define my purpose.”

Approximately one in 10 newborns will be diagnosed with a vascular birthmark, according to Rozell-Shannon. While 90 percent of these birthmarks will disappear by

the time the child is 2 years old, the other 10 percent will be so significant that they require the opinion of a medical specialist. Nearly 85 percent occur in the head and neck area, primarily in the face, and the most common is the hemangioma. These bright red marks typically stop growing after one year, and regress for the next 10 years, but a deformity often remains.

Rozell-Shannon’s blind faith, a fervent belief that there was a solution to her daughter’s condition, led her on a path that resulted in the creation of the Vascular Birthmarks Foundation. According to its founder, it is the leading not-for-profit organization in the world dedicated to educating and assisting individuals who are diagnosed with hemangiomas, port wine stains, and vascular malformations.

A senior administrative analyst with New York State’s Department of Motor Vehicles at the time of Christine’s birth, Rozell-Shannon drew on her highly refined research skills in order to track down possible treatments for her daughter’s tumor. “By nature, I was a researcher,” she says. “And when they said that nothing can be done, but it’s the most common birth defect, I just couldn’t accept that as an answer.”

Despite being told that an attempt to remove the hemangioma would result in her daughter bleeding to death, Rozell-Shannon forged ahead in her quest for treatment. At first, a doctor in Boston suggested it would take



Eighteen years ago, Linda Rozell-Shannon (left) embarked on an incredible learning journey when her daughter Christine (right) was diagnosed with a hemangioma on her lower lip. Her quest to find a cure was the genesis of a worldwide organization that now has helped more than 60,000 people (many pictured in the background) to achieve positive outcomes and receive helpful information, and in some cases, free treatment. PHOTO: GARY GOLD



**“I had a dream that
I was going to write a book,
start a foundation, and
raise \$1 million.”**

—Linda Rozell-Shannon

five surgeries to repair her daughter’s lip, but a chance encounter in the Massachusetts hospital’s waiting room pointed her to a South African doctor who had recently relocated to Little Rock, Ark. As luck would have it, she was able to connect directly with the doctor, who instructed her to send Polaroid snapshots of her daughter via overnight mail. The next day after he reviewed the images, he offered his prognosis: “I can have your daughter looking normal in two hours.”

Dedicated to the Cause

“I had gone to bed, just praying and praying, and begging God to help me to help my daughter, but I also began to have a burden for all the other children,” she passionately relates. “If this is happening to my daughter and I have a master’s in public health and I’m a good researcher, what about all the other parents who aren’t as tenacious? So, that night, I had a dream that I was going to write a book, start a foundation, and raise \$1 million. So, I made a vow to God. I said, ‘OK if this is what you want me to

“Linda is in a class of her own. I am constantly amazed at her generosity of time, effort, and spirit to attend to the needs of all patients and families with vascular anomalies.”

— Dr. Gregory M. Levitin

do, let this doctor be the one who will make my daughter look normal, and I will dedicate my life to this cause.”

Rozell-Shannon’s prayers were answered. The surgery was a success, so much so that she walked right past her 18-month-old daughter in the recovery room, because she had not seen her with a normal lip since she was a newborn.

But before Rozell-Shannon could teach others about vascular birthmarks and treatments, she had to learn. Much of her knowledge was gathered from research on her daughter’s condition. In fact, on the night of Christine’s successful surgery she told her daughter’s physician, Dr. Milton Waner, that she’d write a book with him. In 1997, *Birthmarks: A Guide to Hemangiomas and Vascular Malformations* was published featuring pictures of her daughter on its cover.

After an article about her daughter’s successful surgery hit the newswires and was widely disseminated, Rozell-Shannon was inundated with inquiries from families seeking information on vascular birthmarks. In addition to a flood of letters, she received 40 to 50 phone calls a week. Even doctors contacted her, asking her how she discovered treatment options.

In order to meet the burgeoning need to respond to requests for information, Rozell-Shannon sought an efficient way to share her research and resources. The Internet was in its infancy in 1995 when Rozell-Shannon started the Vascular Birthmarks Foundation website. Since then, the birthmark.org site has grown into a vast warehouse of information, providing a place for discussion and information sharing, and facilitating opportunities to ask the experts. The original site receives

more than 2 million hits each month and has expanded its borders with additional international sites, including ones in Latin America, Canada, Europe, Poland, Africa, India, Vietnam, Asia, Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, and Russia.

“Linda is in a class of her own. I am constantly amazed at her generosity of time, effort, and spirit to attend to the needs of all patients and families with vascular anomalies,” observes Dr. Gregory M. Levitin of The Vascular Birthmark Center of New York. Like Rozell-Shannon, he had a daughter with a large hemangioma that required medical and laser therapy, and ultimately surgical treatment. Combining his unique personal experience with extensive training, Dr. Levitin is one of just a handful of specialists across the entire United States who is trained to treat vascular birthmarks, and an important member of Rozell-Shannon’s VBF team of experts.

