



# ECHO

Autumn 2022

ST. JOHN'S  
COLLEGE  
ALUMNI  
NEWSLETTER

*A Division of St. John's College*



Greetings fellow St. John's alumni,

Unfortunately, Alumni Board President Brandon Leonard is unable to write the president's message for the fall edition of the ECHO due to health concerns. Please join me in wishing him well. My name is Linda Blakley, '82. I am an alumni board member, as well as an associate professor at St. John's College of Nursing. I am one of seven alums who also are full-time faculty members.

The board is excited about the upcoming alumni banquet, which will be held Saturday, Oct. 1 at Northfield Center in Springfield. Since COVID prevented us from holding the banquet the past two years, we will celebrate 50-year anniversaries with three different classes, 1970, 1971 and 1972. We also will celebrate three distinguished alumni, Dr. H. Catherine Miller (2020, class of 1970), Dr. Jill R. Engel (2021, class of 1985), Beverly Deaton (2022, class of 1963), as well as two young alumni, Amanda Simpson (2021, class of 2015), and David Johnson (2022, class of 2015). Even if it isn't your anniversary year, please plan to attend. I look forward to seeing you.

If anyone is interested, there are openings on the alumni board and members at large. Responsibilities include monthly meetings, which are both in person and on Zoom. This means you can be on the alumni board even if you do not reside in central Illinois. We are all proud of our alma mater and what the education, both formal and informal, provided as an entry into the nursing profession. I would like to encourage you to consider becoming involved as a member or an officer for the alumni board.

Best wishes,  
Linda Blakley, class of '82

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## Become *more.*

Recently, St. John's College of Nursing adopted a new slogan, Become more. The slogan was chosen for several reasons, most notably that our students choose St. John's College and work hard to achieve their goals to "become more."

The slogan eventually will be used on all marketing materials, the college's website and in most communications.



## New recruitment vehicle

Starting this fall, St. John's College representatives will be proud to travel across Illinois to various events in a new Nissan Sentra. The car is wrapped with the college's name, logo, contact information and our new slogan, Become more.



## Chancellor's Message

Hello alumni!

It's time to celebrate again as we look forward to the alumni banquet on Saturday, Oct. 1, after two years of waiting due to COVID-19. I am looking forward to celebrating three 50-year classes, 1970, 1971 and 1972, and I know all alumni of these classes are, too.

Distinguished Alumna 2020 Dr. H. Catherine Miller, class of 70; Distinguished Alumna 2021 Dr. Jill Engel, class of 85; and Distinguished Alumna 2022 Beverly (Bev) Deaton, class of 63, will be honored. Young Alumna 2021 Amanda Clouser and Young Alumnus 2022 David Johnson, both from the class of 2015, will be celebrated, as well.

This spring, 34 students graduated with Bachelor of Science in nursing (BSN) degrees and three with master's degrees. Our new recruiter is making a difference by increasing enrollment numbers across all programs. Additionally, we now offer fall and spring admissions. This primarily is due to the new LPN-BSN pathway program, which is the first and only program of its kind in Illinois. The LPN-BSN pathway streamlines how licensed practical nurses (LPNs) can advance their degrees in Illinois. Barriers to advancement have been removed, a transition course has been added and credit for prior learning is accepted. Relationships with Capital Area School of Practical Nursing (Springfield) and community colleges with LPN programs have resulted in the popularity of the pathway program.

Fifteen students are enrolled in St. John's College program at Greenville University as freshmen and will take their first nursing courses in spring 2024. Our faculty is embarking on the journey of curricular revision and plans to complete this mission by fall 2024.

We also have students enrolled in either the BSN-DNP or master's entry pathway who can work toward Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degrees from St. John's College. It is exciting and humbling to reflect on the Sisters' progressive and persistent nature when they started the school of nursing in 1886. To this day, their mission and traditions of nursing education provide guidance to our administration and faculty and allow for additional program development, continued accreditation and well-prepared registered nurses. The advanced degrees allow St. John's College nurses to become faculty, achieve leadership opportunities, implement best practices research and prepare for specialty practice in their areas of interest.

In June, one of our alumni who specialized and practiced as a nurse anesthetist, Patricia Ann Sur Hart, '55, was recognized. Pat designated St. John's College to receive a substantial award of \$1.125 million, plus another \$125,000, for nursing student scholarships. Her family was adamant that one student be given the gift of full tuition for his or her senior year. Senior student Raven Smith, class of 2023, was chosen for the first Patricia Sur Hart Award.

Sadly, Pat passed in October 2021 at the age of 87, but I had the pleasure of learning from her family what St. John's School of Nursing meant to her and how much she cherished receiving ECHO. There was a time when Pat was not receiving ECHO. A member of Pat's family, Paul Esker, class of 1966, and his wife, Emma, made me aware of this issue, and I contacted them to clarify Pat's address so she didn't miss another issue. I never dreamed how that follow-up phone call would result in such happiness to Pat and a donation of this magnitude.

