Celebrating Father Biondi’s Anniversary

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By Laura Geiser

Because University President Lawrence Biondi, S.J., is sharing his thoughts in a Q&A that appears on pages 8-13 of this issue, he begged off his usual president’s message and asked me to write an editor’s message instead.

F

From 1900-1908 Saint Louis University was led by William Banks Rogers, S.J., a visionary who is said to have transformed SLU. In just eight years as president, he Americanized and modernized SLU’s academic structure, re-established the School of Medicine, expanded the campus, rebuilt the athletic program and made plans to open a School of Law.

Rogers had a brief but groundbreaking tenure marked by his prophetic grasp of future trends, including his early understanding of the importance of public relations, his emphasis on alumni development and his commitment to the St. Louis community.

In Better the Dream, a history of Saint Louis University by William Barnaby Fawcett, S.J., Rogers is dubbed the “Second Founder of Saint Louis University.” Clearly he was a fascinating, driven man.

I have been intrigued by Rogers’ story since stumbling across his achievements many years ago. But there are probably very few other people on campus (except maybe our archives) who even know his name. You see, his legacy is not widely known at SLU.

Sure, his portrait does hang on the second-floor hallway that has a stored, self-assured intellect. Letters in the hallway must be signed, instructions not transmitted by publication should indicate that fact. The editor reserves the right to edit all letters. Address all mail to Universitas, SLU Box 39, 2311 Grand Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63103.

Add your own dedication to the event on page 123. Address the festivities at (314) 977-2249. Address fax submissions to Editor, Universitas, SLU Box 39, 2311 Grand Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63103.

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The undergraduate entrepreneurship program at Saint Louis University is one of the five Jesuit universities in the United States. In the 2008 edition of "America's Best Colleges" guidebook, published by Random House, only about 15 percent of the four-year colleges in America and two Canadian universities are listed. In August, SLU was ranked No. 21 in the world in graduate business programs in the top 100. In addition, SLU was listed in the top 100 undergraduate engineering programs No. 31 and undergraduate business programs in the top 100. The undergraduate entrepreneurship program ranked No. 21.

SLU ALERT SYSTEM IN PLACE
Saint Louis University now has a new emergency communication tool designed to quickly and alert all members of the SLU community about imminent public danger, campus disaster or other major crisis. SLU recently signed an agreement with St. Louis-based GroupCast to provide a message broadcast system that can notify all students, faculty and staff by office, home and cell phones within minutes of an emergency situation. It also sends text messages.

262 national universities. According to the magazine, SLU is ranked as one of the top five universities in the United States. U.S. News ranked SLU's undergraduate engineering programs No. 31 and undergraduate business programs in the top 100. The undergraduate entrepreneurship program ranked No. 21. In addition, SLU was listed in the top 100 undergraduate engineering programs No. 31 and undergraduate business programs in the top 100. The undergraduate entrepreneurship program ranked No. 21.

SLU ALUMNI AND FASIL ETICS INSTRUCTORS
SLU-owned acres in Midtown St. Louis in 1987; 234 in 2007

SLU makes two national rankings

On Campus

Major Grant Will Improve Children's Health

The National Institutes of Health selected the city of St. Louis and Macoupin County, Ill., as one of the National Institutes of Health's four major university partnerships in the United States. The extensive population-based study looks at the health and development of children by following them from birth to adulthood.

SLU Scientists Conduct Groundbreaking Research — Literally

This summer, a Saint Louis University team was part of a group of scientists drilling deep into the San Andreas Fault in California to better understand what causes earthquakes. It's research that could have implications back at SLU, which is near the New Madrid Fault.

The 2008 edition of "America's Best Colleges" ranked SLU No. 82 among 262 national universities. According to the magazine, SLU is ranked as one of the top five universities in the United States. U.S. News ranked SLU's undergraduate engineering programs No. 31 and undergraduate business programs in the top 100. The undergraduate entrepreneurship program ranked No. 21.

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Gass receives Literary Award

The Saint Louis University Library Associates presented the 2007 Saint Louis Literary Award to noted writer, critic and philosophy professor William H. Gass on Oct. 24.

Gass joined an impressive list of writers who have been recognized for their legendary contributions as novelists, essayists, poets and playwrights. Recipients of the Saint Louis Literary Award include Saul Bellow, Eudora Welty, John Updike and Joan Didion.

During a writing career that spans nearly five decades, Gass has been recognized for his works of fiction and nonfiction as well as stories and essays. He has received many awards and honors, including the American Book Award, the National Book Critics Circle Award for Criticism and the Mark Twain Award for Distinguished Contribution to Literature in the Midwest. As the David May Distinguished Professor in Humanities at Washington University in St. Louis, he taught philosophy for more than 30 years and founded the university’s International Writers Center.

NEW MALL ENHANCES MEDICAL CENTER

SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY has increased the beauty, safety and accessibility of the Medical Center with a new pedestrian mall.

The area along Vista Avenue between Grand Boulevard and Carr Lane Avenue has been transformed into an urban oasis that mimics green space near the Dougherty City of Health Sciences building as well as parts of campus north of I-64/Mwy. 40. The area is bordered by the School of Medicine complex on the north and the building that now houses the department of nursing and psychiatry on the south.

Pedestrians are welcomed to the mall by one of SLU’s signature red brick monuments, and landscaping, trees and flowers provide a parklike atmosphere. Safety also has been enhanced, as city streetlights were replaced by upgraded lighting that shines brightly on the mall.