Dr. Levitin adds, “One has to realize that this is the proverbial never-ending journey: every year thousands of children are born throughout the U.S. and the world; just as she finished helping one patient get the proper treatment, she literally picks up and moves on to the next, tirelessly and with the same enthusiasm each and every year.”

Expanding its borders outside of the virtual realm, the Vascular Birthmarks Foundation made its first international mission trip to Russia in June 2012. Rozell-Shannon organized the visit after receiving an inquiry from a Russian doctor seeking training from U.S. laser experts. During the four-day visit, more than 100 children were treated free of charge. The VBF iTEAM Program

now has five additional trips planned over the next three years, including visits to India, Paraguay, Ukraine, China, and Dubai.



Christine Shannon's surgery to remove a hemangioma from her lip was so successful that her mother didn't recognize her in the recovery room.

Foundation Spurs Lifelong Learning

Like many of the students she now teaches, Rozell-Shannon’s education path was non-traditional. While she originally planned to attend college right after high school, she worked full-time for New York State’s Department of Motor Vehicles instead. At that time, she took advantage of the newly established Career Opportunities Group for women, and eventually earned a bachelor’s degree in business administration through the College of Saint Rose’s DPEA (degree program for experienced adults). With a lifelong interest in health, Rozell-Shannon’s next degree was a master’s

in health education from Russell Sage College while she continued her full-time position.

As the Vascular Birthmarks Foundation continued to grow, Rozell-Shannon felt an additional credential would increase the perceived legitimacy of her work. She explains, "In order to elevate this organization, I believed I needed to get my PhD." So, she reduced her hours at the DMV and earned a doctorate in education through Walden University.

"I had such a wonderful experience earning my PhD online and it was such a good fit for me, because I'm a very self-motivated and self-disciplined person. How many people do you know who finish a PhD in two years and nine months?" she posits.

Now retired from the DMV after a 37-year career, Rozell-Shannon can devote more time to teaching. "The thing I enjoy most about teaching is 'exchanging' knowledge with my students," she reveals. Rozell-Shannon teaches three courses in the School of Health Sciences'

bachelor's degree program and notes, "[My students] teach me, and I facilitate their learning. I love hearing about what they do and how they can apply the health education teaching methods to their careers or how they have experienced firsthand health literacy problems with clients they deal with on a day-to-day basis. It reinforces that what we are teaching at Excelsior is practical and educational."

Practical matters are also top of mind for her Vascular Birthmarks Foundation work. Currently, she devotes 40–45 hours a week to Foundation matters but realizes the importance of passing the torch; thus succession planning is now underway. In the meantime, Rozell-Shannon navigates her work at the intersection of teaching, learning, and supporting others. She says, "I'm an advocate for my families to get the right treatment, and I'm an advocate first for my students to finish their degree and to get them so they can see their path." ■

Compassion TRANSCENDS BORDERS

In June 2012, Linda Rozell-Shannon traveled to Moscow with a team of six physicians for the Vascular Birthmarks Foundation's first international compassion trip. The genesis of this international outreach, the inaugural VBF iTEAM Program, began in the spring of 2011, when the Foundation received an email from Dr. Tatiana Belysheva of the Pediatric Oncology and Haematology Research Institute of N.N. Blokhin Russian Cancer Research Center of the Russian Academy of Medical Sciences requesting help in obtaining training in the U.S. with leading laser experts. Since the Russian hospital was already planning an annual conference on pediatric tumors, adding the vascular birthmarks team to the agenda was a perfect fit.

The VBF team of experts shared their knowledge via lectures during the conference, performed operations on patients for free, and also conducted a clinic, training physicians in the latest techniques. More than 100 children and adults were treated free of charge during the Russia visit.

VBF expert Dr. Gregory M. Levitin reports, "I truly enjoyed being part of the Moscow medical mission in June. I was invited to run a clinic for surgery cases, to operate on young children, and simultaneously help inform

and train the local pediatric surgeons on state-of-the-art therapy. *None* of this would have happened without Linda's efforts; she worked tirelessly to secure grants, lodging, and equipment for the mission."

Rozell-Shannon's help to one Russian baby extended well past the June visit. Guzal was in rough shape with an enormous hemangioma that affected her heart and threatened her vision. Funds were raised to bring her to the U.S., where Dr. Levitin could perform the first of possibly three or four more surgeries.

"She [Linda] was instrumental in helping one very unfortunate Russian child travel back to the U.S. the following month where I operated on her vascular tumor to save her eyesight," explains Dr. Levitin. "It wouldn't have happened without Linda."

The Russia trip is the first stop in a planned series of international outreach events, with the intent to travel abroad every nine months. Delhi is the next iTEAM visit in the works, and Rozell-Shannon has received requests from Ukraine, Dubai, and Paraguay to hold similar events.



During Linda Rozell-Shannon's (left) outreach trip to Russia, she arranged to bring baby Guzal (center) to the U.S. for free treatment. The first operation saved the baby's eyesight and two other surgeries were performed (see inset).



