

LIVE & LEARN

EXCELSIOR COLLEGE MAGAZINE



Enthusiastic Epidemiologist

Adjunct faculty member
Rena Jones studies
links between pollution
and cancer

p. 14

EXCELSIOR COLLEGE

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History in the Making: Alumni at the Helm

For the first time, two Excelsior graduates lead the College's board of trustees. Jerry L. Neff '87, a trustee since January 2011, was elected chair, and Mary O'Connor '94 was elected vice chair. Both have been active supporters of the College. Neff chaired the 40th anniversary celebration, and O'Connor was president of the alumni association from 2002 to 2009, when she joined the board of trustees. PHOTO: MIKE HEMBERGER



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In the digital age, authors choosing to self-publish their works are both writer and publisher, and oftentimes a few roles in between.

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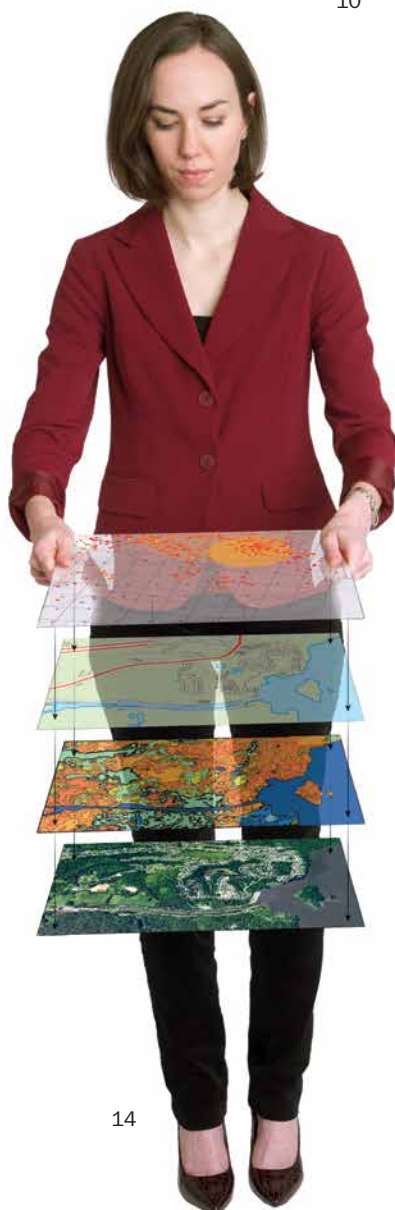
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ON THE COVER: Rena Jones, an adjunct faculty member in the School of Health Sciences.

RENA JONES PHOTO: EIKON PHOTOGRAPHY

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: NICK KLERCKER



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Dr. John F. Ebersole

What will Excelsior College look like in 2019?

That is the question posed to Excelsior's staff, adjunct faculty, students, and alumni this past fall. While the College may not have a crystal ball to predict the future, it is busy at work envisioning what the years ahead may bring.

All College constituent groups were invited to participate—either in person, live from a distance, or asynchronously via archived webcasts—in a series of discussion forums. The conversations centered on six themes: academic programs; student, faculty, and alumni services; student success; future demographics and culture; next-generation teaching and learning; and brand. Groups of volunteers shared their ideas on each topic, leading to productive and energizing discussions by the College community.

The ideas produced during the forums have helped to give shape to a vision for the next five years. The vision and its resulting strategic plan encompass all sectors of Excelsior's rich community. Notably, alumni are increasingly represented in the picture envisioned in strategic planning. Numbering more than 150,000 strong, Excelsior's alumni demonstrate the success of the College's model for attaining degrees and credentials.

Building on this success, Excelsior will continue to provide students with programs and support that help them achieve their goals. As an institution, the College is focused on providing relevant and meaningful education to students. An example of this can be seen in the fact that the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program recently received the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) Award for Outstanding Institutional Practice in Student Learning Outcomes (see p. 3). This prestigious award recognizes the MA/LS program for its attention to the measurement of student learning. Findings from this review system helped create enhancements to the student experience within the program.

As Excelsior looks to the future, it clearly sees opportunities to support students in a rapidly changing higher-education environment. The College community has embraced these strategic challenges, and with its input, the Excelsior of the future remains committed to student success.

Upward,

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

MA/LS Receives CHEA Award

The Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program is the recipient of a 2014 CHEA Award for Outstanding Institutional Practice in Student Learning Outcomes. Given by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), the award honors the MA/LS program for a system designed by faculty and administrators to measure student learning within the program's flexible online format.

The CHEA Award was established in 2005 to recognize institutions that have been exceptional in developing and applying evidence of student learning outcomes to improve higher education quality and accountability. Eastern Kentucky University and The Citadel were also honored in 2014.

"Over the past two years, we have honed the system, gathered data, and used that data to drive changes in the curriculum to help students meet the outcomes we believe are so important in a Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program," explains Tracy M. Caldwell, program director. "The goal was to determine how well the program is assisting students in acquiring the knowledge and skills they would need to demonstrate mastery of the learning outcomes. We believe the data gathered in assessing student performance has truly strengthened both the academic rigor of the program as well as the student experience." ■



Among the three 2014 recipients of the CHEA Award for Outstanding Institutional Practice in Student Learning Outcomes, the MA/LS nod was the only program-level honor. From left, Piyusha Singh, associate dean, School of Liberal Arts; Jean M. Taylor, director of learning assessment, School of Liberal Arts; and Tracy M. Caldwell, program director of the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies program, display the award.

Forensics is more than the common conception inspired by popular TV shows.

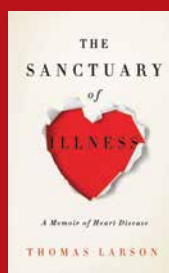
Forensics Concentration Available for BS in Criminal Justice



The Investigative Forensics concentration, available in the Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice program since January, offers a broad overview of the topic, and covers subjects that include forensic pathology, computer forensics, forensic psychology, and procedures and practice such as crime reconstruction.

Criminal Justice Program Director Michael Verro explains that forensics is more than the common conception inspired by popular TV shows. "People always think of 'NCIS' or 'CSI' when thinking about forensics—absolutely gorgeous people in tight leather pants and high heels working in labs, solving a case in one hour," he says. By contrast, the word forensics as defined by Verro, who had a 23-year law enforcement career, means to apply scientific theories, concepts, and procedures to the court system. Consequently, he adds, a small percentage of forensics work may be tied to a criminal case, while the majority of tasks can be carried out in any number of fields, ranging from forensic accounting to forensic psychology.

Verro believes the concentration will appeal not only to younger students, but also to seasoned officers who are transitioning from patrol duty to detective assignments where they need to acquire more knowledge of hands-on crime scene investigation. ■



By telling his story, journalist Thomas Larson reminds readers that a diagnosis of heart disease may affect more than just one heart. In *The Sanctuary of Illness: A Memoir of Heart Disease*, recently published by Hudson Whitman/Excelsior College Press, Larson traces his journey from experiencing three heart attacks in five years to finding a path to healing with his partner Suzanna. They live in a "sanctuary," a state of living created when treatment removes symptoms, leading one to feel protected and safe, but where the condition and facing one's own mortality are ever-present. An excerpt and a video trailer for the book, which is available in paperback and as an e-book, can be viewed at www.hudsonwhitman.com. A series of articles, based on an interview with Larson, can be seen at www.excelsior.edu/excelsiorlife.



Lumina Foundation President to Speak at Commencement

Jamie P. Merisotis, president and CEO of Lumina Foundation, will address Excelsior graduates at Commencement on July 11 in Albany, N.Y. The Lumina Foundation is the nation's largest private foundation committed solely to enrolling and graduating more students from college. Merisotis leads the Foundation's \$1.3 billion endowment and oversees all staff and strategic decision making.

Long a champion of the idea that higher education enhances both society and individuals, Merisotis has worked for decades to increase educational opportunity among low-income, minority, and other historically underrepresented populations. At Lumina, Merisotis is continuing that effort by employing a strategic, outcomes-based approach in pursuing the Foundation's mission of expanding college access and success. Under his leadership, Lumina has embraced an ambitious and specific goal: to ensure that, by 2025, 60 percent of Americans hold

high-quality degrees, certificates, and other credentials — up from the current level of less than 40 percent.

Before joining Lumina in 2008, Merisotis was founding president of the Institute for Higher Education Policy. Established in Washington, D.C., in 1993, IHEP is an independent, nonpartisan organization regarded as one of the world's premier education research and policy centers.

Merisotis' work has been published extensively. He has written and edited several books and monographs and is a frequent contributor to magazines, journals, and newspapers. He has served as a regular commentator on the award-winning PBS show "Nightly Business Report." His writing has appeared in The Washington Post, National Journal, Times Higher Education Supplement (London), The Chronicle of Higher Education, The Huffington Post, Politico, Roll Call, and many other print and online publications. ■

COMMENCEMENT 2014 Share in the excitement of Commencement on July 11. The ceremony will be broadcast live at www.excelsior.edu/webcast. For more information, go to www.excelsior.edu/commencement.



