

Fontbonne University's

tableaux

September 2009

Fresh Perspectives



CONTENTS

Back to Roots 2

Physics prof teaches (*and learns*) on trip to Vietnam.

Canvas of Love 4

Fine arts alums explore Europe — and life — together.

Pushing Through 6

Dietetics grad overcomes adversity, lands internship.

Crunching Numbers 8

Teacher of Year is humble recipient of high honor.

An Open Door 10

Campus Ministry embraces mission and heritage.

Civics 101 12

Involvement is key in and out of the classroom.

Right Leaning 14

Student mixes politics and studies for promising start.

Changing Paths 16

Economy prompts satisfying diversion in careers.

Time Machine 18

Hop in and enjoy a trip to Fontbonne's yesteryears.

On the cover: This birds-eye view of Medaille Meadow, taken from the Doerr Chapel rooftop, comes with the added bonus of a closeup of our bell. Although not gracing us with its presence the day this photo was taken, keep an eye on our bell and you could spot our resident hawk. Photo by James Visser.

CREDITS

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HAIRCUTS, THE ECONOMY and ALUMNI AS AMBASSADORS

"So, what are we doing today?"

"Just trim up the sides and back, and take a little off the top."

"OK, sure, about like last time. So, how are things at the school? Has the economy hurt you guys?"

My haircut turned out just fine, but the idle chitchat got me thinking.

Has the economy hurt Fontbonne? What does the future hold? Honestly, it's hard to say at this point. Our fall enrollment numbers won't be truly firm until we're into the school year and we've sorted out who showed up, who stayed and who dropped. But we do have projections.

Traditional student enrollment for first-time freshmen and transfer students looks to be stable. Graduate program enrollment appears to be status quo. Of course we'd like those numbers to be trending up. International recruiting is seeing some drop off. And the numbers for OPTIONS, our program for adult learners, are down, and perhaps that's the one area we can truly say that the economy has hurt us. If a single parent, or a husband or wife with a family, has to make a choice between going to school or paying the mortgage ... well, we know what wins out.

We've done some belt-tightening of our own. As you might have been aware, we held salaries at their current level this year. That's never welcome, but all around me, faculty and staff are dedicated as ever to the mission at hand. And we delayed the start of major renovation on the Science Building, but it's hopeful that the project will begin later this fall.

So, yes, there is adversity. There are challenges. But there's no "woe is me" or handwringing. Fontbonne has positioned

itself well to weather the storm. We have the strongest, most robust offering of academic programs ever in our history. We introduced our new College of Global Business and Professional Studies last year. Earlier this year, we opened our new Brentwood facility to serve as a headquarters for OPTIONS staff and a satellite location for classes. And we just launched an advertising campaign to promote major changes in the aforementioned OPTIONS format, looking to infuse a successful program by making it stronger, more flexible and more personalized. Our third "dedicated semester" is about to get under way. This campus-wide endeavor will shine a keen light on all aspects of the "Immigrant Experience" and will feature a naturalization ceremony later this fall. And you're probably aware that our major fundraising campaign — "Now ... More Than Ever" — is in its final phase, zeroing in on the \$20 million target. Your financial support and investment in Fontbonne is still needed and very much appreciated.

Ultimately, though, we are a school that relies on tuition. If we are to survive — no, grow — we need to recruit harder and smarter.

And, so, dear reader it comes down to this. I'm asking you today to join our cause, perhaps like you never have before. Who better to serve as deputy recruiters than our proud alumni — 14,000 strong. We need your help in singing our praises near and far.

You are the example. You are our strongest advocates. You can make a difference.

Mark Johnson
Editor

Know somebody who might want to be a Griffin?

Just send them our way:

Admissions phone: 1-800-205-5862 e-mail: fbyou@fontbonne.edu

And we're always just a click away: www.fontbonne.edu





physics of the heart

INSTRUCTOR SAYS HELPING OTHERS IS 'THE VERY BEST THING'

by Elizabeth Hise

Imagine leaving everything you know behind you.

Imagine risking your life in order to secure your future.

Imagine starting over in a new world.

For Dr. Minh Truong, these scenarios were at one time a very vivid reality. Truong, an assistant professor in Fontbonne University's biological and physical sciences department, spent the earliest years of his life in Saigon, Vietnam. But in 1984, his family escaped the communist country in a small boat built by his father, an engineer. Truong, then 8, and his parents and sister, were plucked from the middle of the ocean a few days later by a support ship near an oil-drilling platform. They have since made their home in the United States.

Truong, now 34, resides in the Ferguson area with his wife, Amanda, a Fontbonne mathematics and computer science instructor, and their two children. In 2006, he received his doctorate in theoretical particle physics in tandem from the University of Missouri–St. Louis and the University of Missouri–Rolla. He can often be seen walking through the halls of Fontbonne, clean-cut, well-dressed, reserved but friendly. On a typical day, he teaches physical science and engineering physics; in his free time, he researches theoretical physics. This past winter, it was Truong's research outside of class in the area of high energy physics, or supersymmetry, that led him to an international conference in his native country of Vietnam.

"This was something I wanted to do as part of my professional development," he said. "I didn't have any expectations. I just wanted to meet people, especially other scientists."

And they were eager to meet Truong as well. He was even invited back to Hanoi University and Ho Chi Minh

University as a visiting professor during the 2009-2010 winter break.

"They seemed happy I was there. Physicists in Vietnam feel isolated — because of communism, everything is censored," Truong explained.

He remembers the Vietnam of his childhood as a much smaller and slower country. Today, he said, its intensity is almost overwhelming. Chaotic traffic fills the streets, and cities overflow with noise and movement. "Initially, it felt very foreign to me," he said. "After a week, though, I felt more at home. But I am glad to be back in the States."

Truong chose to visit Vietnam for professional reasons, but he also wanted to give back to the country in which he was born. He held a fundraiser here before he left, gathering toys and school supplies that he could take to the Dieu Giac orphanage in Ho Chi Minh City. Following the 10-day conference in Hanoi, he spent time teaching, volunteering and visiting with disadvantaged children. According to Truong, many of those he met were seriously ill with diseases thought to be caused by Agent Orange used during the Vietnam War.

"The experience was profound," he said. "You wouldn't know it until you get there — the level of poverty, and at the same time, how hard people work. It makes you realize you take everything for granted."