ZOMBIES

GIVE RISE TO CRITICAL THINKING

If you think the zombie is a dead subject, think again! The undead are on the rise, not only in popular TV shows such as “The Walking Dead,” but also in contemporary movies such as the teen romance, “Warm Bodies.” The never-say-die attitude of these timeless monsters is even the subject of a new Excelsior course, ENG 315 Zombies in Literature and Popular Culture.

The brains behind this course are from Excelsior’s School of Liberal Arts—Tracy Caldwell, program director and faculty advisor for the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program, and Scott Dalrymple, the school’s dean. Caldwell explains, “We’re both English majors and big fans of ‘The Walking Dead.’ We would have these protracted conversations that the show was good, but it was also touching on social commentary and psychological issues.” When Caldwell suggested to the dean that zombies would be a great subject for a humanities class, he told her to pursue it if she could find someone to develop a worthy course.

Carly Cate was just the person for the job. “She’s a huge zombie aficionado,” Caldwell explains. Cate eagerly devoured the assignment as course designer. She developed a curriculum that draws on current popular interests to deliver a course that is rich in historical and literary content and delves deeply into the social, psychological, and political ramifications of the zombie concept. Make no bones about it: This is not a gut course.

“I knew that Excelsior wanted something academic, an approach which would curtail the initial raised eyebrow of people who might scoff at the idea of an actual course about make-believe,” explains Cate. “In order to do so, I had to avoid some of the pitfalls I had seen in some of the courses I looked at [at other institutions] and present my subject as serious.”

Other courses come with prerequisites, but this may be the only Excelsior class that comes with a disclaimer,

warning students of the inherent violence in the subject matter. But that caveat aside, this course is like any other humanities offering. Using literature and film as a platform to stimulate critical thinking, the course is replete with weekly discussions, quizzes, projects, and midterm and final exams.

A SIGN OF THE TIMES?

What has spawned a recent resurgence in all things zombie? It may be a reflection of current events and modern anxieties.

“The 21st century is just rife with reasons to be concerned about the end of the world,” observes Caldwell. “This interest in zombies is a manifestation of contemporary social concerns.” Course designer Cate agrees, adding, “Some people have linked the renewed interest in the undead from a cult following to mainstream media to major catastrophic events such as 9/11. Even more recently, we have seen a great focus on not just anticipating the end of the world, but actually preparing for it as one might prepare for battle. Throughout history, there have always been various predictions of the end of the world, but I do have to think that things such as terrorism, nuclear warfare, and economic crises must strike a major chord with some people and their solution is to be proactive, in their own way.”

Even the Centers for Disease Control took advantage of popular interest in the brain-eating denizens when its Office of Public Health and Preparedness and Response issued guidelines on how to survive a zombie apocalypse. The thinking there, of course, was to capitalize on contemporary interests to make important points regarding overall emergency preparedness. If you’re prepared for the zombie apocalypse, then you’re well equipped for the likes of hurricanes, pandemics, earthquakes, or terrorist attacks. ►

THE 21ST CENTURY IS JUST RIFE WITH REASONS TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT THE END OF THE WORLD.

—Tracy Caldwell

Like a natural disaster such as Hurricane Katrina, the zombie apocalypse could bring a complete breakdown of society, raising all sorts of ethical and moral dilemmas. By partaking in zombie-themed distractions/entertainment/media such as movies and novels, people may find a venue for dealing with their own fears and anxieties. As brain-sucking ghouls are conquered by heroes in various forms, it can be seen as a metaphor for man dealing with his own fear of death, disease, asteroids, or any other number of natural and man-made disasters seemingly outside his control.

BRING ON THE MONSTERS!

In planning for future courses that draw on popular interests, Dean Dalrymple notes, “On the humanities side, we ask, ‘What are people reading now? What are people interested in?’ Things like horror literature and science fiction are increasingly popular. A lot of the folks who read Harry Potter novels, or read them to their kids, are taking college classes now.”

Dalrymple says that by tapping into interesting topics, students are more engaged and consequently have the potential to learn more. Caldwell concurs, adding, “The most effective course and the best education is something that is personally relevant to the student. And while zombies may be fun and interesting, a lot of the questions about what makes you human—what are the differences between you and a zombie—really make you think about who you are, who you want to be, who’s important to you.”

Course designer Cate adds, “I hope that students will learn to find the academic side of even a subject that does not seem academic. If students are able to watch zombie movies, TV, or read zombie-themed books and really consider the survival strategies of the characters, the leadership qualities, or whether or not the author is presenting an adequate portrayal of the undead, that student is engaging with that material in a way they wouldn’t have before.”

The zombies course is proof positive that interesting topics resonate with students: in the January term three sections of the course quickly filled up and it’s proven popular with nursing students in particular, perhaps because of the tie-ins with emergency preparedness.

Based on this ongoing assessment of contemporary interests, the College has other popular culture courses in the works. In May, students will be able to sink their teeth into ENG 320 Vampires in Literature and Film and in the fall, a course on pirates is ready to set sail. The pirates course promises to be truly interdisciplinary, covering content ranging from the novel “Treasure Island” to current events like piracy off the coast of Somalia. Other ideas that are being considered include science fiction and fantasy literature.