ONLINE WRITING LAB MIXES FORMULA FOR SUCCESS

A new, improved version of the Excelsior College Online Writing Lab (OWL) has taken flight. Designed to support beginning college writers and those seeking to advance their skills beyond introductory writing classes or programs, the OWL offers unique multimedia learning resources. Quizzes, videos, interactive PDFs, and an online game called Paper Capers help writers gain new skills or polish existing ones. Open 24/7, the OWL, located at excelsior.edu/owl, is available worldwide; users need not be Excelsior students to tap into the lab's services. A supplemental Paper Capers smartphone app lets Android and iOS users play the learning game on the go.

Seven areas in the OWL support diverse student needs. Included are the ESL Writing Online Workshop and a tutorial on avoiding plagiarism. Helping students from idea conceptualizing through the mechanics of writing a paper in traditional and digital media, the OWL covers how to locate information and use sources, the writing process, different discipline-specific writing styles, and grammar essentials. In keeping with digital trends, the OWL also provides instruction on writing emails, blogs, and presentations, as well as on writing for social media and websites.

A recent nationwide pilot study showed college students' writing skills significantly improved through use of the OWL. Students at Excelsior and five partner colleges in the study showed the equivalent of a half grade point increase in the final grade. ■

Two Elected to Board of Trustees

Joining the ranks of the Excelsior College Board of Trustees are Debbie Dawson Hatmaker, a nursing leader, and Jack M. Lafield, chairman of an energy company.



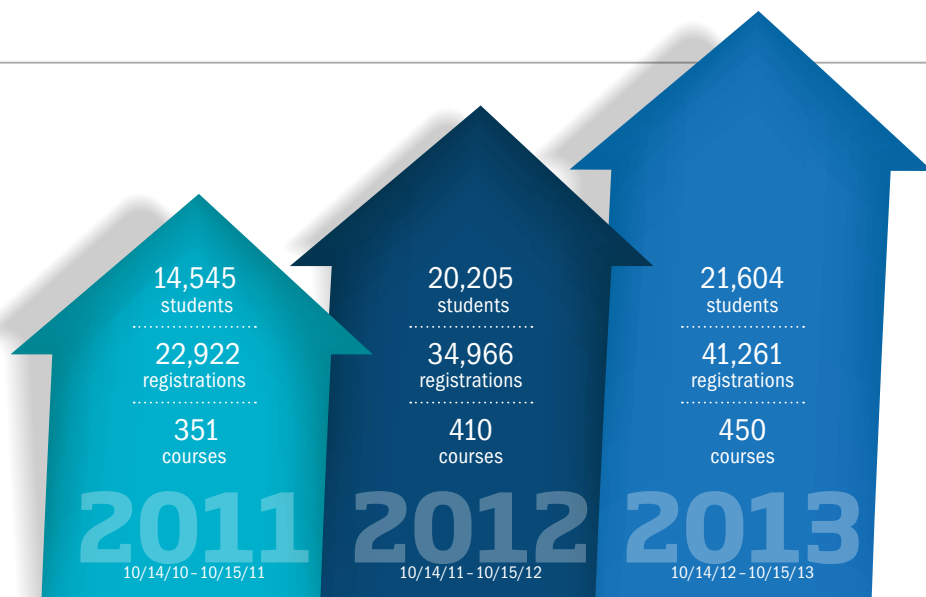
Hatmaker is the executive director of the American Nurses Association. She earned a Bachelor of Science in nursing from the

University of Tennessee College of Nursing in Memphis, and a Master of Science in nursing and doctorate from the Medical College of Georgia. She is the recipient of the Georgia Nurses Association's highest award: the Distinguished Service Award, and the ANA Distinguished Membership Award. She was inducted as a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing in 2012.



Lafield is chairman and CEO of Caiman Energy II LLC, an independent midstream company that provides the infrastructure and services

necessary to move natural gas products from the wellhead to market. Lafield earned a Bachelor of Science in chemical engineering from Texas A&M University and is a graduate of the Executive Program at Stanford University.



In addition to increases over the past three years, as illustrated above, course registrations remained strong in the second half of 2013. This past fall, 20,867 students registered for at least one course, resulting in a total of 37,168 registrations in 435 unique courses. Excelsior began offering online courses in 2004, and the 2012–2013 fiscal year marked the first time that more than half of the College's revenue income derived from courses. For more information on academic and institutional accomplishments for the year ending June 30, 2013, see the annual report at www.excelsior.edu/annualreport. ■

Have You Heard?

Two areas of specialization—health care informatics and public health—were added to the Master of Science in Health Sciences program, joining the existing health professions education and no-specialization options. The College began offering the master's program in May 2013. There is steady interest in the graduate program from Excelsior alumni who earned a bachelor's in health sciences.

For the fifth time, the American Assembly for Men in Nursing (AAMN) named Excelsior College a recipient of the Best School or College of Nursing for Men Award. Excelsior was one of three schools recognized with the award in October 2013, joining Goldfarb School of Nursing at Barnes-Jewish College and Riverside City College School of Nursing. "This award is affirmation of our commitment toward a diversified RN workforce and the excellence of our nursing curriculum," says Mary Lee Pollard, dean of the School of Nursing.

The inaugural issue of the Journal of Business & Technology can be read online at Excelsior's website or in e-pub format from iBooks. Peer-reviewed articles explore the impact of virtual teams on trust in the workplace, how having lost a job to downsizing affects people when they start a new job, and other topics. The e-journal is envisioned as a reference source for professionals in academia, business, industry, and government as well as for graduate and undergraduate students. Founding editor Eric S. Harter, faculty program director, plans that information in the journal guide students, researchers, practitioners, policy makers, and the general public on issues of business and technology.



Excelsior Grants Support Faculty Research Activities



Adjunct faculty member Robert Altamura finds faults with his research. A geologist, Altamura used an Excelsior Faculty Professional Development Grant to help fund his field work last summer as he and research partner Ronald Marple sought to map faults in Connecticut. Using Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) imagery to test a theory the two have developed, Altamura and Marple trudged through the New England wilderness with a magnetometer strapped to Altamura's back to make magnetic measurements of buried bedrock. "We're riding a wave of new technology by trying to

"GEOLOGISTS THINK NOTHING OF A FEW HUNDRED YEARS. SIGNIFICANT SEISMIC STRESS COULD BE BUILDING UP."

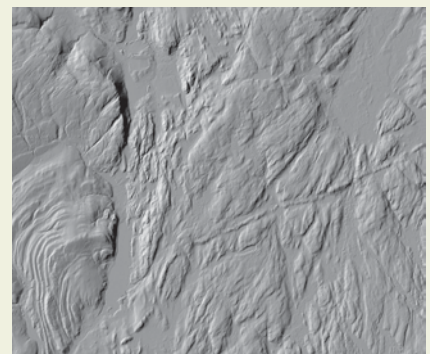
find/discover faults by having access to this remotely sensed imagery," he explains.

While other parts of the United States may come to mind when thinking about potential earthquakes, such as California, the Northeast is not immune to seismic activity. Altamura cites a big quake that occurred near Boston in 1755. "That's not that long ago geologically speaking, so even though it's a long time for us, it's something to be concerned about," says Altamura. "Geologists think nothing of a few hundred years. Significant seismic stress could be building up."

Altamura has been studying the geology of the Northeast for many years. His field work began as a graduate student at Wesleyan

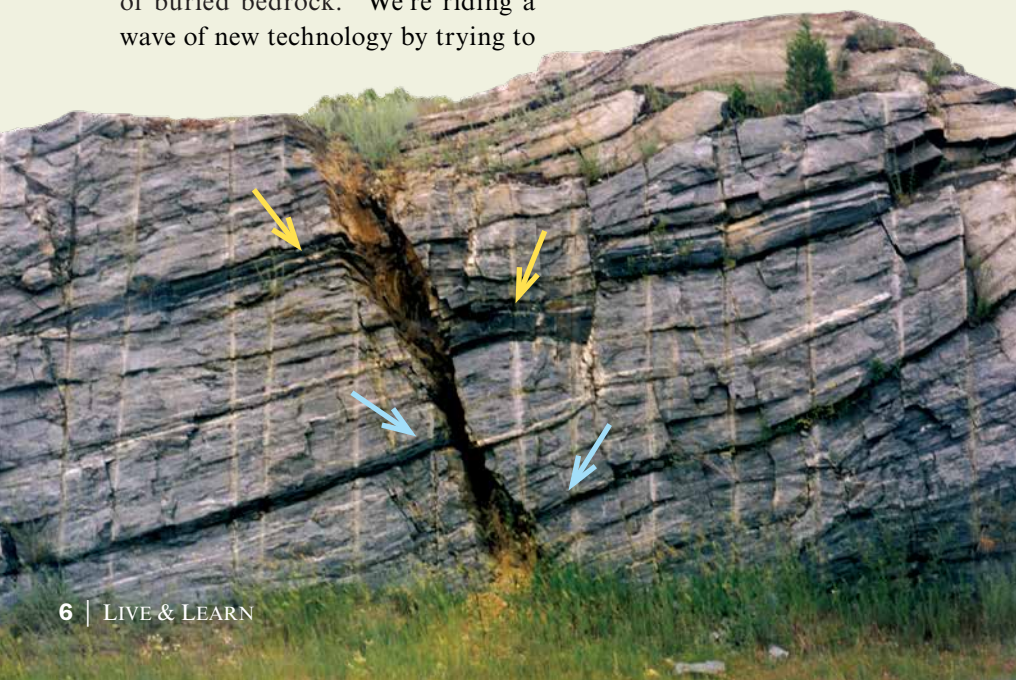
University in Middletown, Conn. In addition to his academic work, he has also served as a consultant for mining and geological consulting companies and with the State Geological and Natural History Survey of Connecticut. In 2013, he and his team published a major paper that provided new data and interpretations showing that the Eastford fault/lineament was the cause of the 1987 cluster of earthquakes near Moodus, Conn.