Discipline and hard work have always been important values for Truong, and he stresses them in the classroom. "It seems to me that the value of education remains the most important priority in an average Vietnamese household," he noted. He strives to instill this priority

in his students through unique learning opportunities.

"Dr. Truong's energy and excitement seem to inspire students," said Dr. Elizabeth Rayhel, associate professor and chair of Fontbonne's biological and physical sciences department. "Through his star-gazing sessions and trips to Reis Biological center, he has really given



Fontbonne faculty member Minh Truong helps a Vietnamese student during a trip to his native land.

students so many hands-on opportunities to learn physics."

Clearly, energy, passion and discipline all contribute to Truong's success — in the classroom and beyond. But one could say it's his compassion that makes him a role model for the Fontbonne community.

"I would encourage others to do more traveling, to see the world, and broaden their horizons," he said. "Do whatever you can to help. To help someone else — that's the very best thing."



Mike Nichols and Leslie Reuther explore Oxford, England.

ART ... in life & love

by Elizabeth Hise

Fontbonne University alums Mike Nichols and Leslie Reuther both understand the art of a captured moment. So when these two professional artists found themselves on a four-month adventure 3,000 miles away from home, they pulled out their paintbrushes, canvases, sketchbooks and cameras to record every step.

Nichols and Reuther spent the first few months of 2009 — and the beginning of their married life — at Harlaxton College in Lincolnshire, United Kingdom. The experience was a teaching opportunity for Nichols, who is a faculty member at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green.

“Western Kentucky participates in a study abroad partnership with Harlaxton College. I was sent to teach there as a visiting faculty member,” Nichols explained. “The location was breathtaking; in addition to being an object of awe and inspiration, it acted as a staging point for four months of travel in Europe.”

With all of Europe at his fingertips,

Nichols didn’t just teach during the trip. Before he left the United States, he received a grant from his university to study buon fresco painting — an ancient, complex and very permanent method of large-scale mural painting — in Italy. And so he and Reuther spent their time away from home studying, learning, painting and exploring, with the old masters as their guides.

Foundations at Fontbonne

Several years before their trip overseas, the pair began their own personal journey. They met in 1998 at Meramec Community College in St. Louis where Reuther studied and Nichols worked as a slide-room technician and

photographer for the art department. Meramec would eventually offer Nichols a position as an adjunct professor, but in the meantime, he was pursuing graduate degrees in art and fine arts at Fontbonne.

“Mike actually introduced me to Fontbonne,” Reuther said. “I was considering my options when he insisted I look into the university’s painting program. The technical foundations in drawing and painting impressed me. The teachers helped me develop my visual vocabulary and gave me the tools I needed to make a technically sound painting.”

Nichols believes that Fontbonne provided him with a critical



Reuther’s piece, “Passing,” (above) and Nichols’ untitled work (right) appeared in a show titled “Opus Stratum” at Harlaxton College, England.

educational foundation, especially in his understanding of historic and fundamental image-making techniques.

By 2001, both Nichols and Reuther had completed their degrees — Reuther with a bachelor’s in fine arts and Nichols with his master’s degrees. And they got to know each other in the process.

Keeping a Connection

“Admiration would have been an accurate word to describe my earliest feelings about Leslie,” Nichols mused. “Her drive and talent impressed me greatly. But she graduated from Fontbonne, I moved to Kentucky and we lost touch for several years.”

But, somehow, a bond lingered between the two. After reconnecting and dating for two years, Nichols popped the question on July 4, 2008, beneath an explosion of fireworks on the grounds of a golf course near their home. “Just like the old television show, ‘Love, American Style,’” he grinned.

A month after their November 2008 wedding, Nichols and Reuther found themselves winging their way to Europe.

“We traveled extensively, visiting historic cities such as Bath, London, Paris, Amsterdam, Florence, Rome and Pompeii,” Nichols said. Both artists are painters and — although their styles

vary greatly — they found significant inspiration in the rich architecture, art and landscape found in the Old World.

Reuther typically paints with a technique in which she uses words in collaboration with imagery. While in England, she completed her “Stratum Series,” a collection of atmospheric landscape paintings created using handwriting and color washes. Nichols, in contrast, uses both traditional and contemporary techniques and materials, including oils and pastels. According to Nichols, his art explores time, space and motion, and uses physical characteristics, such as texture, paint qualities and varied surfaces to help convey meaning.

It is this appreciation for what Nichols calls the “raw process of image making” that drew him to the age-old art of buon fresco painting. Few modern artists use it because of its demanding nature, he explained. He plans to produce a fresco of his own with the help of a team of student apprentices at Western Kentucky.

Coming Home

In May, Nichols and Reuther packed up their arts supplies and returned home to Kentucky.

“Our personal lives have moved so quickly in the past year that I hope to put our roots down for a little while



and find time to process everything that has changed and everything we have experienced,” Reuther said.

In the meantime, Nichols plans to throw himself into his fresco project and complete his tenure application. Reuther will showcase her art in a two-person exhibition and plans to continue work on commissioned portraits. Both have settled back comfortably into the routine of everyday life.

“A year ago, neither of us would have imagined having an opportunity to live in England for four months,” Reuther said.

But through the photos, paintings and drawings they created along the way, it’s an opportunity they’ll never forget.



A Long and Winding Road

by Mark E. Johnson

Sixteen can be a tough age. Especially for girls. And especially if you suffer from a skin disorder that makes you stick out like a sore thumb.

Ruth Ann Crouse developed severe eczema when she was a sophomore in high school and for four years dealt with a merry-go-round of doctors, drugs and creams. Finally, one doctor suggested looking at her diet. Through a process of elimination over six months, she discovered that wheat and dairy products caused the outbreaks.

That experience planted the seed for what Crouse would eventually pursue and achieve in college: a degree in dietetics. The 2008 Fontbonne University alumna recently completed a graduate internship at Bastyr University in Seattle, Wash., acclaimed for its curriculum focusing on holistic medicine. She's the first Fontbonne student to be accepted into the program.

As part of an internship program, dietetics grad Ruth Ann Crouse completed a five-week rotation at Seattle Children's Hospital working with the transplant team, as well as the cardiac and neonatal intensive care units.

"I feel that because of my journey, I am less inclined to judge others."