I am happy to share that the HSHS St. John's Hospital Foundation has hired a new colleague who will be responsible for engaging with alumni and assisting with details for the alumni banquet and ECHO. The colleague's name is Natalie Donaldson. Natalie's mother, Janet Hornickel Donaldson, is an alumna of the class of 1976.

Peace and all good,

*Charlene S. Aaron PhD, RN*

Charlene S. Aaron PhD, RN  
Chancellor and professor



## Spring graduation held May 13



Thirty-four students graduated with Bachelor of Science (BSN) degrees and three with Master of Science (MSN) degrees in nursing from St. John's College of Nursing on Friday, May 13. The baccalaureate Mass and commencement was held at Christ the King Parish in Springfield, Ill.

### *Spring 2022 graduates:*

#### **Bachelor of Science in Nursing**

Kari Lyn Adams, BSN, Lincoln, Ill.  
Kayla Jill Anderson, BSN, Mason City, Ill.  
Chandler James Joost Balmain, BSN, Woodland, Calif.  
Bridget Brennan Bertolino, BSN, Virden, Ill.  
Aubrey A Beyers, BSN, Pana, Ill.  
Jennifer Teri Brillhart, BSN, Springfield, Ill.  
Alexis Joyce Carlock, BSN, Chandler, Ill.  
Lydia Marie Churchill, BSN, Jacksonville, Ill.  
Asia A Coleman, BSN, St. Louis  
Samantha Jordan Cote, BSN, Springfield, Ill.  
Abby Elise Cravatta, BSN, Sullivan, Ill.  
Krista Marie DeFrisco, BSN, Jacksonville, Ill.  
Kayi Emmanuela Dikewu, BSN, Springfield, Ill.  
Michelle Erin Green, BSN, Springfield, Ill.  
Daryn Jordan Handlin, BSN, Springfield, Ill.  
Devyn A Heard, BSN, Springfield, Ill.  
Emily Noele Higgerson, BSN, Springfield, Ill.  
Mariah Lynn Ingram, BSN, Jacksonville, Ill.  
Brooke Erin Kellermann, BSN, Decatur, Ill.





# Legacy donor of \$1.125 million gift honored



St. John's College of Nursing honored and remembered the late Patricia Ann Sur Hart who endowed \$1.125 million to the college to establish a scholarship fund. The first scholarship recipient of the newly established endowment is Raven Smith of Springfield, Ill., a senior at St. John's College working toward her Bachelor of Science in nursing.

Patricia Ann Sur Hart (1934-2021) was born and raised in Effingham, Ill. She was a 1955 graduate of St. John's Hospital School of Nursing. After working in Denver as a registered nurse for two years, she returned to Springfield and continued her education at St. John's Hospital School of Anesthesia. She then entered the workforce as a certified registered nurse anesthetist.



In 1970, Pat moved to Lexington, Ky., and began working at Good Samaritan Hospital. Pat married Emette Hart in 1972, and they enjoyed many years together, traveling extensively. She enjoyed golfing, sewing, political conversations and reading, and was an avid University of Kentucky basketball fan.

Pat was aware of the sacrifices her parents made to send their three children to college. That surely was a factor in Pat donating one of the largest single gifts to St. John's College of Nursing to be used for endowed scholarships. She carried a quiet love for the college since her graduation and loved reading the ECHO with updates about her classmates and the school's advancements.

*"St. John's College of Nursing ... is a place where lives are transformed, and in Pat's case, a place to transform the lives of so many with her generous gift."*

Mark Sur  
Patricia's brother

"Pat valued her education and with this endowment, she has now created educational opportunities for others," said Charlene Aaron, PhD, RN, chancellor of St. John's College. "We could not be more grateful for Pat's generosity toward the future of nursing."

"St. John's College of Nursing is more than just a place to go to get a degree," said Mark Sur, Patricia's brother. "It's a place where lives are transformed, and in Pat's case, a place to transform the lives of so many with her generous gift."



Senior St. John's College of Nursing student Raven Smith was the first scholarship recipient of the Patricia Ann Sur Hart award. Raven (left) is pictured with Chancellor Dr. Charlene Aaron.



# Distinguished alumni recognized



Several St. John's College of Nursing distinguished alumni and young alumni were celebrated on June 23 at Dove Conference Center at Prairie Heart Institute at HSHS St. John's Hospital.

Each of the celebrated alumna were recognized for his or her contributions to nursing and adding to the legacy of St. John's College of Nursing. All will be celebrated at the alumni banquet on Oct. 1.