Altamura teaches Oceanography and Earth Science and Society for Excelsior, and his research may prove to be earth-shattering some day. "The identification of active faults within the high-density population belt between New York City and Boston, of course, could have considerable value," he says. ■



▲ This remotely sensed (LiDAR) image of an area in south-central Connecticut is used to interpret presumed fracture zones (lineaments). Lineaments are then field checked to verify if they are actual bedrock fractures (width of image represents ~ 13 miles).

◀ This fault near Salem, Conn., represents those studied by Robert Altamura as part of his Excelsior-supported field research. Note the displaced black layers (yellow and blue arrows) on opposite sides of the biggest crack (fault) and the crumbled fault rock (breccia) at the bottom (height of outcrop is ~ 25 feet).



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ROBERT ALTAMURA

Since its founding in 2013, an Excelsior program designed to foster faculty professional development has awarded \$11,000 to support a wide range of scholarly activities. The Excelsior College Faculty Professional Development Grants for Applied Scholarship are available in four categories: discovery, integration, application and engagement, and teaching. Grants have funded scholarly pursuits ranging from paper presentations to field work. Here are highlights from two recent faculty projects.



**“WE’RE ALL DEALING
WITH MORTALITY—
NONE OF US IS GOING
TO GET AWAY.”**

Death, dying, and bereavement are anything but dead subjects for School of Health Sciences adjunct faculty member Deborah Golden Alekson. She tapped into an Excelsior Faculty Professional Development Grant to moderate an interfaith forum on the spiritual beliefs and rituals related to the process of dying, death, and the afterlife as understood by many of the world’s religions. The first forum in January 2013 in Great Barrington, Mass., was so well received that it has given life to an annual event.

“We’re all dealing with mortality—none of us is going to get away,” she says. She acknowledges that she’s

had an unprecedented amount of personal loss that has fueled her interest in a subject that admittedly may make some uncomfortable. She lost an infant daughter, her husband died of cancer, and her mother committed suicide at 85.

“There are a lot of questions that have not been answered for individuals and I’m hoping that these forums will give people an opportunity to learn about their own faith tradition but also others,” says Alekson. More than 100 turned out to hear the perspectives on death and dying from members of the Catholic, Jewish, Buddhist, Christian, and Islamic communities. “One would hope that one’s transition from life to death would be as peaceful a process as possible, but that’s not the case,” says Alekson. “And it would also be very nice if you could turn to your faith tradition and get some reassurance and some guidance.”

On the College’s faculty since 2009, Alekson has taught four courses for Excelsior: Spirituality and Life Transitions; Death, Dying, and Bereavement; Sociology of Health and Illness; and Ethics of Health Care. Her personal experience and classroom dealings helped frame the forum, and conversely, the knowledge shared at the event will find its way back to her students. “The nature of the courses I teach gives me the opportunity to share my personal stories—my daughter, my husband, now my mother—that gives students an opportunity to feel much more comfortable in discussing these subjects and sharing their own personal experiences comfortably,” she says. “It’s quite intense.”

While people may try to avoid thoughts of death, dying, and grief, there is much to be gained from the study and discussion of these inevitable events and emotions. “Grief is a very significant experience that our society plays down, and it’s to our detriment,” says Alekson. “There’s so much to learn and understand about life and the human experience by truly being with one’s grief.” ■



This past February more than 100 people turned out to hear different perspectives at an Interfaith Forum on Death, Dying, and the Afterlife in Great Barrington, Mass. Health Sciences adjunct faculty member Deborah Golden Alekson received a Faculty Professional Development Grant to support the first forum in 2013.

School of Public Service Welcomes Dean

Robert E. Waters has been appointed dean of the School of Public Service. As a consultant to the College, he developed a proposal for a Master of Public Administration program. From 2012 to 2013, he served as vice president for academic affairs and chief academic officer at the Institute for Shipboard Education. For 11 years prior to that, he held the position of associate

vice president for academic affairs and assistant to the president at the University of Maryland, College Park.

He earned a bachelor's degree at Eckert College, a master's in public policy at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government, and a PhD in administration and policy analysis with an emphasis in higher education at Stanford University. ■



JOHN BOLLENTIN

The National Cybersecurity Institute at Excelsior College assists government, industry, military, and academic sectors with meeting the challenges of cybersecurity policy, technology, and education. The academic and research center, based at the College's office in Washington, D.C., opened in January. Jane LeClair, the chief operating officer of the National Cybersecurity Institute, shares more on the new center.

Q. Why did Excelsior College form the National Cybersecurity Institute?

A. The goal of the NCI is to help raise awareness of evolving cybersecurity issues and support efforts to deal with them. We also promote Excelsior's cybersecurity programs and that students completing these programs can help meet the United States' cyber workforce needs — according to some, as many as 100,000 new jobs will be generated between now and 2020.

Q. What are some of the institute's current initiatives?

A. NCI is working on a peer-reviewed cybersecurity journal, plus a podcast and webinar series that align with the new book, "Protecting Our Future: Educating a Cybersecurity Workforce" (Hudson Whitman/Excelsior College Press, 2013). We are also developing training in several cyber areas. We are working on a second volume of our well-received "Protecting Our Future" book, which will identify the specifics of several other important cybersecurity sectors, including entertainment, transportation, and retail.

Q. You were the editor of "Protecting Our Future: Educating a Cybersecurity Workforce." What did you learn in the course of producing the book?

A. Editing the book has heightened my awareness that everyone is vulnerable to cyber attack and needs to protect organizational data as well as personal data. I also learned there is a great pool of talent out there who are willing to share their expertise to help raise cyber awareness.

Q. How will the National Cybersecurity Institute support the academic programs at the College?

A. Of course, one of our most important goals is to support the School of Business & Technology's six cybersecurity programs by speaking about them, writing about them, and naturally, working toward enrollments to meet the need for educated cyber professionals. I frequently speak at conferences and seminars and write and present papers to help spread the word about Excelsior College. ■



KRIS QUAA

Jane LeClair

Chief Operating Officer of the National Cybersecurity Institute

Quick Tips to Refine Your Resume

BY MARIBETH GUNNER PULLIAM

Writing an effective resume is one of the most important tasks in the job search process. Your resume outlines your unique value and reflects your personal and professional brand. Most employers will spend only 20 to 30 seconds reviewing your credentials, so ensure your document serves as a strong self-marketing tool by crafting a resume that gets you noticed at first glance and sets you apart from other candidates.

Here are some tips to build a better resume:

- > Document your achievements. Show the employer why you are qualified. Highlight your past accomplishments, not just your previous job responsibilities. Accomplishments that are results-oriented will attract the employer's interest and are much more meaningful than just listing job duties.

- > Customization counts. Tailor your resume to portray a clear match between your qualifications and the job requirements.

- > Quantify information on your resume whenever possible. For example, convey to the employer the number of staff you supervised, the total budget amount you managed, the percentage of sales you achieved.

- > Soft skills are the new hard skills. Known as transferable skills, soft skills are those you acquire over time that apply to a wide variety of employment settings. Examples include communication, leadership, and interpersonal and organizational skills. Employers place high value on candidates who have mastered these important versatile skills, so be sure to emphasize them in your resume.

- > Be honest—don't embellish. Ensure all the information on your resume is accurate and true. Once you secure a job interview, you must be able to substantiate the skills and credentials you originally touted.

- > Add a profile or summary of qualifications. Capture the employer's attention by highlighting your best-selling attributes. Include approximately three to six relevant brief, bulleted phrases at the top of your resume that summarize your most prominent experiences, achievements, and/or strengths.