— Ruth Ann Crouse

"I saw what a great difference nutrition made in my life and realized how powerful nutrition can be for the health and well-being of others," Crouse, 27, said. "Scientists are starting to understand the effect of nutrient gene interactions (nutrigenomics), which has great implications for many conditions like cancer."

Crouse's path to college was, as the song goes, a long and winding road. Neither of her parents had much formal education. Her father was one of eight kids growing up on a chicken farm in Illinois. He joined the Army during the Vietnam War and eventually found himself stationed in Korea in 1974. That's where he met Crouse's mother, who had been orphaned during that country's own war and had grown up as a house servant.

They started a family — a daughter, Crouse and a son — and embarked on the hopscotch life of an Army vet. Crouse said they planned on moving to some land in Arizona when her dad retired from the Army. But when the family arrived they discovered that the money they had invested over the years with a family member hadn't gone toward the land. Left without a place to live, or money, Crouse says her dad, "a handy, ingenuous man," fashioned living quarters — complete with kitchen, bathroom and a communal bedroom — out of an old school bus. It was home for seven months.

"That one experience probably had more to do with me pursuing an education than any single thing," said Crouse, who was 8 at the time. "My dad worked in the orange groves to make extra money. It was rough and I knew I didn't ever want to be without good options."

The stress took its toll and Crouse's parents divorced. The single mom with three kids in tow ended up living in a rough neighborhood in Clarksville, Tenn. At 12, Crouse begged her mom if she could go live with an aunt in St. Louis and the request was granted.

"I just knew I had to be in a different environment if I was going to make it," Crouse recalled. "Moving to Missouri was the best thing that ever happened to me. My aunt is like a second mom to me."

The goal of a college education already instilled, Crouse worked through high school as a hostess at Bob Evans. And she focused on her studies.

"I worked very hard in high school to make good grades so I could go to college," she said. "I knew I would have to pay for it myself."

Though she initially enrolled at another local university, Crouse said the school just didn't seem supportive of somebody trying to get through college, work a job and deal with life. At Fontbonne, she found a different atmosphere.

"It makes a difference when students perceive that teachers care," she said. "For me, it made me want to work harder and learn more." Crouse points to a particular teacher — Jaimette McCulley, assistant professor of dietetics — as someone who inspired her.

"She is an extraordinarily gifted teacher. She always encouraged me to have confidence and believe in myself," Crouse said. "Even in my internship, I was always working hard to represent my school well. If another student from Fontbonne applies to the Bastyr internship, I want to have represented Fontbonne in a good light."

Crouse's interest in holistic medicine made her a perfect fit for the Bastyr internship, but her education at a private Midwestern school didn't fit the typical profile, according to McCulley.

"Ruth Ann pursued this area on her own time with great enthusiasm," McCulley explained. "She had a real thirst for knowledge. She was inquisitive and motivated. Seeing her confidence grow as she moved through our program was amazing."

Crouse says she was accepted to the research track of Bastyr's graduate program in nutrition science and she just passed her board exams, but the brand new registered dietician is not sure what the future holds. Her fiancé is considering a cardiothoracic anesthesia fellowship at the University of Washington and has a job offer in New Zealand.

"We're quite blessed with options," Crouse said. "Eventually, I want to teach at the university level. I want to challenge students to think about the bigger picture of nutrition — whole foods, food production, sustainability, access and socioeconomic status and how the health and well being of humans directly relates to the health of the planet."

Whatever path she chooses, it's hard not to admire where this alum has been and where's she gone. And she wouldn't change a thing.

"I feel that because of my journey, I am less inclined to judge others," Crouse said. "I do not know where they are in the course of their journey, where they have been or where they are going."

WINNING THE BALANCING ACT by Elizabeth Hise

Mother of two. Certified Public Accountant. Fontbonne alumna. Kerry Borawski plays many roles. Most recently, she was acknowledged for one in particular — teacher.

Borawski received the 2009 Fontbonne University Joan Goostree Stevens Excellence in Teaching Award for her work as a full-time instructor in the business administration department. A committee of representatives from the student body, faculty and administration selected her for the award, endowed in 1994 by the family of Joan Goostree Stevens '47. For the past eight years, as both an adjunct and full-time instructor, Borawski has helped Fontbonne students connect principles of accounting with current events, real-world experience and business practices.

"I've always had an interest in accounting," Borawski said. She appreciates the steadiness, order and predictability the field offers, and she comes from a family of accountants, so the subject matter felt familiar and comfortable to her.

Borawski, who met her husband, an alumnus, at Fontbonne, received a bachelor's degree in accounting in 1996 and went on to earn a master's in

business administration from St. Louis University in 2001. That same year, she began teaching as an adjunct at Fontbonne. She also worked as a full-time CPA at LarsonAllen, a Minneapolis-based accounting firm with an office in St. Louis.

"It's a special place," she said about her alma mater. "I think the distinguishing factor is a matter of confidence. Because of the small class sizes, students are encouraged to become members of the community. They gain self-assurance, which leads to contribution, then satisfaction, and finally, self esteem."

Borawski, who became a full-time instructor in 2007, enjoys her role in the classroom; she strives to provide the leadership she believes that students crave.

"I've found that if I'm direct, honest and courteous, that I'll be able to bridge the gap between subject matter and student," Borawski said. "I take the role of leadership very seriously; students want someone to lead them with courage."

For the past few years, she's balanced teaching with motherhood and volunteering in her local community of Sunset Hills. She plans to scale back to a part-time teaching role, staying connected to Fontbonne, but spending more time with her family.

She is humbled by the teaching award, insisting that it's just a matter of being in the right place at the right time. "With so much going on with the world's economy today, discussions flow freely and students express much curiosity about the world of business and the role of accounting," Borawski said. "Instructing them is the easy part."

While this may be true, Fontbonne doesn't give out awards indiscriminately.

The campus community spoke. Kerry Borawski is an excellent teacher.

"I take the role of leadership very seriously; students want someone to lead them with courage."

— Kerry Borawski

molding METAL & MINDS

by Elizabeth Hise

Google Peg Fetter's name and you'll have a wealth of information at your fingertips. This instructor of art at Fontbonne University seems to be everywhere at once — creating her own art, teaching metalsmithing classes and staying actively engaged in the St. Louis art community.

Fetter is a woman of many talents, but to her students, she's a passionate teacher and motivated instructor, evidenced by her selection as Fontbonne's 2009 Excellence in Teaching Award for Part-Time Faculty.