***Pictured are (from left):**  
Dr. H. Catherine Miller, '70, distinguished alumna 2020;  
Bev Deaton, '73, distinguished alumna 2022; Amanda Clouser, '15, young alumna 2021; and  
David Johnson, '15, young alumna 2022.*

***Inset:** Dr. Jill Engel, '85, distinguished alumna 2021.*

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## Distinguished Alumna 2020 **Dr. H. Catherine Miller**

*Class of 1970*

Catherine is a 1970 graduate of St. John's School of Nursing. She received a bachelor's degree from Sangamon State University in 1981, a master's degree from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville in 1986 and completed her doctoral degree in educational organization and leadership, higher education administration in 2009.

Catherine served as the assistant director of St. John's Hospital School of Nursing from 1988 - 1990. Catherine emulates all the characteristics we hold dear when you look at the St. John's nursing pin and excellence in all aspects of nursing. She has worked diligently throughout her career as a steward of quality nursing practice.

A lifelong learner, Catherine continues to develop by attending current conferences presenting on varied topics that enhance excellence in nursing practice. Catherine has helped many communities through presentations and consulting.

As a faculty member, Catherine was committed to teaching excellence in nursing through research-base theory and interventions. She always emphasized a caring approach that treated the patient as whole, with mind, body and spiritual needs.

Catherine is a great example of St. John's core values for nursing, care, respect, competence and joy.

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## Distinguished Alumna 2021 **Dr. Jill Engel**

*Class of 1985*

Jill serves as the associate vice president for heart services for nursing, operations and patient care services and interim vice president and service line executive of heart and vascular services for Duke University Health System. In addition to her leadership roles, Jill has maintained her bedside practice as an acute care nurse practitioner (ACNP) in the cardiothoracic intensive care unit at Duke University Hospital, where she staffs per diem.

Jill serves as a reviewer for The Journal of Nurse Practitioners and has published and presented nationally and internationally on a variety of clinical, operational and leadership topics. She is a member of the American Association of Critical Care Nurses, American Association of Nurse Practitioners, Sigma Theta Tau, the American College of Cardiology and the Society of Thoracic Surgeons, where she serves on the multidisciplinary membership committee. She is certified as an ANCP, family and adult specialties and maintains her critical care RN (CCRN) and CCRN cardiac surgery specialist certifications, as well as her nurse executive advanced certification. Dr. Engel was inducted as a fellow into the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners in 2011 and completed the GE Health Management Academy Nurse Executive Fellows Program in 2018.

Jill lives in Morrisville, NC, with her husband, Samuel.

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## Distinguished Alumna 2022 **Beverly (Bev) Kirby Deaton**

*Class of 1963*

Bev spent most of her professional life at St. Francis Hospital in Litchfield, Ill. She held multiple positions from staff nurse to chief nursing officer.

She was an early champion of RN-BSN and MSN programs. Obtaining her BSN from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville (SIU-E) in 1986 and her MSN from SIU-E in 1995. Throughout her career, Bev was a mentor to others, encouraging them with formal education, as well as the pursuit of specialty certifications.

Bev promoted education for nurses and physicians alike. As a member of NAACOG and then AWHONN, she was an instructor, as well as instructor trainer, for electronic fetal monitoring. She also taught neonatal resuscitation, childbirth preparation and lactation courses. Because of her expertise, Bev also had the opportunity to serve as an expert witness in malpractice cases, assisting in the defense of claims against nurses.

When the federal government introduced the Critical Access Hospital initiative, she worked with the St. Francis Hospital Board of Directors to apply for and gain this designation. This provides reimbursement for Medicare dollars at an increased rate, assisting rural hospitals to remain open and able to care for the citizens of their communities.

Bev officially retired from nursing in 2011.

You are cordially invited to the  
2022 St. John's College Alumni Association

# Alumni Banquet

Saturday, October 1

5 p.m.

Foundation reception  
for class agents and alumni

6:30 p.m.

Banquet and dinner

Northfield Inn, Suites and Conference Center  
3280 Northfield Drive | Springfield, IL

To RSVP, go to [sjcs.edu/alumnibanquet](https://sjcs.edu/alumnibanquet)  
or cut out and mail the form below.



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

# of attendees \_\_\_\_\_ Class of \_\_\_\_\_

**50-year class only:**

☐ I would like to buy a composite picture  
for \$10.

**Please select your entree choice:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Bruschetta Chicken**

Balsamic marinated chicken breast topped with classic bruschetta mixture of diced tomatoes, red onion, basil and garlic, and finished with shredded mozzarella cheese. Served with twice-baked potato.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Chicken Marsala**

Boneless breast of chicken with red wine demi glaze, mushroom rice pilaf, honey glazed carrots and tossed salad.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Vegetarian (gluten free)**

Portobello mushroom caps stuffed with quinoa, grilled vegetables and melted provolone cheese.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Vegetarian (vegan)**

Portobello mushroom caps stuffed with quinoa and grilled vegetables.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Dessert**

Tuxedo truffle mousse cake.