- > Leverage LinkedIn. Approximately 80–90 percent of employers are using some form of social media to seek and vet applicants. Make it easy for them to find you. Place your customized LinkedIn profile URL on your resume, along with your name and contact information. Be sure your profile is complete, current, and clearly corresponds to the information on your resume.

- > Computer skills are no longer optional. Most jobs today require some computer knowledge and ability. List all applications and languages you are proficient in. If you are not proficient in a particular area, but have familiarity, it is important to note that as well.

- > List your experience in reverse chronological order. The only exceptions to using the reverse chronological format are if you are changing careers, have had a gap in employment, or your past experience is more relevant to your career goals than your current experience.

- > Maximize your exposure: Become familiar with electronic resume formats. Many employers use electronic scanners and applicant tracking systems to screen candidates and sort through large volumes of resumes received. You may be required to submit a scannable or Web-based version, which are designed differently than the traditional resume.

- > Use key words. Applicant tracking systems also search resumes for specific descriptors that match the job requirements of the position. Refer to the job posting and incorporate these key industry words in your documents.

- > Be clear and concise. Keep your information brief and to the point. Depending on the extent of your experience, a one- or two-page resume is the norm.

- > Proofread! Before you submit your resume to an employer, be sure to catch any spelling, grammatical, and punctuation errors. These types of errors will cause a prospective employer to dismiss you regardless of any winning qualifications you may have. Ask friends or relatives to review your resume as a second pair of eyes.

A well-crafted resume can secure an interview and elicit entry to your next job or career. Use the above tips as guidelines, and take the time to create a resume that reflects the exceptional and strong candidate you are! ■

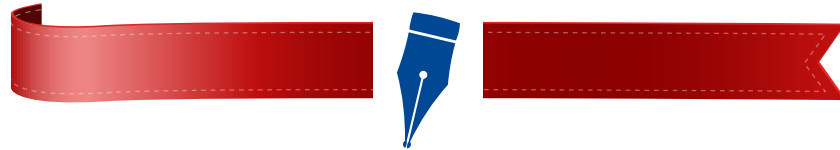
RELATED RESOURCES Access many additional career-related resources and services at the Excelsior College Career Center, www.excelsior.edu/career. Questions? Email careerinfo@excelsior.edu.

Maribeth Gunner Pulliam, MS Ed, is the director of career services at Excelsior College.



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THE WRITE STUFF



Self-publishing offers authors new options and expanded roles in the digital age



The self-published author must juggle many responsibilities — writer, designer, copy editor, publisher, marketer, and distributor, to name a few — in order for his work to see the light of day. PHOTOGRAPHY BY KRIS QUA

The number of self-published books has nearly tripled in the United States since 2006 and self-published e-books now account for 12 percent of the entire digital publishing market.

BY DANA YANULAVICH

When Johannes Gutenberg turned the publishing world on its head in the 15th century, he could never have imagined the acceptance and influence of digital publishing seen today. The invention of movable type attributed to Gutenberg has been credited among the most influential events in the modern era, contributing to the Renaissance and beyond. Yet now, a new age of change is upon us as more and more people have turned to self-publishing as a way to give life to their printed words.

The number of self-published books has nearly tripled in the United States since 2006 and self-published e-books now account for 12 percent of the entire digital publishing market, according to statistics issued by Bowker, a provider of bibliographic information to publishers, booksellers, and libraries. It may come as no surprise, then, to learn that in July 2013, four out of the top 20 titles on The New York Times ebook bestseller list were self-published titles.

Many people who are taking advantage of this trend have discovered that publishing is at their fingertips. Among them is Elizabeth Bewley '85, who has several self-published books to her credit, including her most recent, "Not Your Grandmother's Nursing Home: Demystifying Today's Retirement Living Options." Bewley is just one of many Excelsior alumni who have turned to self-publishing. She sought to reduce the turnaround time from manuscript to printed product and to retain a higher degree of editorial control over her work. "The technology has reached a point where it is possible to self-publish at a very low cost," she says. Using a variety of online services such as Amazon's CreateSpace,

Barnes & Noble's NOOK Press, or Smashwords, aspiring authors can literally publish their books, for free.

AUTHORS AS PUBLISHERS

This shift in responsibility, from author to writer and publisher, can be a doubled-edged sword. In the traditional model, the writer needs to primarily focus energy on crafting the content, putting word to page. Then, the publisher takes over, handling any number of tasks from copyediting, proofreading, cover design, printing, distribution, and marketing. But in the traditional model, the publisher also serves as the gatekeeper, controlling which works see the light of day, making judgments on quality and marketability. Now, as authors can publish their own works, it opens up the opportunity for a greater variety of content to be offered. On the flip side, however, are self-published works that may be of dubious quality both in writing and design. "The world of self-publishing is awash in mediocre books," Bewley says. "Because it's so easy to self-publish, many people who don't have the discipline or ability to publish a good book can still publish. Many self-published books are full of incoherent ramblings, grammatical mistakes, and typos."

But, as with any issue, it's not as simple as the black and white of the words on a printed page. "I think it (self-publishing) can be done, and I think it can be done well," says Russell Davis, an Excelsior adjunct faculty member. While the majority of Davis' large body of published work has been issued via mainstream publishers, he, too, is about to enter the self-publishing realm with a textbook. Davis, who teaches Excelsior's mythology

“Self-publishing is not for the faint of heart. The amount of work involved is tremendous.”

Marianne Sciucco '98,
author of “Blue Hydrangeas”

and Shakespeare courses, and developed the College's Vampires in Literature and Film course, has more than 30 published works to his credit.

Davis offered examples of writers who first dipped their pens in the well of self-publishing and later rose to fame in the large, traditional publishing houses. Amanda Hocking, a young aspiring writer, sent manuscripts to more than 50 literary agents, only to suffer the humiliation of rejection from each one. Eventually, she decided to self-publish some of the more than a dozen books she had completed. She was surprised at the positive reception—and sales—the books received. Two million dollars and 1 million books sold later, she signed a multimillion-dollar deal with St. Martin's Press, one of the largest publishing houses in the world. Labeled the “star of self-publishing” by The New York Times, she is known for her paranormal-romance books and series on vampires and zombies. Despite Hocking's astonishing success, Davis is quick to note that the average self-published work sells fewer than 100 copies a year. An oft-cited 2012 survey, “Not a Gold Rush – The Taleist Self-Publishing Survey,” noted the median book sale income for self-publishing authors was a mere \$500. Authors Dave Cornford and Steven Lewis (who helps other writers publish their ebooks through his Taleist blog), surveyed more than 1,000 self-published authors in their quest for more info on the burgeoning field.

Howard A. Daniel '75 has seen both sides of the publishing world. His first book was self-published, and it did so well, he was asked by a publisher to write a second edition. However, that experience was not up to Daniel's standards. He says, “I decided I wanted to control the quality and have self-published ever since.” His most recent title—his eighth book—“Cambodia Coins & Currency,” is a detailed numismatic catalog.

Similar to Hocking's experience, Marianne Sciucco '98 received 50 rejection letters. “Traditional publishing is not easy to break into,” she says. “Many excellent writers with wonderful books to offer are shut out of the industry by a number of reasons: no contacts, lack of resources, ignorance about how the industry works, or simple lousy luck.” She self-published her book, “Blue Hydrangeas,” in 2013, and in 2014, the title received IndieReCon's First Best Indie Novel award.

SELF-PUBLISH OR PERISH

So, what does it take to succeed in self-publishing?

“Self-publishing is not for the faint of heart,” says Sciucco. “The amount of work involved is tremendous. As the author/publisher/publicist/distributor, I am responsible for every aspect of production. I have had to learn how to do many things—design my book covers, send out a press release, and manage the money. It takes many, many hours. Yet, I have complete control over my project, which I enjoy very much.”

Those interested in self-publishing can benefit from a range of online and print resources, and the advice of those who have gone before them. “Do your homework,” says Sciucco. “Make sure you know what you're getting into. There's a lot more to this than one expects. Make sure your book is the best it can be before you put it out there. Take your time. Don't rush. If you don't know how to do something, hire someone who does.”

Not only can authors hire independent proofreaders, editors, and graphic designers, but self-publishing platforms such as Amazon's CreateSpace offer à la carte options for an additional cost.

The Taleist self-publishing survey noted that authors who paid for professional services, such as copyediting, cover design, and the like, made 13 percent more than those who didn't tap into those resources. And, authors who paid for professional cover designs saw a 34 percent increase in their sales.

In addition to writing and publishing the book, the self-published author cannot necessarily sit back and wait for sales to roll in. According to Bewley, “Sales in all cases depend on how much marketing the author does.” Sciucco supports that position, adding, “The amount of work required is exhausting.” She not only sells her book on a variety of platforms, but also has a website, Facebook fan page, submits her book for reviews, sends out news releases, sells her book at craft fairs and festivals, and makes appearance at libraries, churches, and more.

Self-publishing has not only risen in popularity, but also in its acceptability to consumers and reviewers alike.