"At first I thought the fine arts department was teasing me," Fetter said. "But when I found out my students had nominated me, I was blown away. This is a huge honor. I work so hard to make my class fun and challenging, and it thrills me that I'm making an impact."

Fetter has been an artist for as long as she can remember. Her parents encouraged her to study art, she said, because it was what she loved. Originally from South Carolina, she moved to St. Louis to attend Washington University where she earned a Master of Fine Arts in metalsmithing in 1993. She and her husband, a native St. Louisan, remained in the area. In addition to Fontbonne, Fetter also teaches at St. Louis University, as well as Craft Alliance, an organization in University City that offers exhibitions, classes and community outreach programs. She works with metals of all kinds, both raw and refined.

"I work mostly with steel, gold and diamonds," Fetter said. "I love the juxtaposition of refined against rough, elegant against pedestrian. My work remains delicate while I use an industrial medium — the gold and steel create a perfect foil."

And Fetter's love of art translates to her classroom.

"The main reason I enjoy teaching is because of the moment a student 'gets it,' and it starts to fall into place; the designing and the craftsmanship unite," she explained. "When a student is excited and wants to learn, that's when I feel like I've done my job as an instructor."



An Open Invitation

by Elizabeth Hise



Sarah Schumacher (seated on pew) believes in taking her campus ministry mission out of the office. Joining her are students on the campus ministry team (l-r) Lauren Zak, T.J. Eggleston, Mary Gould, Stephen Werkmeister, as well as alumna Krista Brown '09.

Campus ministry stresses community involvement. Students Lauren Sandefur, Michael Horn, Libby Brauss, Sarah Shehata and Bridgette Holmes live out Fontbonne's mission during a service trip to Belize in the spring of 2009.



Students can participate in as many as three or four volunteer trips each year to places like Belize; Biloxi, Miss.; or Nazareth Farm in Salem, W.Va., where they perform basic home repair, build homes or structures, and develop relationships with those they serve. And the campus ministry team also sponsors spiritual journeys on spring break — to locations like Rome and Ireland — where students, faculty and staff can explore both faith and culture.

Fellowship is also a big part of campus ministry. A faith-sharing group meets weekly, giving students the chance to ask questions and discuss faith, God and spirituality in a safe, comfortable environment, according to Schumacher. And weekly Mass, celebrated by visiting priests every Sunday and Friday while classes are in session, is a relaxed, prayerful experience that appeal to students, giving them a respite from their busy lives and daily activities, according to Schumacher. “They tend to linger outside the chapel after mass, enjoying the fellowship and friendship they find there,” she said.

“I’m very appreciative and proud of how Fontbonne unconditionally supports what we do for students,” he said. “It’s not just a written statement — the school supports us in word and in resources.” The growth of the program can be seen in new and improved programs offered to students throughout the school year. The office has increased the number of service trips available through a student organization it sponsors called FISH, Fontbonne in Service and Humility.

“We’ve had some amazing students take on leadership roles. What they do makes our outreach possible,” Schumacher said.

Interns assist with new programming, some of which involves faculty and staff, in addition to students. The interns for the 2009-2010 school year, Lauren Zak and Stephen Werkmeister, have already stepped into their new positions. Each will spend about five hours a week in their roles as interns and many more as engaged participants.

“It’s wonderful to find a group that believes the same things and has the same values that I do,” Zak said. “It makes the friendships I’ve made here that much stronger.”

Looking forward

As Schumacher warms to her new position, she acknowledges the strong partnership she shared with Mravle. Good memories at her side, she has high hopes for the future of the department and for the Fontbonne community.

“I hope each student, faculty and staff member who connects with our department feels known and appreciated,” she said. “I hope we continue to meet students where they are at in their spiritual journeys and encourage them to explore their relationship with God and to move forward together with God in this relationship.”

And that’s really what campus ministry is all about — creating and maintaining strong relationships with others in the community, as well as connecting with one’s own spirituality and with God. All that’s required, Schumacher said, is for students to come as they are.

The door is open. Always.

Sarah Schumacher’s door is always open. Literally. A cozy nook nestled inside the first floor of Fontbonne University’s Medaille Hall, her office beckons as a place of comfort for harried students. “Relax, unwind, kick back,” it seems to say.

Schumacher is the school’s newly instated director of campus ministry. She is replacing Tony Mravle who stepped down just recently — after serving for five years — so that he and his family can move closer to his hometown of Joliet, Ill. Schumacher was the assistant director under Mravle and shares the same passion and drive to make campus ministry a welcoming environment.

A Catholic identity

Campus ministry is intrinsically connected to the mission of Fontbonne and its founders, the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. The department works hard to ensure its metaphorical doors really are open to all students —

regardless of their faith or traditions.

“For me,” Schumacher said, “I refer back to our Catholic identity statement. It’s very much about inclusivity and universal themes.”

According to the statement, “the permeating quality of Fontbonne is our commitment to know, to love and to serve the truth that unites faith and reason, ... ” and it is that “commitment” that Schumacher and Mravle believe leads to a greater capacity for love of others, bearing witness to God’s own sacrifice and love for his creation. As they point out, the Sisters work to connect people to one another and to God, and the campus ministry team feels called to extend that mission.