Please enclose \$35 per person. Graduates of 1970, 1971 and 1972 attend free.

To RSVP, return this form by Sept. 5 to:

St. John's College, Alumni Banquet  
729 E. Carpenter Street, Springfield, IL 62702



# Alumni Board Spotlight



## Kris McCarthy Maurer

RN | Class of 1988

My name is Kris McCarthy Maurer. I am a 1988 graduate of the school of nursing. I had the pleasure of being one of the final graduating classes who attended classes in the old school of nursing building on Ninth Street. What a lovely environment we had to receive our nursing education. From Jackie and Sam at “control,” the big lounge, Sr. Anthony in the library, the old mailboxes and the tunnel connecting the school to the hospital, I cherish every memory. I have always had a deep love and heart for our beloved school, and now college, of nursing.

I have had the honor of being a member of the St John’s Hospital College of Nursing Alumni board for 19 years. It has truly been my pleasure to serve the alumni. I would like to take this moment to invite all alumni who are interested to become involved in the alumni association.

It is always great to receive fresh ideas on ways to assist alumni, faculty and current students in developing new nurses to carrying on our great tradition. The alumni truly are the guardians of our culture.

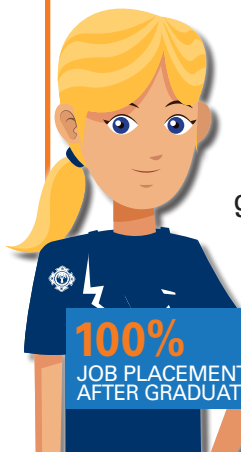
I hope to see many of you at this year’s alumni banquet on Oct. 1 at the Northfield Inn, Suites and Conference Center. It will be great to be able to finally gather in person.

Looking forward to seeing you in person,  
Kris

## APPLICATIONS NOW ACCEPTED.

### BSN program partnership between Greenville University and St. John’s College of Nursing

Nursing students at Greenville University (GU) located in Greenville, Ill., can work toward a Bachelor of Science in nursing (BSN) through St. John’s College of Nursing (SJC). GU’s pre-nursing curriculum provides an outstanding knowledge base for entry into nursing programs. SJC’s program boasts a 100% placement record for nurses who pass their licensing exam and a competitive NCLEX pass rate.



**For more information  
on the program, visit:**  
[greenville.edu/programs/nursing](http://greenville.edu/programs/nursing)

**100%**

JOB PLACEMENT  
AFTER GRADUATION

**99%**

RECEIVE FINANCIAL  
AID ASSISTANCE.

**50**

SJC AVAILABLE  
SCHOLARSHIPS

## Alumni News

### Helen Molohon McWard, '46

I am still active. Walking with a cane for my balance. Driving my car here in Taylorville for medicine, groceries, etc. Moved to Taylorville Estates in 2015. It was a good move.

### Theresa R Kraus, '59

Retired as I am now 90 years old. I am trying to find a classmate who was also my roommate on the third floor. Her name is Joann Christian Harman, and I haven’t been able to locate her in about 10 years.

### Barbara Luchtefeld Hopgood, '62

Having been in nursing all my life. I finally retired after my husband of 56 years passed away Dec. 13, 2020. I took care of him at home - I said the wife left and nurse took over for the last two years of his life. I moved to Springfield from Sherman ... downsized ... and on to the next chapter. Email: [hopgoodbarbara@gmail.com](mailto:hopgoodbarbara@gmail.com)

### Nancy Gail (Tracey) Croxton, '73

Traded nursing career of 45 years in ICU hospital for being a full-time grandma and nanny for two grandsons. I have adopted them, and the oldest has autism and ADHD. I attended and participated in the Oasis program at KC on behavior therapy. Email: [gailcroxton@gmail.com](mailto:gailcroxton@gmail.com)

### Lorna Haines McGrew (Jordan), '76

I retired from St. John’s Hospital Aug. 21, 2020, after working in pediatric ICU for 44 years and at St. John’s 46 years. Email: [lornajordan@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lornajordan@sbcglobal.net)

### Diane Rowe Fink, '81

Working at Carle Hospital, Hopeston, IL

### Condolences

**Mary Turvey Funderbunk, '47**

**Norma Michals She, '47**

**Clara Hilquist Richter, '52**

**Patricia Collins Newman, '55**

**Judith DeSart Grandone, '62**

**Barbara Canion Ostermeier, '63**



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Please mail to:

St. John's College  
729 E. Carpenter Street  
Springfield, IL 62702

Or email:

information@sjcs.edu

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Year graduated \_\_\_\_\_

News \_\_\_\_\_

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Where are you working? \_\_\_\_\_

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Email address \_\_\_\_\_

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