RIISING FROM THE SLUSH PILE

Self-publishing shouldn't be confused with its shady relative of old—the vanity press. In the past, those deterred by the traditional route opted for a pay-to-print plan known as vanity publishing. In this model, the author pays a publisher to print their book, and is often obligated to purchase a large number of copies in advance.

Self-publishing has not only risen in popularity, but also in its acceptability to consumers and reviewers alike. Mainstream reviews are vital to book sales, and the sheer volume of self-published books is hard to ignore. Publishers Weekly, a weekly publication covering the book trade for booksellers, publishers, and librarians, has a supplement devoted to self-published books. In October 2013, PW Select grew from a quarterly publication to a monthly appearance, virtually doubling its coverage of the growing area of self-publishing.

"My first book was reviewed by Publishers Weekly, and was given a favorable review," says Bewley. "Publishers Weekly is helping to legitimize the field of self-published books/self-publishing." She credits the positive review her book received in PW Select with helping her land a weekly column, *The Good Patient*, in *The Daily Courier*, the newspaper in her current hometown of Prescott, Ariz.

The reasons people seek to self-publish are as diverse as the books themselves. Bewley notes that some self-published authors see their works as providing a public service while others may use their books as business cards. For Sciucco, it was a childhood dream fulfilled. For Shawn Daniel Hendricks '10, who wrote "Deployment Kosovo," publishing a book offered the potential for wealth and fame. "I also am enough of a romantic to have hoped to make money and become

more popular," he says. "I am the first in my family to have self-published a book manuscript, if I am not mistaken, and that was a coup I hope makes my parents (both still living well) proud."

Regardless of the authors' motives, or the platform they choose to prepare their book, opportunities abound for writers to publish their own books. Hot off the press, the digital age gives individuals unprecedented access to the publishing process and interested readers a greater opportunity to diversify their bookshelves. ■

Tips of the Trade

Thinking of self-publishing?

Here are some best practices to consider:

1

Write your best possible work.

2

Get feedback. Use a writer's group, friends, or family, and hire a professional editor. Revise, rewrite, and reconfigure, if necessary.

3

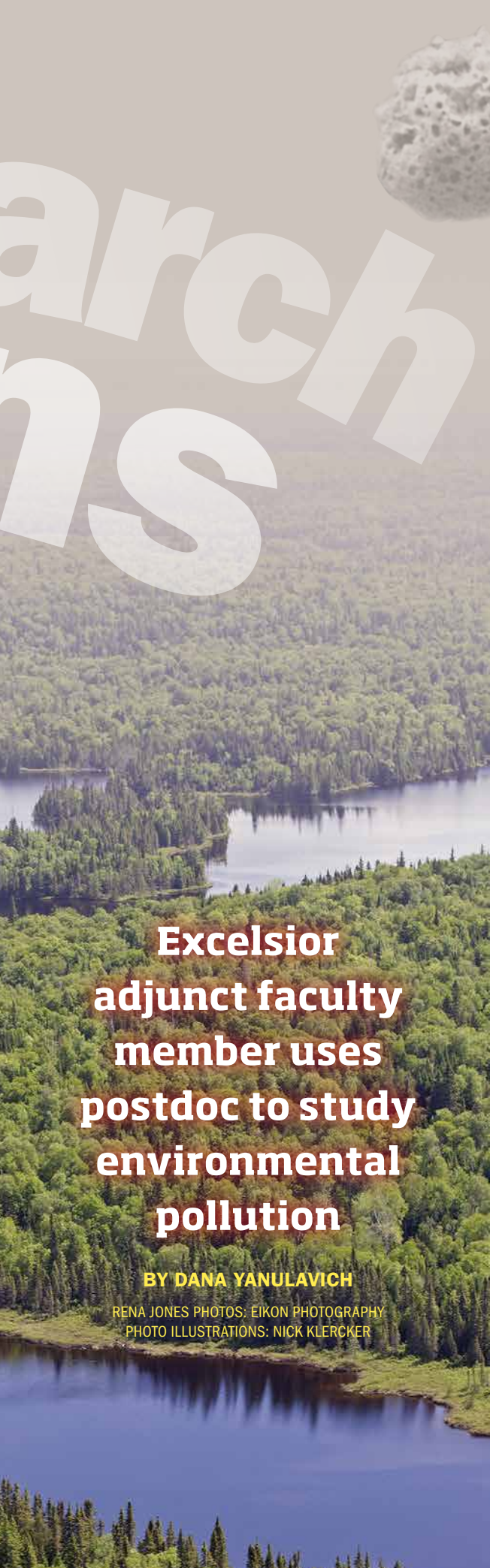
Hire a professional to design the book and its cover. Studies show that those who use professional services tend to earn more.

4

Market the book. Your work does not end when the book is written. Reviews and other promotional efforts are essential.

Airing Her Research Passion





Excelsior adjunct faculty member uses postdoc to study environmental pollution

BY DANA YANULAVICH

RENA JONES PHOTOS: EIKON PHOTOGRAPHY
PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS: NICK KLERCKER

Rena Jones, adjunct faculty member in the School of Health Sciences, is passionate about what she does. An epidemiologist who studies air pollution and its effects on cancer, she keeps the big picture in focus as a motivating factor in her work. “It’s kind of neat to be doing work that has implications for large populations of people,” she says quickly, the words spilling out of her mouth with a torrent of excitement. “Like a physician—who sees a patient, treats a patient, gets that feel-good feeling for treating that one patient—I feel like my work could potentially impact many, many people.”

And many have already benefited from the work of this highly accomplished scientist, who’s worked in the field for barely 10 years. She’s designed, developed, and taught college-level courses and was involved in studies of respiratory health after 9/11. And now, as a part of her prestigious postdoctoral fellowship at the National Cancer Institute in Bethesda, Md., Jones is researching the relationship between environmental contamination and cancer risk, while developing methods to inform that type of research, particularly those relating to geospatial approaches to evaluate human exposure to environmental pollution.

“A classic example is outdoor air pollution,” she explains. “We breathe in air all around us, so in order to identify how people are coming into contact with outdoor air pollutants, we can first identify where people spend their time (e.g., at home, at work) and then measure pollutants in the air within a certain distance of those locations. In this way we are classifying individuals based on their level of exposure to pollution, allowing us to compare health risks between people in contact with high levels of pollution and individuals with lower levels.” This is generally done using computing software packages called Geographic Information Systems, which help identify the geographic location of both individuals and pollution measurements, and link them for analysis.

No stranger to long hours and hard work, Jones devotes 60–70 hours a week to her research at the National Cancer Institute. She knows firsthand the balancing act many adult learners practice as they juggle careers while pursuing a college degree, because she’s walked in their shoes. Jones worked full-time out of economic necessity at the New York State Department of Health, Center for Environmental Health while she pursued her master’s and doctoral degrees. “The work experience was a very good supplement to my actual academic training,” she says. “I got hands-on experience in working and doing research way before I did my dissertation.”

By all accounts, Jones is attentive to the adult learner, both as a course designer and as an instructor. “She is very skilled at bridging student knowledge from the individual level (matching her instruction to the level at which the student enters the course) into a working knowledge and mastery of population-based health,” explains Anna Zendell, faculty program director in the School of Health Sciences.

A typical day for Jones involves juggling many different activities: reading journal articles, conducting data analysis, writing a manuscript of research findings, or developing a proposal for a future research project. This, of course, is in addition to attending the many meetings involved with collaborators to discuss research findings, making plans for next steps in the research process, or participating in weekly seminars and talks.

Epidemiology wasn’t a planned destination on Jones’ career path. As an undergraduate biology student at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, she set her original goal on becoming a physician. “Probably around the time I was applying to med school—my senior year of college—the idea of treating individual patients wasn’t as alluring to me as reading research articles,” she says. Changing directions, she began graduate studies in public

The image at right illustrates how geospatial methods are often used to determine human exposure to environmental contamination, such as pollutants in air or drinking water. A typical approach might include several layers of spatial information, such as what state, county, or zip code an individual lives in, a radius of a particular size drawn around their home, or even the exact geographic coordinates (latitude, longitude) where a residence is located. The exposure source (e.g., a factory, a nearby highway, an industrial animal operation) is also measured in a spatial context, such as how close it is to a participant’s home or drinking water supply. These tools allow epidemiologists like Rena Jones to characterize individuals’ level of exposure based on their proximity to a pollution source, and draw comparisons between populations with different levels of exposure.



health. Her desire to conduct research led her to focus exclusively on epidemiology, the branch of biomedical science that deals with the distribution, determinants, and prevention of disease in populations.

An adjunct faculty member at Excelsior since 2011, Jones developed and teaches the College's Introduction to Epidemiology and Principles of Public Health courses. And she's been tapped to help the School of Health Sciences develop a graduate-level epidemiology course for the public health specialization in the master's program. She's also taught at several other colleges, currently serving as an instructor at her alma mater, University at Albany in its School of Public Health, and is precepting a graduate student at George Washington University.