“If vampires are as popular as zombies, we’ll just keep the monsters coming,” Dalrymple quips. ■

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: COURSE EXCERPTS

Much of the course content in ENG 315 is presented in an engaging second-person perspective:

“With a lull in the constant gnashing and oozing of the undead horde, (See? That weaponry training did pay off...), you return once again to the escape of literature, it being your only hope of quelling thoughts of your impending consumption. Nestled in your makeshift hideout, the gentle hum of a zombie’s moan sprinkled by an occasional blood-curdling scream as another survivor is devoured, you rummage in your pack for another book.”

“In order to guard against being overwhelmed by this immense sense of culpability, you must find a stoicism within yourself to forge ahead, past the family now lumbering the streets in search of flesh, past the friends you could not save, past that one guy you are kind of glad is a zombie, and maintain your psychological and emotional sanity in order to have the wherewithal to fight another day.”

SEAN BIERI. USED WITH PERMISSION





ALUMNI CONNECTION

Whether you are

One of the **23,275** graduates of USNY-Regents External Degree Program, or
One of the **55,723** graduates of USNY-Regents College, or
One of the **14,027** graduates of Regents College, or
One of the more than **55,000** graduates of Excelsior College
Read on for news of your alumni community

GREETINGS, EXCELSIOR ALUMNI!



AS I LOOK BACK ON MY SEVEN YEARS ON THE ALUMNI ADVISORY BOARD, I am amazed at the changes that have happened at Excelsior in that time. Since I began my term, the College has expanded its offering of online classes, added new programs, and introduced an assessment-based path to a bachelor's degree.

One of the biggest changes I've seen, however, are increased opportunities for alumni connection and involvement. Whether it's interaction on social media, meeting fellow alumni and students in person at events held around the country, or

taking advantage of our new volunteer opportunities, the Excelsior community today has far more options for personal interaction than ever before.

I hope each of you is taking advantage of these chances to connect and serve. In this way, you can reap the benefits of being an Excelsior College alum long after graduation.

Ever Upward,

Sara Waldorf, BA '03, President
Excelsior College Alumni Association

WHERE ARE YOU @?

By sharing your email address with us, you will receive our monthly alumni e-newsletter, which is rich with information about the Alumni Association, benefits for alumni, new degree programs and career services announcements, as well as news about regional happenings. You will also receive invitations to events and career and professional development Web chats. Visit www.excelsior.edu/myprofile.

Let Your Voice Be Heard

Visit www.excelsior.edu/alumni to meet the 2013 nominees for the Alumni Advisory Board and accept or reject the proposed slate. The Alumni Advisory Board is the leadership of your alumni association. Voting will be open from May 1-7, 2013.

2012-2013

ALUMNI ADVISORY BOARD

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

Sara J. Waldorf, BA '03
Warren, MN
Serving 2006-2013
swaldorf@excelsior.edu

VICE PRESIDENT

William Senn, BCI '07
Franklin, TN
Serving 2011-2014
wsenn@excelsior.edu

SECRETARY

Wayne A. Oppel, BS '91
Winston-Salem, NC
Serving 2009-2015
woppel@excelsior.edu

ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

Kadidia Doumbia, BS '85
Washington, DC
Serving 2010-2013
kdoumbia@excelsior.edu

Dwayn Hanford, BS '05
Springfield, VA
Serving 2012-2014
dhanford@excelsior.edu

Adrienne Mason, BS '11
Endwell, NY
Serving 2012-2013
amason@excelsior.edu

LCDR Shannon McMillan, AS '07, BA '09
Virginia Beach, VA
Serving 2010-2013
smcmillan@excelsior.edu

Danny Scott, AS '01, BS '02
Phoenix, AZ
Serving 2007-2013
dscott@excelsior.edu

Ronald Tosto, BPT '12
Walnut Creek, CA
Serving 2012-2015
rtosto@excelsior.edu

Megan Wilcox, AS in nursing '11
Nassau, NY
Serving 2011-2014
mwilcox@excelsior.edu

Marie Wrinn, BS in nursing '10
Tucson, AZ
Serving 2011-2014
mwrinn@excelsior.edu

WEB CHATS

Web chats are presented by Ed Hallenbeck, career consultant for Excelsior College. Registration is required at

www.excelsior.edu/AlumniChatReg

Informational Interviewing:
A Valuable Career Exploration
and Networking Tool

TUESDAY,
APRIL
30

8-9 pm ET

Informational interviewing, long recognized as an essential career exploration and networking technique, can open doors to new careers and new opportunities. Learn how to connect with professionals in a field of interest to you and find out more about what they do and how they do it.

After the Job Offer:
A Primer for Negotiating
Compensation

WEDNESDAY,
MAY
22

8-9 pm ET

What do you do when an employer extends a job offer with a financial package that doesn't quite match your expectations? Learn practical and proven advice, techniques, and strategies for making the best choices in getting the right offer.

The 50+ Job Search:
Strategies for
Mature Workers

WEDNESDAY,
JUNE
19

8-9 pm ET

Learn how to approach the unique challenges of looking for work in your fifties or later with a renewed energy, confidence, and enthusiasm.