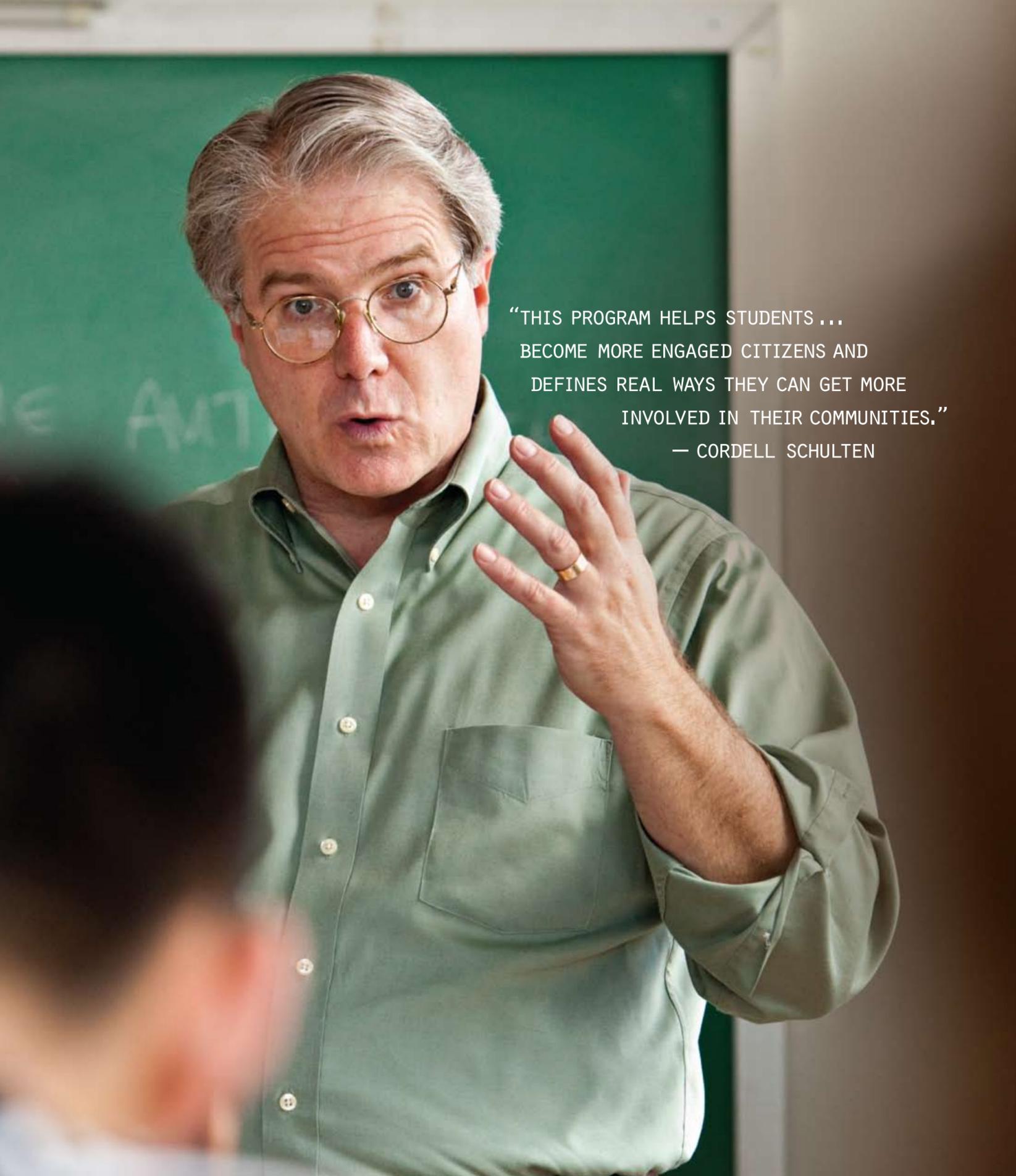
“Through our Catholic sacramental view, we believe that everyone has dignity through the very definition of being created as a child of God,” Mravle said in a recent interview before stepping down.

A flourishing department

Under the Mravle-Schumacher tenure, campus ministry has grown by leaps and bounds. But not just because of their personal efforts, according to Mravle.

“I’m very appreciative and proud of how Fontbonne unconditionally supports what we do for students,” he said. “It’s not just a written statement — the school supports us in word and in resources.”

The growth of the program can be seen in new and improved programs offered to students throughout the school year. The office has increased the number of service trips available through a student organization it sponsors called FISH, Fontbonne in Service and Humility.



“THIS PROGRAM HELPS STUDENTS ...
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DEFINES REAL WAYS THEY CAN GET MORE
INVOLVED IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.”

— CORDELL SCHULTEN

AWARENESS + INSPIRATION ACTION

by Elizabeth Hise

“THE MOST IMPORTANT POLITICAL OFFICE IS THAT OF PRIVATE CITIZEN.”

— LOUIS BRANDEIS

More than 90 years after Louis Brandeis took office as a United States Supreme Court Justice, his words still resonate for Cordell Schulten, a law, ethics and religion instructor at Fontbonne University. They reflect the values he teaches every day.

Sharing with younger generations the importance of personal civic responsibility, engagement and awareness has become a way of life for Schulten. He began his career as an elementary and middle school teacher, then earned his law degree from St. Louis University and practiced law for 10 years. But he realized that teaching was his passion and returned to education in 1996, this time at the college level. This summer, he's teaching part time at Fontbonne while working toward a doctorate at Concordia Seminary. Beginning in the fall, he plans to teach American law for a year as a visiting instructor at Handong University in Pohang, Korea. Next year, he'll return to Fontbonne.

Animated and energetic, Schulten can't help but share his enthusiasm for civics. In addition to his teaching responsibilities, Schulten volunteers as a judge for We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution, a nationwide competition that promotes civic competence and responsibility among grade school and high school students.

“This program helps students begin to see how their education is meaningful,” Schulten explained. “It helps them become more engaged citizens and defines real ways they can get more involved in their communities.”

At the national level, the program is sponsored by the Center for Civic Education; at the regional level, the Missouri Bar Association coordinates the competition. Volunteers include lawyers, judges, professors, teachers, law students and alumni of the program, all who take time out of their schedules to

serve as competition judges and support participating students. Schulten has participated for several years, first as a coach and now as a judge.

The competition takes place at the state level every January in Jefferson City, but the students' preparation begins in the fall. The process was designed to mimic the structure of congressional committees, with judges acting as legislators and students testifying as experts. Teams of students present answers to predetermined Constitutional questions, and judges then score them on understanding, application, reasoning, evidence, responsiveness and participation. The winning team travels on to the national competition in Washington, D.C.

“Cordell is a remarkable judge for the program, as he brings a keen intellect to the table,” said Charles Hinderliter, an instructor of political science at Western Illinois University and also a judge for We the People. “He engages the students in dialogue, and in doing so, allows them to showcase their knowledge, pushing them to think about the critical issues that are involved in the mock congressional hearings.”

Students become very dedicated and involved in the program, according to Schulten.

“They're interested in current events, government and politics. They're kids who are interested in their own personal formation — students that teachers love to have in class, — he said. “As judges, we ask them questions, not to throw them off track, but to help them go deeper, understand more and question what they learn.”

And for Schulten, that's the whole point — educating bright, thoughtful students, of course, but at the same time, developing a new generation of energetic and engaged citizens who will participate in the process.