The postdoc position at the National Cancer Institute (NCI), part of the National Institutes of Health, was the result of this go-getter's initiative to find an opportunity to pursue her research passions full-time. Jones found another researcher at the NCI who was doing work similar to her interests, and applied for the position. "I was really interested in going to the NIH, because of its cutting-edge health research," she says. That researcher is now her primary mentor, and they work on multiple projects together.

The NCI coordinates the National Cancer Program, which conducts and supports research, training, health information dissemination, and other programs with respect to the cause, diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of cancer, rehabilitation from cancer, and the continuing care of cancer patients and the families of cancer patients.

Jones explains that one of the advantages to a postdoc fellowship is unfettered research time. When she worked for the New York State Health Department, her responsibilities were split 60/40 between administrative work and research. But now she can focus all her attention on her scholarly pursuits. She says, "For a researcher, it's a dream. One advantage is that you can do very cutting-edge, innovative, and sometimes risky research, because your grant is not contingent on it working or not. That's what's sexy about being at the NIH, because you get to do some really cool stuff and work with people who are the world's experts in a particular thing."

Another bonus of working at the NCI is access to its large cohort studies of populations some of which have been followed for 20 or more years, giving her a rich set of data with which to work. "I look at various pollutants in the environment—pesticides and air pollution and chemicals in drinking water and that sort of thing—and I look at how they cause or may not cause cancer in populations. My work actually involves developing methods to measure exposure to those things in the environment."

**"Like a physician—
who sees a patient,
treats a patient, gets
that feel-good feeling
for treating that one
patient—I feel like my
work could potentially
impact many, many
people."**

Jones' work does not go unnoticed or unsupported. She was awarded a National Cancer Institute Sallie Rosen Kaplan (SRK) Postdoctoral Fellowship for Women Scientists in December 2013. The goal of the SRK program is to better equip NCI female postdoctoral fellows to remain in a biomedical research career. To that end, Jones will receive additional mentoring and will take part in seminars and workshops designed to strengthen her leadership skills. She was also awarded a \$10,000 NCI Director's Career Development Innovation Award for an original proposal she developed. These are competitively awarded funds for high-risk projects with the potential to be high impact but which are hard to fund through other means. Jones proposed a study to assess cancer risk in relation to environmental exposures from industrial farming operations.

While Jones has more than a full plate with teaching and research responsibilities, she still makes time for fun. In addition to enjoying outdoor pastimes such as hiking, she also has been known to skydive out of a 1954 Cessna and bungee jump in Michigan. "I went skydiving first and then I decided I wasn't sure anything could match the euphoria of doing that and I decided to go bungee jumping," she says. "They're equally cool!"

While her scholarly activities keep her well-grounded, Jones sees a long research and teaching career on the horizon. She says, "In the ideal world, I would continue doing what I'm doing in that I would maintain a research program and dabble in teaching, because I think that is how you keep your skills fresh—teaching them to other people. Plus, I like doing it." ■

Everyday M4+H

A different kind of math course encourages higher-level thinking to solve real-life problems

BY MARIA C. SPARKS

Math is everywhere—be it calculating your mortgage, balancing your check-book, or figuring out the area dimensions for your home's new carpeting—but when it comes to taking a math course, some people worry their skills won't add up. And what do adult students really need to know about math anyway?

That was the question facing Margie Dunn when she came to Excelsior as program director in February 2011. Most students, unless they were pursuing degrees in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics, were not likely to take another math course after completing their core requirements. So, Dunn developed Mathematics for Everyday Life, a comprehensive course that emphasizes the critical thinking involved in understanding common uses of math.

Offered each term since May 2012, the course covers eight topics: unit conversions; financial mathematics, such as retirement planning, percents and earning interest, and compound interest on loans; the math involved in voting; evaluating statistical information as a consumer; and the use of math in the arts and natural world. By emphasizing common uses of math, Dunn seeks to build student's confidence with mathematical concepts and increase their ease of using them. Students are given extended problems with several associated questions and use their mathematical knowledge and critical thinking skills to determine the answers [see example at top right].

In the course, offered in both an 8-week and 15-week format to fit individual learning preferences, students work on an extended problem for each topic covered. They practice the concepts in My Math Lab, an online tool where they do homework and receive instant feedback and tutoring help. Students work together in small groups to determine solutions to the extended problems. The group work builds community—a desired attribute of online education—and an instructor

Extended Problem

Last season, a pair of jeans cost \$44.95. This season, the price of all jeans increased by 15 percent. Later in the season, the jeans were put on sale for 15 percent off.

1. How much did the jeans cost at the beginning of the season?
2. What was their sale price?
3. Were you surprised by the sale price of the jeans? Why or why not?

facilitates the decision-making process by asking questions when students go

too far off track. After helping their group members arrive at a solution, everyone submits their results to the discussion board, where there might be further discussion of strategy and outcome. Then each student clearly describes the correct solution and provides an accurate justification for the answer in a formal essay that's submitted to the instructor. The homework, quizzes, discussion-group problem solving, and individual write-ups have equal weight in the grading.

Some students commented on their course evaluations that they were nervous or afraid to take the course, or surprised by the writing involved. Others were uneasy about taking an online math course or being assigned to groups and participating in discussions. "I was really unsure about an online math class," commented one student. "It has been years since I did math like this course. I enjoyed the videos to help me refresh those math skills." Although the discussion forums have drawn mixed feedback, mostly about the timing of student participation, the course itself has been well-received. "I could not think of a better course to get me interested in math again," reported one student. "I had a terrible fear going into this course, and I came out wanting to take another math class."

The format of the course combines the best practices of current math education, including extended problems, group work requiring communication, computation, critical thinking, and elements of surprise, with best practices for online education, such as the community building. Solving the extended problems is not without struggle—a key element of the best practices—since the problems in the course can be solved in a variety of ways. In mathematics there are different ways to arrive at the correct answer, says Dunn, who has a doctorate

in mathematics education. "There is no best way. The best way is the way you understand it," she explains, even though students may come to learn faster or easier ways.

"There's not going to be anybody looking over your shoulder when you have a problem in your real life, making sure you do it the best way," says Dunn. "The best way is the way you can do it and get it right." ■



"The Everyday Math course requires students to think critically to answer problems. You can't just follow the format, fill in the numbers, and you don't really understand it ...," says Margie Dunn, the faculty program director. "You have to figure it all out."



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 **58,000** graduates of Excelsior College,

Read on for news of your alumni community.



STAFF GRADUATES AS ALUMNI AMBASSADORS

Among Excelsior's more than 150,000 alumni is a group of 75 who are closer to the College than most graduates. They not only hold Excelsior degrees, but also hold jobs at the College. As employees they, perhaps better than anyone, can empathize with students who contact staff because they are having trouble in a course, rethinking their degree plan, or anxiously awaiting a transcript or financial aid package. Likewise, they are often the first to celebrate a student's achievement with them, be it the passing grade they have been hoping for or the completion of the final degree requirement.

And when it comes to Commencement, they don their caps and gowns to take that all-important walk among the graduates with whom they've earned their degrees side-by-side. It's a moment of solidarity, if ever there was one.

As alumni and employees, the dual investment of these grads makes them some of the alumni association's most dedicated volunteers. They are always willing to reach out to their fellow alumni — on their own time. Here is a snapshot of some of their activities:

- They host and attend alumni events across the country, including the annual Capital Region (N.Y.) Alumni Event held every August.
- They make reminder calls to graduates who have registered for events to say "I hope to see you there."
- They make thank-you calls to donors to the Annual Campaign.
- They themselves support the Annual Campaign with monetary contributions for scholarships and student resources.
- Recently, they handwrote more than 500 messages to alumni.

A group always willing to give of time, talent, and treasure, these Ambassadors have hearts of purple and gold.

If you would like to become an Alumni Ambassador, visit www.excelsior.edu/alumniambassadors for more information about this flexible volunteer program.



Excelsior staff members who are also alumni wrote messages to fellow graduates to thank them for supporting the Annual Campaign.

2013-2014

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WEB CHATS

**Job and Career Fairs:
Learning How to Successfully
Navigate the Maze**

MONDAY
APRIL
7

8-9 pm ET

There are a variety of job and career fairs, and they attract large volumes of job seekers who are vying for the time and attention of a smaller group of recruiters. Join us to learn strategies you can use to set yourself apart from other candidates.

**Moving In, Up, or Out...
Your Guide to Career
Moves and Transitions**

WEDNESDAY
APRIL
30

7-8 pm ET

We've assembled a panel of career experts to help guide you through any career move: from searching for a new job, to advancing yourself within your current organization, to transitioning from one career to another. Join us for tips and strategies on making your next career transition, no matter what that may be.