REGIONAL EVENTS

Look for us this spring in Washington, D.C. and Hawaii!

Visit www.excelsior.edu/alumnievents for information and registration instructions.



Central Texas Alumni Reception

|WHAT:

|WHEN: November 14, 2012

|WHERE: Shilo Inn Suites, Killeen, Texas

|WHO: More than 50 Excelsior alumni, students, staff, and guests gathered for a cocktail reception hosted by Command Sgt. Maj. 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 military graduates. Attendees included Alumni Ambassador Michelle Vega BS '11 and several Fort Hood education counselors who turned out to celebrate and support Excelsior's successful grads. More photos available at www.facebook.com/ECalumni.



Phoenix Alumni Reception

|WHAT:

|WHEN: February 10, 2013

|WHERE: Phoenix Airport Marriott

|WHO: Nearly 40 alumni, students, staff, faculty, and prospective students gathered for an afternoon reception hosted by the Alumni Advisory Board. Class years ranged from 1975 to 2012 and graduates shared many diverse and inspiring stories about how Excelsior helped them achieve their educational and professional goals. Among the attendees was Alumni Ambassador Brad Woodruff, BS '11; faculty members Dr. Anton Camarota (School of Business & Technology) and Karen Faith, MA (School of Liberal Arts); and Nancy Ondra, baccalaureate online coordinator for the School of Nursing.



LIKE US? JOIN US!

Check out the Excelsior College Alumni Association Facebook page for current information about alumni happenings. If you're on LinkedIn, join the Excelsior College Alumni Group.



Take the Next Step with Alumni Career Services

BY ED HALLENBECK

Tricia Shepherd '12 of Banks, Ore., knows firsthand the value of Excelsior College's Alumni Career Services. A new RN who was struggling to find a job in the competitive health care arena in the Pacific Northwest, she took advantage of a one-on-one resume critique session. Thanks to the expert guidance and resulting updated resume, two weeks after her counseling session Shepherd landed a job as an RN at the Organ Clinic in Portland.

"It was awesome," Shepherd reports about her career counseling experience. "I'm not good at articulating my skills on paper," she confides, "and talking to the career counselor and having him show me the steps, made it a lot easier."

And there are many more success stories like Shepherd's! Customized career services are available to meet the diverse needs of Excelsior's worldwide alumni. A number of options are offered — free of charge or for a small fee — to help alumni get started with their careers, navigate a career transition, and/or advance their careers. These include resume and cover letter critique services, career phone appointments, a career webinar series, and a website (www.excelsior.edu/web/career-center/alumni) filled with resources for people at all stages of career development.

The **resume critique service** affords alumni an opportunity to send in their resumes for a critique by a knowledgeable career professional. Through a series of questions, alumni provide information to the career professional, which allows the resume critique to be customized to their specific career goals. Within six business days, alumni receive suggestions and advice about how to improve their resumes in a way that gets noticed in today's competitive market. Alumni can also receive help with the challenging task of **writing an effective cover letter**.

"What most impressed me about Excelsior's career services was the quick response and professional guidance that I experienced," explains Maryanne Lee, MBA '11, of Claverack, N.Y. The president of Saturn Industries Inc., she took advantage of a cover letter and resume critique, and notes, "I liked the fact that the service provided to me was tailored to my specific goals."



Maryanne Lee, MBA '11, took advantage of cover letter and resume critique services tailored to her personal goals.

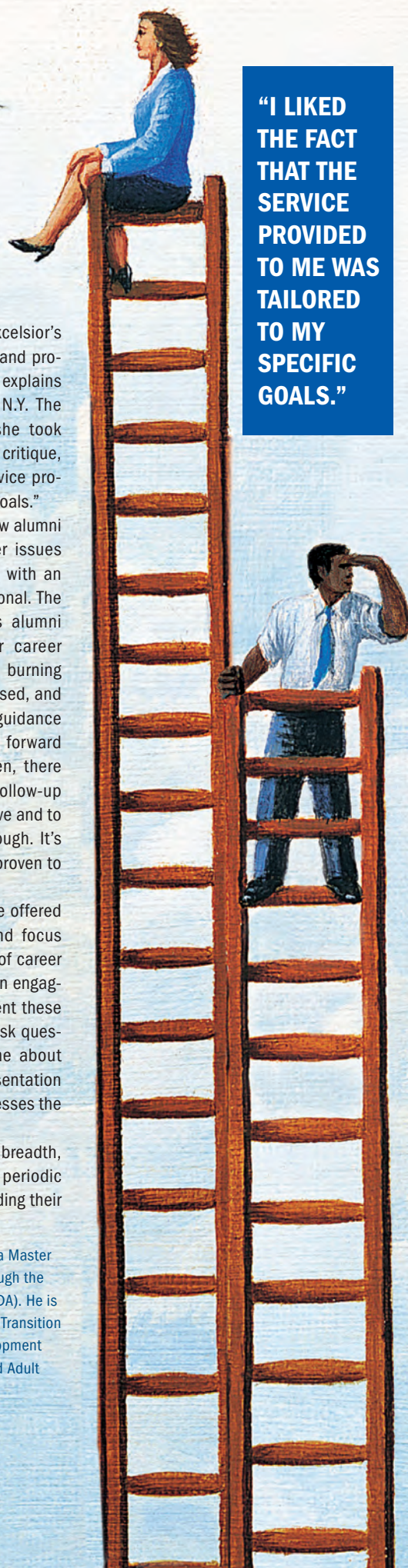
Career phone appointments allow alumni to bring a variety of career issues to a personal conversation with an experienced career professional. The career professional meets alumni "where they are" in their career development, identifies the burning career issue(s) to be addressed, and offers sound advice and guidance that will help alumni move forward in a constructive way. Often, there is both email and phone follow-up to keep the conversation alive and to help alumni with follow through. It's a coaching model that has proven to be effective.