STUDENT BLEEDS PURPLE, GOLD — & RED?

by Elizabeth Hise

KIT CRANCER COMES ACROSS OLDER THAN HIS 22 YEARS. HE'S WELL-SPOKEN AND THOUGHTFUL, SOMEONE WHO'S CLEARLY COMFORTABLE IN HIS OWN SKIN. AND HE'S NOT ABOUT TO LET YOUTH BE A LIABILITY.

Crancer is a senior at Fontbonne University majoring in human services. Most college students pay the bills working at the mall, fulfilling internships or finding work-study jobs on campus. But, defying typecast, Crancer serves as chief of staff for Missouri Republican State Senator Jim Lembke. He's the youngest to hold that position in the state legislature by about five years.

Crancer says his age occasionally elicits questions about his capabilities, but his decision to take on roles as working professional and student is due to a strong sense of independence.

"It's been difficult to balance these two aspects of my life," he conceded. "I've had to make sacrifices but, at the same time, I'm financially secure and independent. I've been able to better myself and my community. And I'm getting life experience."

As a Conservative Republican, Crancer's political views are influenced by his faith, upbringing and ideals, he said, and he's driven by a passion for politics — and making a difference.

One gets the impression that Crancer, a Crestwood native, has always been a bit of an old soul. But certain events in his life have contributed to aging him more quickly than most.

"My father died when I was in high school," he explained. "His death, and others within my family, helped shape and mold me. They really showed me not only the value of a life, but how quickly it can end." Crancer is matter-of-fact about these observations, but he clearly still feels their impact.

The summer after his high school graduation found Crancer on his own; his family had moved to Florida that same year to pursue job opportunities and be near warmer weather. Alone in Missouri, he jokes that he had to "sink or swim." So he channeled his inner entrepreneur and swam. Just 19, he began managing political campaigns, the first for Republican Colleen Wassinger who was running for the St. Louis County Council; the second for Republican Jim Avery, Missouri State Representative candidate. Both won their elections. Around the same time, Crancer and a business partner began a consulting business, offering direct mail services for state level political candidates. Again, his efforts helped guide successful campaigns.

In 2008, Crancer served as a general consultant for Lembke. After another successful campaign — the candidate won the election by just 70 votes — Crancer accepted the position as Lembke's chief of staff.



"No two days are the same," Crancer said of the time he spends in the state's capitol, Jefferson City. He mentally strolls through a typical day on the job, elaborating on briefing Lembke with the morning news, meetings with other legislators, preparing press releases and working on legislation. Crancer said he is particularly proud of his role in drafting Senate Bill 435, which was signed into law recently. He describes it as legislation to help prevent sexual predators from engaging in further predatory behavior from jail or detention centers.

When the legislative session is complete — a period that lasts from January through May each year — Crancer returns to St. Louis and registers for class at Fontbonne.

"Kit exemplifies what the Fontbonne experience is all about," said Sharon Jackson, an instructor of behavioral sciences and Crancer's faculty advisor. She is also director of Fontbonne's human services program. "He's a talented student, but also a successful political organizer and policy maker, respected by many for his integrity and dedicated work. He'll achieve great success in his career, but he also understands and appreciates the purpose of community and working together to achieve goals."

Crancer made a very conscious decision to attend Fontbonne. He wanted a small school with a personalized class structure and the flexibility to accommodate his intense schedule. And he received all of that, he said, plus an insightful and dedicated advisor in Jackson. If all goes as plans, he'll graduate in December 2009. But unlike other graduates, he won't have to look for a job.

His advice to fellow students? "Don't be afraid to dive in," he said. "If you decide you want to work in politics 15, 20 years down the road, it's probably too late. Take your shot while you're young — create a schedule that will allow you to have flexibility, find a cause and work for it."

Crancer says if he ever loses his idealism, he'll leave politics behind him. But until that time, he's clearly thriving on the political process.

"When you get a bill passed that you know will help your constituents, you get a feeling like you've done something," he said. "The ability to enact change within your community is remarkable."

making the SWITCH

by Elizabeth Hise

Hap Gentry has always been a teacher. Until now, however, teaching was never actually his job.

He's held positions in banking and computer technology. He's earned a degree in economics and a master's in business administration. He's coached swimming for as long as he can remember, and he's been a stay-at-home dad. He relishes the role of mentor and instructor.

At age 51, Gentry has decided to follow his passion and pursue a master's degree in teaching at Fontbonne University. "I didn't know what to expect, but it's going great so far," he said. "My teachers are fabulous and the course material is a blast. For me, stepping into the classroom won't be hard." He's currently working as a substitute teacher while taking his first two classes. This fall, he'll even have a companion on campus — his 18-year-old son, Michael, will be attending Fontbonne as an undergraduate student.

Like Gentry, more and more people are exploring numerous careers throughout their lives rather than settling on one. Many of them are considering the idea of teaching. "Sixty percent of our graduate education students at Fontbonne are changing careers," said Dr. James Muskopf, director of graduate studies at Fontbonne.

Muskopf believes a lot of the current interest has to do with the economy. Many people lose their jobs and pursue teaching to fulfill lifelong dreams of becoming educators. Others see teaching as a stable career path in an unstable economy.

"In recession years, this happens," Muskopf said. "It affects our numbers — we see an increase in the inquiries regarding teaching certification. Whatever the rationale for the decision, good teachers have a passion for sharing knowledge. When I meet with interested students, I can

tell right away what kind of a teacher they'll be."

Debbie Suchanek, 52, a recent Fontbonne graduate, has a similar story to Gentry's. She has two degrees — a bachelor's in business administration and a master's in human resources development — but she has always wanted to teach. Sixteen years ago, she began studying for her teaching certification, but after she and her husband adopted a child, she put her plans on hold to become a stay-at-home mom. She eventually put the teaching goal back on track, and just this year earned her teaching certification from Fontbonne.

"Once I got back to class, I just loved it," she said. "I wish I had done this many years ago. This was my aspiration, but life has a way of changing plans for you. I look back now and wouldn't change anything. I have lots of life experiences to bring to the classroom."