Web chats are presented by Ed Hallenbeck, career consultant for Excelsior College. All chats are open to alumni and students. Registration is required. To register, go to www.excelsior.edu/AlumniChatReg

REGIONAL EVENTS

Alumni Event

SUNDAY
JUNE
1

Raleigh, NC

**Alumni Association
Annual Meeting and
Commencement**

FRIDAY
JULY
11

Albany, NY

Alumni Event

WEDNESDAY
AUGUST
6

Schenectady, NY

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

ALUMNI
EVENT
RECAPS

| WHAT: BINGHAMTON, N.Y. ALUMNI RECEPTION

| WHEN: October 30, 2013

| WHERE: Lost Dog Café, Binghamton, N.Y.

| WHO: Twenty alumni, students, faculty, and staff joined former Alumni Advisory Board president Robert Williams, BS '95 and current Alumni Advisory Board member Adrienne Mason, BS '11 for an hors d'oeuvres reception to meet Excelsior alumni and students in the area. Terri Faddon from Broome Community College, one of Excelsior's community college partners, joined the group to connect with some of her advisees and BCC grads who went on to earn bachelor's and master's degrees from Excelsior.

| WHAT: CENTRAL TEXAS ALUMNI RECEPTION

| WHEN: November 13, 2013

| WHERE: Shilo Inn Suites, Killeen, Texas

| WHO: More than 50 alumni, students, and staff 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 former Alumni Advisory Board president John Amidon, BA '99 and U.S. Department of Defense education counselors from Fort Hood who turned out to celebrate and support Excelsior's successful grads.

| WHAT: WASHINGTON, D.C. ALUMNI RECEPTION

| WHEN: February 12, 2014

| WHERE: Excelsior's Washington, D.C. Center

| WHO: Nearly 30 alumni gathered in the nation's capital as one of winter's worst snowstorms moved up the East Coast. Dozens of other alumni from the D.C. metro area who planned to attend were unable to make it due to the impending storm. But those who gathered found warm camaraderie in Excelsior's Dupont Circle facility, as they shared inspiring stories about how Excelsior helped them achieve their educational and professional goals. The event was hosted by Harry Kantrovich, director of Excelsior's Washington, D.C. Center, and attended by Alumni Advisory Board members Kadidia Doumbia, BS '85 and Dwayn Hanford, BS '05.

PHOTOS: EIKON PHOTOGRAPHY

| WHAT: SAN DIEGO ALUMNI RECEPTION

| WHEN: March 2, 2014

| WHERE: Hyatt Regency Mission Bay

| WHO: More than 30 alumni, students, and staff gathered for an afternoon reception hosted by Alumni Ambassador Ken Desforges, BIX '10. Class years ranged from 1972 to 2013 and graduates shared many diverse and inspiring stories about how they discovered Excelsior. Among the attendees were Alumni Advisory Board members Ron Tosto, BPT '12 and Marie Wrinn, BS in nursing '10. PHOTOS: SPARK PHOTOGRAPHY



Election 2014: Let Your Voice Be Heard

Visit www.excelsior.edu/alumni to meet the 2014 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, 2014, until May 7, 2014.

ALUMNI: 10 REASONS TO GIVE US YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS

1. You'll receive the monthly alumni newsletter,
2. and find out stuff faster.
3. You'll help the College save money on printing and mailing and postage (oh my!).
4. You'll really appreciate the extra space in your mailbox.
5. We can stay in touch, even when you move or change jobs.
6. You can unsubscribe at any time (but why would you want to?).
7. We won't sell your name,
8. or spam you.
9. Everybody's doing it (by "everybody" we mean 70,000+ of your fellow alumni).
10. It's easy! Visit www.excelsior.edu/myexcelsior.

Let's Take Our Relationship to the Next Level



Like us on Facebook
www.facebook.com/AlumniAssociationatExcelsior



Follow us on Twitter
[@ExcelsiorColl](https://twitter.com/ExcelsiorColl)



Connect with us on LinkedIn. If you're on LinkedIn, join our Excelsior College Alumni Association Community.

Did you know you can help the College provide the most up-to-date information to LinkedIn users by simply adding "Excelsior College" to your profile? If your diploma says the University of the State of New York or Regents College, consider simply listing your education as: "University of the State of New York, now known as Excelsior College" or "Excelsior College, formerly known as Regents College."

HATS OFF!

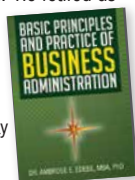
WHAT HAVE YOU, OUR GRADUATES, BEEN DOING? READ ON TO FIND OUT.

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS & TECHNOLOGY



Ambrose E. Edebe, BS in business '99, Owings Mills, MD—published a book, “Your Women Did Prophecy,” which

documents evidence for biblical and historical precedent for women's participation in preaching and prophesying ministries. He also published “Basic Principles and Practice of Business Administration.” He retired as district manager of the Baltimore City Department of Social Services, and he serves as the president of Trinity Professional Services LLC. In addition to his Excelsior degree, he earned a BS in business administration from Thomas Edison State College; an MA in leadership and management from Notre Dame of Maryland University; an MBA from Columbia Southern University; a Doctor of Ministry from Covington Theological Seminary; and a PhD in theological studies at the Trinity Theological Seminary. Edebe has received various citations and awards, including the Governor of Maryland Citation for advocating for those in need, Mayor of Baltimore Citation for community services, Maryland Senate Award of Merit for helping the citizens of Maryland, Baltimore County Executive Citation for community services, and the Maryland Department of Human Resources' Award of Merit for excellent customer service.



Mark Polimeno, BS in accounting '00, Lake Jackson, TX—has published a cookbook, “Mother Teresa's Fine Foods:

The Soul of Italy Comes to the Heart of Texas.”



Patrick Rivers, AAB '07, Watervliet, NY—is a divisional disaster director for the American Red Cross in New

England. He is responsible for providing preparedness, response, and recovery support for natural and man-made disasters affecting Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. He also supports the overall efforts of FEMA Region I in Essential Support Function (ESF) 6. He earned a master's degree in emergency management from Trident University International and a master's degree in homeland security management from Long Island University.

Jerry Porter Sowell, BS in technology '07, Memphis, TN—earned a master's degree in operations management from the University of Arkansas in summer 2013.

SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES



Karen K. Kobus, AS in nursing '03 and BHS '13, Coon Rapids, MN—has been appointed director of nursing at Covenant

Village of Golden Valley. A geriatric health care professional with more than 25 years of experience, Kobus will manage the continuing care retirement community's nursing departments, nursing services associated with the community's adult day programs, medical records, and central supply. She is also a member of the Minnesota Directors of Nursing Association and the Minnesota Medical Directors Association.

SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS

Jeffrey Baker, AA '73 and BS '75, Fairport, NY—was elected to a second term as adjunct director of the Faculty Council of Monroe Community College where he is an adjunct associate

professor of psychology. He was also elected delegate-at-large to the council of the New York State Conference of the American Association of University Professors. Baker is a member of the faculty in Excelsior's School of Liberal Arts. He also served as an alumni trustee and secretary of the alumni association when the institution was known as Regents College. Baker earned a master's degree at Syracuse University and a PhD at Capella University.

Harold Geller, BSL '83, Burke, VA—

published a book, “All the Secrets of the Solar System in Large Print,” in September 2013. This volume brings to the visually impaired reader the latest information about all the components of the solar system, including major planets, dwarf planets, asteroids, comets, and the sun. It not only describes in words the nature of the components of the solar system, but also provides a historical perspective to how humans have discovered all of these secrets. In October 2013, he published a chapter entitled Harmful ETI Hypothesis Denied: Visiting ETIs Likely Altruists in the book, “Extraterrestrial Altruism: Evolution and Ethics in the Cosmos,” edited by Douglas Vakoch. This volume is a joint effort of affiliates of the SETI Institute and brings together researchers from astronomy, biology, chemistry, sociology, psychology, anthropology, and law.



Dennis Baker, BS '92,

Tallahassee, FL—retired as a commander in the U.S. Navy after a 28-year career. Now with the Florida Agency for Health Care Administration, he has written his first work of fiction, “Restless Hearts: What if Fallen Heroes Could Go Home?” The book is about five fallen heroes of wars past who go home to bring closure to their unfinished lives. Baker also earned an MAS from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University in 1996.



Sinencio B. Salvador, BSL '94, Silver Spring, MD—retired from the Food & Drug Administration in November 2013 as a consumer safety officer after almost 37 years in federal service. He retired from the U.S. Navy in 1994 after more than 20 years of service and credits his Excelsior (then Regents) degree with helping him advance in his allied health career.



Steven G. Rindahl, BAL '96, Black River, NY—earned a Doctor of Ministry from the University of Chester in 2013. While conducting

research for his dissertation, “The US Army Chaplain's Role During Times of Traumatic Injury and Death in a Combat Environment,” he wrote an entry on combat chaplains for the Encyclopedia of Trauma. He serves as a U.S. Army chaplain in the 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry) based at Fort Drum, N.Y. He also earned a Master of Theology, focused on preaching, from Spurgeon's College in 2006. Capt. Rindahl delivered the invocation at Excelsior's 2013 Commencement.