Career Web chats are offered multiple times per year and focus on both traditional and current aspects of career building. The Web chat format provides an engaging and interactive environment to present these topics. Alumni have the opportunity to ask questions — and get answers — in real time about the specific topic. What starts as a presentation transforms into a conversation that addresses the specific career needs of the participants.

In an effort to continually improve the breadth, scope, and quality of career services, periodic surveys are conducted with alumni regarding their career interests and needs.

Ed Hallenbeck, Excelsior career consultant, is a Master Career Development Professional (MCDP) through the National Career Development Association (NCDA). He is also internationally certified as a Job & Career Transition Coach (JCTC), as well as a Job & Career Development Coach (JCDC), through the Career Planning and Adult Development Network.

"I LIKED THE FACT THAT THE SERVICE PROVIDED TO ME WAS TAILORED TO MY SPECIFIC GOALS."



HATS OFF!

WHAT HAVE YOU, OUR GRADUATES, BEEN DOING? READ ON TO FIND OUT.

ALABAMA



Judy A. Lipka, BSL '10, Mobile — has been elected president of the Alabama State Chiropractic Association

(ASCA) for 2012–2013. She earned her Doctorate of Chiropractic magna cum laude from Life University in 1982. She became a certified sports physician in 1994 and is an active volunteer for ProSport Chiropractic, an organization dedicated to providing care for athletes. Dr. Lipka earned Diplomate status with the American Chiropractic Neurology Board in 1996 and in 1998 was named Fellow of the International Academy of Chiropractic Neurology. In private practice serving the Mobile community since 1983, she was named the ASCA's Chiropractor of the Year in 2006 and 2011.

CALIFORNIA

Clifton L. Massingale Jr., BS '92, Corona — program manager for Raytheon Technical Services Company in Fullerton, Calif., earned a Doctor of Business Administration from the University of Phoenix in 2011. The owner of CLM Business Development Center in Corona, Calif., Massingale also earned a master's degree in public administration from Troy State University, an MBA from the University of Redland, and a Certificate in Systems Engineering from the University of California, Riverside.



Jeffery C. Diercksmeyer, AS '83, BSL '85, Costa Mesa — was promoted to captain of the Airbus 319/320/321

aircraft, flying domestic and international routes. A pilot for 27 years with US Airways, he continues to be involved in accident investigation

with the US Airlines Pilots Association, most recently working on the US Airways Flight 1549 "Miracle on the Hudson" landing.



Bob Uda, BS in business '88, San Marcos — earned a PhD in business administration with a specialization in

homeland security from Northcentral University (NCU) in Prescott Valley, Ariz., in July 2012. His doctoral dissertation was "Exploring Factors Contributing to Improvised Explosive Device (IED) Terror Campaigns in the United States Homeland." At NCU, Uda was the 2011 president of the Lambda Eta Chapter of Delta Mu Delta Honor Society. He was awarded a Provost Scholarship in 2009 and a Dean's Scholarship in 2008 and received Certificates of Achievement both years. He is also a member of Alpha Phi Sigma, the honorary society for Criminal Justice and Homeland Security, and a member of Golden Key International Honour Society. He also served as an inaugural member of the NCU Student Advisory Board of the School of Business and Technology Management during 2007–2009. He is an adjunct online instructor of homeland security with the Colorado Technical University in Colorado Springs, Colo. Since earning his Excelsior degree, Uda also received an MBA from the University of La Verne in 1993.

FLORIDA

Rodney Andreasen, BSL '91, Marianna — recently completed his third master's degree, an MA in security studies, homeland security and defense from the Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey, Calif. Andreasen also earned an MS in technical and occupational education from the University of Southern Mississippi in 1997 and an MS in justice and public safety from Auburn University-Montgomery in 1999.

He is the emergency management director for Jackson County, Fla., a position he has held for the past 11 years. He holds state certification as a Florida Professional Emergency Manager from the Florida Emergency Preparedness Association and is a Certified Emergency Manager from the International Association of Emergency Managers.

Judy Goodridge, AAS in nursing '10, Mulberry — is assisted nursing director at a health care facility.