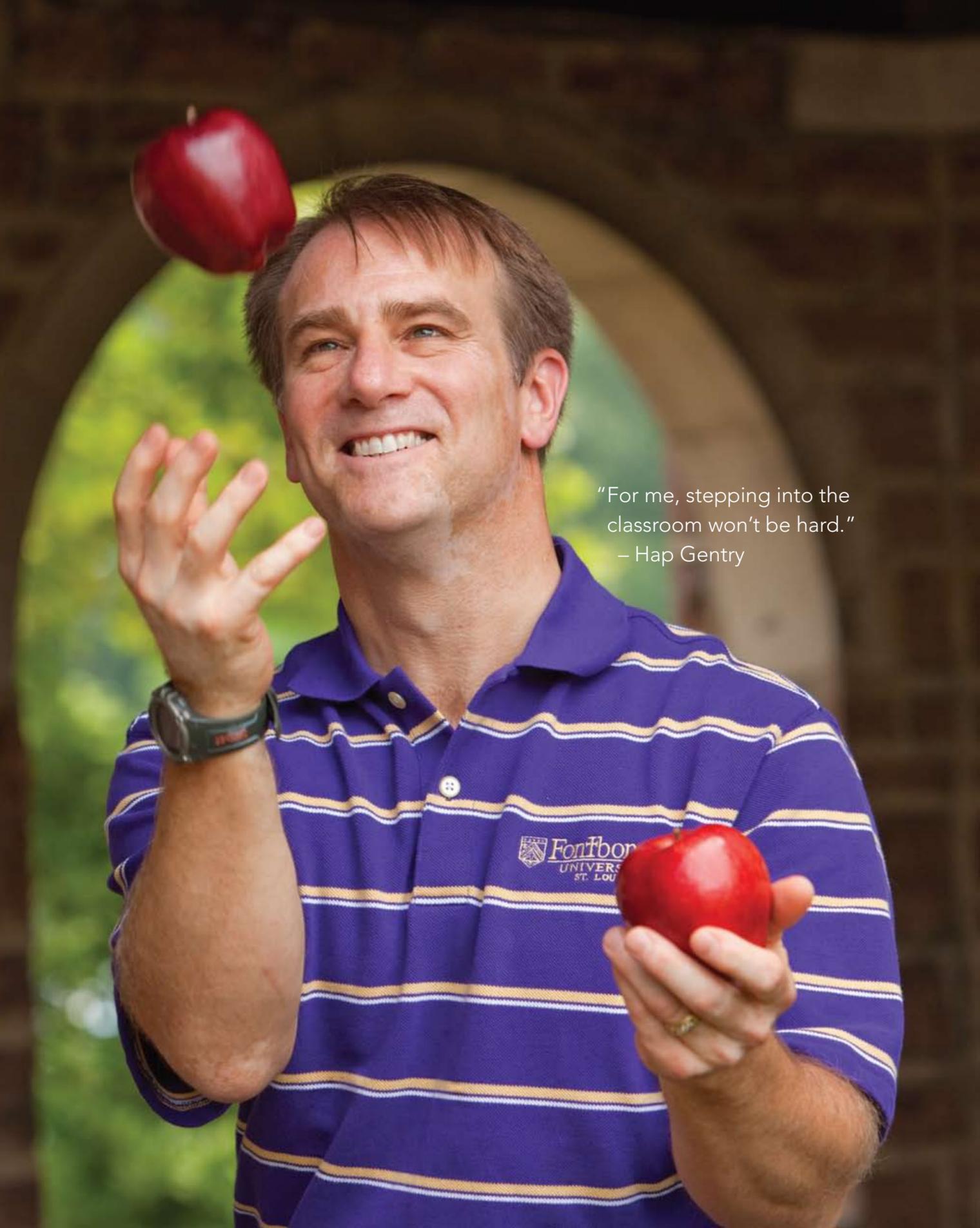
The Fontbonne education department offers many degree possibilities for those who are changing careers. This variety is a good thing, according to Muskopf, because prospective students are interested in different types of teaching.

"Elementary school teachers, for instance, are passionate about helping children grow," he explained. "They can teach a variety of subjects, and they love younger children. Those interested in middle or high school have a high regard for students, but also respect for a specific academic discipline."

At Fontbonne, practicing teachers can enhance their resume with a master's in education that has a choice of five concentrations. Those who hold degrees in fields other than education could pursue a master's in teaching, thereby combining teacher certification with an advanced degree. Fontbonne also offers the Career Builders program, designed for those already working in classrooms as paraprofessionals or teacher aides or assistants. It specifically focuses on bachelor's and master's degrees concentrating in special education.

The graduate education program has grown considerably in the last few years, and Muskopf believes much of that success is due to the quality of the faculty and staff. "We offer personalized attention, small class sizes, convenient scheduling and help with appointments to discuss financial aid," Muskopf said. "And we work very hard to help graduates find jobs in local schools. Our placement rate is very high."

And that's good news in any economy.



"For me, stepping into the classroom won't be hard."
— Hap Gentry

"Sixty percent of our graduate education students at Fontbonne are changing careers."

— Dr. James Muskopf, director of graduate studies

Freeze Frame

If the granite walls of Fontbonne University could talk, they would tell countless colorful tales. In 86 years, students, styles and subjects innumerable have come and gone. And each claims a unique part of Fontbonne's history. Since our DeLorean time machine is fresh out of plutonium, *Tableaux* felt the best way to take you back was through the lens of a camera. We hope you enjoy these early memories as much as we do. We plan to feature more recent decades in an upcoming issue.

Editor's Note: special thanks to Sr. Jane Hassett, Fontbonne's archivist.



1930s ▲ **BOOK WORMS** The Fontbonne Library was originally located on the fourth floor of Ryan Hall. In 1967, library materials were transferred to the current building through the efforts of a human chain.