Robert Edward Wright Jr., BS '97, Sunrise, FL—graduated in 2012 from the doctoral program in transformative studies at the California Institute of Integral Studies. His dissertation was titled, “The Role of Endogenous Cyclic Nitric Oxide Spiking in Motherloss and Existential Grief: A Modified Neuropsychological and Psychophysiological Heuristic Self Search Inquiry Approach to Stress Reduction, Homeostasis, and Healing.”

Takis J. Dikas, BS '98, Colonie, NY—works for the Golub Corporation as a warehouse clerk following a 10-year career in public service with New York state.

Robert V. Kaleta, BA '00, San Ramon, CA—was named as senior vice president of business development for Cloudeeva, a global cloud services and technology solutions company specializing in cloud, big data, mobility solutions, and outsourced services with offices in California, New Jersey, Chicago, and India. He also serves



Exceptional Excelsior Grad Overcomes Disability to Earn His Degree

While many Excelsior students have overcome life's obstacles to pursue a college education, Ron Miller '13 may very well be at the head of the class. Paralyzed from the nose down due to amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), he must rely on others for his daily care at Lake Taylor Transitional Care Hospital in Norfolk, Va. Eye-gaze computer technology is his window to the world, where he types with his eye movements, communicates with staff, and navigates his school work and correspondence.

He admits he had never heard of Excelsior until he learned about it from a hospital staffer who had earned a degree at the College. "She put the name in my head before I even considered that I could go back to school, so when I started researching, I looked closer at what Excelsior had to offer," he says.

Miller earned an associate degree with a 3.8 GPA in December 2013 and celebrated his accomplishment at a special graduation ceremony in January at Lake Taylor with Excelsior's president John F. Ebersole, members of its board of trustees, a local Virginia congressman, family, friends, and staff at the rehabilitation center.

"It isn't always easy, but life never is," Miller said during his graduation celebration, via the text-to-speech feature of his computer. "I just have a different set of challenges than most. I have gained an incredible amount of knowledge these past two and a half years. ... With that I leave you with a simple quote by John Wooden, 'Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do.'"

on the advisory board of the CIO Leadership Program at the Haas School of Business at UC Berkeley.



Raymond L. Stinson, BSL '05, Killeen, TX—retired from the U.S. Army in 2006. Since then, he has become a certified teacher

in Texas, completed a Master of Science in Educational Leadership, and is currently pursuing a doctorate degree with Walden University. He credits Excelsior for the start of his online educational journey. Stinson plans to go into middle school administration and ultimately become a college professor. He writes, "[This is] all thanks to a great online school that

gave me the opportunity demonstrate my potential."

Kimberly A. Haley, BSL '06, Eaton, NY—is a disabled veterans operations program specialist (DVOP) for New York state. She writes, "I tell all my veteran customers about Excelsior and [how] supportive the staff/faculty treated me. I encourage [them to consider] Excelsior as a great way to obtain their degree, learn at home, be able to spend time with their families as well [as] maintain employment."



Anelia Sutton, BSL '08, Silver Spring, MD—is CEO of ASEHQ International Inc. A U.S. Navy veteran with 11 years of service,

she continues to serve in the Navy Reserve. Her company instructs "Fire Your Boss," a course that teaches aspiring entrepreneurs how to start an online business. Additional course offerings are featured on her training website, magicofdoing.com. Sutton also earned an MBA in 2009 from Northcentral University.



Jason E. Bryant, BSL '09, Ewing, NJ—was appointed to the board of directors of the Delaware Valley Fuel Dealers' Association in June 2013.

Margaret M. Brown, BSL '08 and MAL '12, Fayetteville, NC—credits

Excelsior's rigorous master's program with preparing her to write, edit, and publish her own book, "When Man Said No, God Said Yes."



Lissy L. Weirich, MAL '10, Carlisle, PA—received the 2012-2013 Outstanding Staff Performance Award, high school level, from the Mechanicsburg Area School District.

Miguel Rodriguez-Gist, BSL '12, Elkton, MD—retired as a Chief Warrant Officer Four from the U.S. Army in 2013. He was awarded the Legion of Merit, which cited his "exceptionally meritorious performance and outstanding service over a 30-year career in various technical and leadership positions of increased responsibility, culminating as the Senior Military Technical Advisor in the Tactical Support Equipment Department of the United States Army Ordnance School, and Senior



Instructor in the Technical Logistics College."
Miguel Rodriguez-Gist (right); Major General Langston (left)

SCHOOL OF NURSING

John W. Ridley, AS in nursing '94, Carrollton, GA—recently retired as a college instructor and as a director of allied health programs. He has lead a varied life, ranging from a field grade officer in the military to

a medical technologist, and then as an educator. He writes, "I have used my associate degree in nursing from Excelsior (then Regents) to enhance both my writing and my teaching." He is the author of four textbooks: two in print, "Parasitology for Medical and Clinical Laboratory Professionals" and "Essentials of Clinical Laboratory Science," and two forthcoming. Ridley also recently published a novel, "Missing the Mark." He earned bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Georgia and a PhD from Walden University.



Marc M. Meyer, AS in nursing '98, Montgomery, TX—has a solo law practice, primarily representing nurses and other health

care practitioners in administrative and regulatory licensure actions. A member of The American Association of Nurse Attorneys (TAANA), Meyer is the Texas chapter president. He was honored by TAANA in 2010 as the Outstanding Student/New Graduate Member and in 2013 as Outstanding Advocate. He has been involved in the American Bar Association's Health Law Section, serving as the Law Student Division liaison while in law school and the Young Lawyer Division liaison for two years since graduating. Meyer was the founding chair (and current chair) of the section's Nursing and Allied Healthcare Issues Task Force. Earlier in his career, he spent 21 years as a firefighter/paramedic for the Houston Fire Department, retiring in 2011. After earning his nursing degree, he also worked as a nurse until 2011. Meyer earned a master's degree in biochemistry from Texas A&M University and a JD from South Texas College of Law.

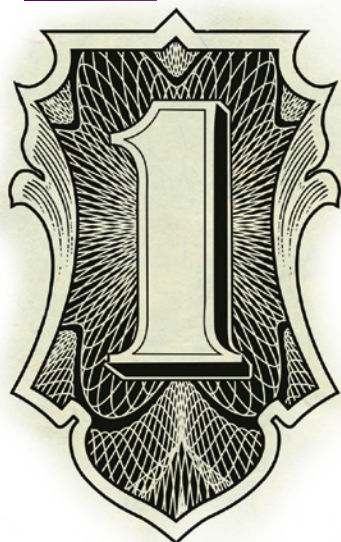


Patricia A. Ardolino, MS in nursing '13, Southington, CT—is a nurse manager at Diagnostic Imaging &

Therapeutics at UCONN Health Center and received the Nightingale Award for Excellence in Nursing in 2013. She was nominated for the award because "regardless of the overwhelming demands of her day, Patti exemplifies professionalism, respect, and a commitment of service excellence."

BY THE

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Excelsior College is No. 1 when it comes to the highest median salary for graduates with a bachelor's degree in liberal arts, according to a September 2013 report by PayScale, a provider of compensation data and software. Excelsior graduates' median salary of \$79,000 by mid-career (an increase from a median starting pay of \$47,000) was 30 percent more than the mid-career earnings reported by liberal arts majors overall.

675,000

The approximate number of approved credits that 15,900 transfer students brought with them to Excelsior College in the year ending June 30, 2013. The credits came from other academic institutions, the American Council on Education, National CCRS, CAEL, and credit from examinations. Not having to re-earn these credits saved students, their families, and benefactors — including state and federal financial aid programs — approximately \$263 million.

16

The number of on-base military education representatives located in 17 states and Washington, D.C., to provide students courtesy preliminary reviews, degree planning services, assistance in enrolling at Excelsior College, help with course registration, and information about Military Tuition Assistance and VA educational benefits.

3,500

The number of people participating in Introduction to Cybersecurity, the first Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) offered by the College. The free eight-week course uses video lectures, written assignments, interactive exercises, and participation to acquaint educators, professionals, and the general public with the fundamental concepts of cybersecurity. The MOOC was administered by Canvas Network and began in late January. Following the course, participants could take an exam to earn 1 credit from the College.

#2

Military Times ranked Excelsior College No. 2 among online and nontraditional colleges in its Best for Vets: Colleges 2014 list. Excelsior ranked high in staff support, one of the five categories in which schools were evaluated. For this study, staff support considers the number of staff members dedicated to veterans issues, the amount of time they spend on veterans issues, and the scope and frequency of military-related training for teachers and administrators.



91%

The percentage of Excelsior College students who reported they are satisfied or very satisfied with their academic experience as indicated on the most recent Priorities Survey for Online Learners.

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