GEORGIA

Byron G. Jackson, BAL '08, Marietta — is a chiropractor at The Chiropractic Center LLC and the author of *The Way I Did It: Lose Weight & Look Great Naturally* and *Stand Tall, Dream Big, Think Large, I Dare You!: We Can All Be Champions*. At Life University, he earned a Doctor of Chiropractic in 2008 and a master's degree in sports health science in 2011.

IDAHO



M. Anthony Harper, BAL '84, Boise — is the cofounder and publisher of a nonprofit Christian newspaper,

InterMountain Christian News, and host of the *InterMountain Christian News Hour* radio program. An ordained minister, he is also founder and executive director of the Shiloh Counseling Center Inc. He earned an MEd in general guidance in counseling from The College of Idaho in 1986 and a PhD in psychology from California Coast University in 1996.

ILLINOIS

Lee Alan Schmidt, BSL '92, Chicago — was honored as a University of Miami School of Nursing & Health Studies Alumnus of Distinction in October. The award honors alumni who, through nursing practice, exemplify

professionalism, humanity, and citizenship and brought distinction to themselves and the University of Miami. In July at Loyola University of Chicago, Schmidt was promoted to associate professor with tenure and to senior associate dean for academic affairs at its Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing. He also earned an MSN in 1996 from the University of Tampa and a PhD in nursing science from the University of Miami in 2001.

MARYLAND

Matthew Koch, BSL '10, Baltimore — has been accepted into the Global MBA program at The Johns Hopkins University's Carey Business School as a member of the class of 2014 and was awarded a dean's scholarship.

NEBRASKA



Ross T. Ridenoure, BS '83, BNT '89, Omaha — was honored with the 2012 North American Young Generation in

Nuclear (NA-YGN) George Hairston Visionary Leadership Award. Vice president of nuclear energy initiatives and chief nuclear officer at Parsons, an engineering, construction, technical, and management services firm, Ridenoure received the award in recognition of contributions in the nuclear industry that go above and beyond in their support of NA-YGN. He is also a member of the American Nuclear Society, the Nuclear Energy Institute's Nuclear Strategic Issues Advisory Committee, and the NuScale Power Customer Advisory Board. Ridenoure was formerly the chairman of the board of directors for the Utilities Service Alliance and was a member of the Strategic Teaming and Resource Sharing Steering Committee and the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations Executive Advisory Group.

NEW JERSEY



Christopher H. K. Persaud, BS in accounting '02, New Milford—is grants administrator at Newark Community

Health Centers Inc. He is a fellow of the Association of Cost & Executive Accountants, a fellow of the Association of Accounting Technicians, and a member of the Association of Certified Accountants. He is an enrolled agent, licensed to practice before the Internal Revenue Service and a graduate of the Certified Financial Planner program at the College of Financial Planning in Denver. Persaud is the author of five books, two of which have won Christian Choice Book Awards: *Evolution: Beyond the Realm of Science* and *The Da Vinci Code Revisited: A Conclusive Refutation of the Widespread, Sinister Lie*.

NEW YORK



Lou Ann Gleason, AS in nursing '04, BS in nursing '11, Ellisburg—received two school nursing awards in 2012.

In May, she was the recipient of the Excellence in School Nursing Award from the New York State Association of School Nurses (NYSASN) Zone 9. As supervising school nurse for the South Jefferson Central School District in Adams, N.Y., she received the award based on her leadership and nursing standards within her district. In November at the New York State

Nurses Annual Conference, Gleason received the 2012 Excellence in School Nursing Award in recognition of her contributions to Zone 9 and NYSASN. She is pursuing her master's degree in nursing with a specialization in nursing education at Excelsior.



Christopher M. Martell, BSL '01, Ballston Spa—has been named a partner at Hodgson Russ' Real Estate & Finance Practice

Group in Albany, N.Y.

OHIO



Gary Willey, BSL '08, Xenia—graduated in March 2012 from Wright State University with a Master of Science in logistics and

supply chain management.

OREGON



Tracy J. Prince, BS '92, Portland—is scholar in residence at Portland State University's Portland Center

for Public Humanities. She is the author of *Culture Wars in British Literature: Multiculturalism and National Identity* and *Portland's Goose Hollow*. She earned an MA from the University of Nebraska at Omaha in 1992 and a PhD from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1997.

SOUTH CAROLINA



Steven G. Rindahl, BAL '96, Columbia—is battalion chaplain of the 277th Aviation Support Battalion with the 10th Mountain

Division at Ft. Drum, N.Y. He recently completed the U.S. Army Chaplain Captain Career Course at Ft. Jackson, S.C. He also earned a Master of Divinity from Southwestern Seminary in 2005 and a Master of Theology from Spurgeon's College in 2006.

TEXAS



Bobby Ysaguirre, BS '96, San Antonio—was promoted to instructional systems specialist (GS-1750-11) at the

U.S. Army Medical Department Center and School, Medical Education Training Campus at Fort Sam Houston, Texas. He also earned a dual MA in management and human resources development at Webster University in 2000.