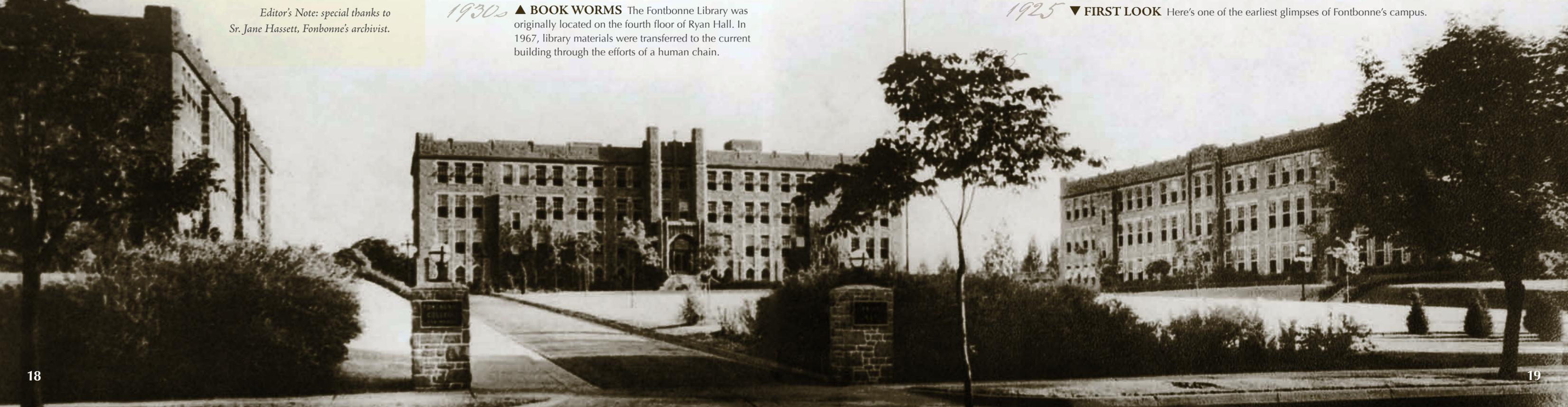


◀ **MMM ... GOOD EATS** The Fontbonne dietetics department bustled with activity even in its earliest years. (year unknown)

▼ **UP & AWAY** Physical education classes went through the roof with exercise on a trampoline located in Fontbonne's original gymnasium, where the Dunham Student Activity Center is today. (year unknown)

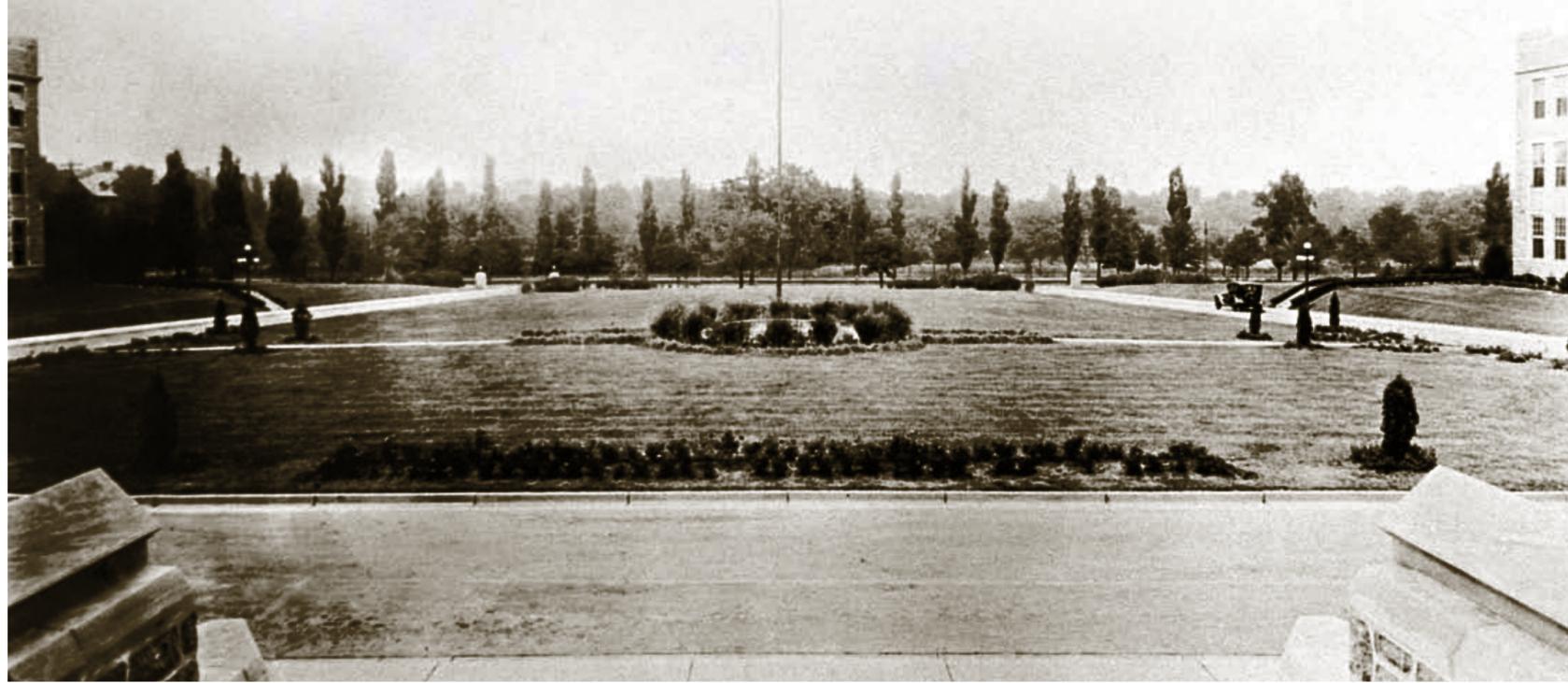


1925 ▼ **FIRST LOOK** Here's one of the earliest glimpses of Fontbonne's campus.



1955

▼ **CAPS OPTIONAL** Fontbonne's original gymnasium housed a swimming pool.



1930s

◀ **FORGOTTEN VIEW** Once upon a time, the steps of Ryan offered a clear view to the north — a perspective that today's students would barely recognize.

1941

▶ **MICROSCOPIC DETAIL** General Mills introduced Cheerios, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, and these two students got a closer look at the natural world in their science class.



1949

▲ **LOOKING SPIFFY** The prom brought (l-r) Frank Fitterer, Phyllis Fitterer, Joe Rebholz, Virginia Graeff, Virgil Puetz and Jackie Greener together for a glamorous night.

1941

▶ **COLD SHOULDER** These two Fontbonne women seem to be enjoying the company of their new friend.



1960s

▲ **CHIT CHAT** A picture of more innocent times, these students share a moment in a Medaille Hall dorm room.

1950s

◀ **40-LOVE** A tennis court was located near where the back parking lot is today. Physical education classes often enjoyed playing doubles on sunny afternoons.



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