VIRGINIA



William H. Bishop, BSL '08, Virginia Beach—draws on his personal experiences in transitioning from the U.S. Navy in

his new book, *Going Home: A Troop's Guide for Successfully Transitioning to*

Share news of your accomplishments and activities:

Go to excelsior.edu/hatsoff, download and fill in the easy-to-use form, and click to send your submission electronically.

the 'Real World'. In sharing the knowledge and insight he gained while developing and implementing his own plan, he aims to assist servicemembers and others in transition. The book focuses on helping readers set goals, take personal inventory, and develop and implement a networking plan. Bishop is the founder and chief executive officer of The Bishop Advisory Group, an independent consulting company that harnesses critical thinking to provide practical solutions to today's complex global challenges. He is a strategic leadership doctoral student at Regent University, where he earned an MBA in 2010.

Don Shaw, BSL '93, Gainesville—is chief of the Enterprise Architecture Development & Management Division at the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency. The division recently won the DoD Enterprise Architecture Achievement Award in competition with 80 other enterprise architecture programs. Shaw earned an MS in information management from Syracuse University in 2009, and an MPA from Troy State University in 2001. He is working on a PhD in public policy at George Mason University.



VICTORIA CAIN'S MISSIONS ACCOMPLISHED

Victoria Cain, BS '06, Crestview, Fla.—is a former Army UH-60 Black Hawk pilot and is included in a new book that features true stories about 71 women who shared the same two dreams—to be a military aviator and a mom. *Military Fly Moms: Sharing Memories, Building Legacies, Inspiring Hope* was compiled and edited by retired naval aviator Linda Maloney.

Cain grew up outside the Kentucky National Guard post where she routinely saw Black

Hawk helicopters flying overhead. She enlisted in 1997 and became an Army medic. Following an opportunity to ride in a Black Hawk, she knew she wanted to learn to fly. Finally, in 2000, her dream of attending flight school was realized. After earning her wings, she got her first choice of aircraft—the UH-60 Black Hawk.

After joining an air assault battalion at Fort Campbell, Ky., she deployed to Iraq in 2003 and flew more than 450 combat hours. Returning home from deployment, she married and had a daughter. In 2010, she left active duty.



BY THE

#S



12%

The increase in the number of students enrolled at Excelsior College from October 2011 to October 2012. Enrollment jumped to 37,194, the largest number of students ever.



The number of new degree programs offered by the School of Liberal Arts. The new degrees include BA in Humanities with four optional concentrations: Fine Arts, Literature, Cultural Studies, and Communications; BS in Social Science with three optional concentrations: Human Services, Environmental Studies, and International Relations; BS in Natural Science with one optional concentration in Biology; and BS in Military Studies. The three broad majors provide students with increased flexibility in completing their degree programs, says Susan Moyer, assistant dean of the School of Liberal Arts. The military studies major was developed to reflect the interests of students who serve in the military.

35,233

The total number of exams students took during the 12-month period ending October 15, 2012. Excelsior offered 56 different exams, and 16,434 students took at least one.

50+

The number of community colleges Excelsior has teamed up with to offer increased access to higher education.



The total weight, in pounds, of electronics—including computers, mice, monitors, printers, and TVs—recycled by the Excelsior community at a November 15 event sponsored by the College's Green Committee.

The number of consecutive times Excelsior has been named a “top military-friendly” college by *Military Advanced Education*. Schools are rated in key areas, including tuition, scholarship and financial aid programs, advising excellence, and presence on military installations, as well as acceptance of transfer credit, credit by exam, and American Council on Education (ACE)-recognized military training. In addition, schools must meet specific standards on veteran support services, faculty training on veteran-specific issues, and mentorship programs, among others. Nearly 13,000 students enrolled at Excelsior are active-duty military personnel or veterans.



**“Because of what Excelsior does for its students,
I want to be an enduring part of its future.” — RUTH OLMSTED**

Plan Now for Future Success

Excelsior's Ruth Olmsted has contributed to student success for the past 20 years through her work in portfolio assessment and credit by exam and as a longtime donor.

When you choose to include a gift to Excelsior College in your overall estate and financial plans, you join Ruth and a community of supporters who ensure the College's future. With a little planning, you can help ensure high-quality educational opportunities for generations of Excelsior College students to come.

Planned giving allows flexibility in determining both the amount and the ultimate use of the funds within the College, while providing you with possible income as well as capital gains and estate tax benefits.

A planned gift can help you make a larger, more lasting impact on Excelsior College than you ever thought possible.

For more information, visit www.excelsior.edu/plannedgiving for resources such as free guides and a gift calculator or contact Marcy Stryker, director of development, toll free at 888-647-2388, ext. 145.



PLAN NOW FOR FUTURE SUCCESS

- ☐ I would like more information on how to support Excelsior College after my lifetime.
- ☐ I have included a gift to Excelsior College in my will or other estate plans.
- ☐ I would consider including a gift to Excelsior College in my will or other estate plans.

Name (PLEASE PRINT) _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP code _____

All inquiries are confidential and without obligation.

Mail to: Marcy Stryker, Development Office, Excelsior College,
7 Columbia Circle, Albany, NY 12203