Kranz helps unveil Parks timeline

FORMER NASA MISSION CONTROL commander Gene Kranz (parks ’54) returned to SLU for a special ribbon-cutting ceremony at McDonald-Douglas Hall during Homecoming Weekend in September.

Kranz was on hand as officials unveiled a park display honoring the 80th anniversary of SLU’s Parks College of Engineering, Aviation and Technology.

Divided into three sections, the colorful, three-dimensional, illustrated timeline of Parks’ history runs the full length of McDonald-Douglas Hall’s main corridor. Stretching 370 feet wide and towering 11 feet high, the display features a stainless steel timeline that connects all three sections.

Black and white photographs and other images representing the key people, news and technology from Parks’ history are displayed above the timeline. Below, aerial shots fade into each other, illustrating the changes to Parks’ former campus in Cahokia, leading to the SLU campus, where Parks has been located since 1997.

Body donors remembered at service

MORE THAN 1,000 STUDENTS, faculty, family and friends gathered at the Medical Center on Oct. 12 to remember and give thanks to the several hundred individuals who donated their bodies this year to Saint Louis University School of Medicine’s Gift Body Program.

First-year medical students planned the memorial service, which included reflections, prayers, songs and words of appreciation to the donors’ family members and friends in attendance.

“The ceremony is a sign of our thanks for those who have donated their bodies so we could learn. It also provides an opportunity for their family and friends to understand why they made this decision,” said Tom Heffern, a first-year medical student. “For me personally, the ceremony is an opportunity to give thanks to my first patient for the opportunity to work on him and learn from him.”

C-STARS PROGRAM ATTRACTS MILITARY LEADERS

THE DEPUTY SURGEON general of the U.S. Air Force hosted guests from England’s Royal Air Force at Saint Louis University’s Center for Sustainment of Trauma and Readiness Skills (C-STARS) on Oct. 6.

During the visit, dignitaries had the opportunity to observe a simulation, in which students treated an artificial, computerized patient in a lab designed to look like a real field hospital.

Dr. Govindaswamy Chinnadurai, of SLU’s Institute of Molecular Virology, has received a Wellcome Trust Investigation Award of Excellence in 2007. Chinnadurai’s research involves using budding yeast to understand the biology of viruses and viroids.

Dr. Donald Stump is now associate provost for undergraduate affairs. Director of the nationally recognized Michal Program, Stump is focused on advising, retention, learning communities, early intervention for students having academic problems, and fostering connections between faculty and students outside the classroom.
BILLIKEN BEAT

Saint Louis University led all league schools with 123 student-athletes named to the Atlantic 10 Conference’s Honor Roll for the 2007-08 season. Student-athletes named to the A-10 were named to the Commissioner’s Honor Roll completed the spring semester with a 3.5 grade-point average. In all, 1,118 student-athletes in the A-10 were named to the Commissioner’s Honor Roll.

Former Saint Louis University men’s basketball center Ian Yovoykus has signed a three-year contract with Olympiakos B.C. in the Greek Basketball League. Olympiakos finished the season with a 25-5 record and reached the league’s championship game. And former SLU women’s basketball standouts Tyler McCallen has signed with AutoCAD Axessco in Holland for the 2007-08 season.

Billiken fans everywhere can now keep up with Saint Louis University’s athletic teams online with the All-Access pass available at www.slabillikens.com through CSTV. The SLU All-Access pass costs $9.95 per month or $79.95 for the entire year. Billiken athletic events to be broadcast online include a minimum of 15 fall events in addition to select men’s and women’s basketball games. Programming will also include press conferences, men’s basketball features, video blogs from student-athletes and coaches as well as other special features.

The SLU All-Access pass is compatible with both PC and Macintosh platforms. However, Mac users must use the Safari Web browser to receive the feed. Pay-per-view programming will be available to annual subscribers for free, while monthly subscribers will be required to pay an additional fee.

Season ticket holders and alumni may qualify for a discounted annual price. Call the Billiken ticket office at (314) 977-4758 for coupon information.

BILLIKEN NAMED BEST MASCOT IN THE NCAA

The Saint Louis University Billiken was selected as the No. 1 college mascot by the Web site SPMsportspage.com. The site listed the Top 100 College Nicknames/Mascots among NCAA Division I schools. The column, written by Larry Ness, stated: “A nickname or mascot must be fairly unique, captivating and somewhat imaginative, and/or have some particular significance to the geographic location of a school. He (the Billiken) was a rock star before there even were rock stars, in the early 1900s. The rest is history, and it’s still the premier nickname/mascot in all of college sports.”

UNIVERSITAS FALL 2007
Saint Louis University President Lawrence Biondi, S.J., and I have just walked back into his office after a hurried lunchtime interview, and in no time at all, three members of his staff have gathered around his desk.

I'm still trying to ask some questions for this story celebrating his 20-year anniversary as president, but there is immediate business that demands his attention — letters to sign, meeting agendas to adjust and a stack of phone messages to return. Still, I keep firing questions at him, hanging onto the few minutes I supposedly have left. But it's hard to get a word in. He wants to answer me (I think). But he is back in his world now, busy and focused, and I know that the interview is over.

I really came as no surprise. Biondi is very much in demand. He routinely speaks to groups on and off campus, he travels to visit donors and alumni clubs across the country, and he averages 25 meetings a week. Because most of his meals are really meetings spent discussing the University, it's no exaggeration to say he eats and breathes SLU.

This interview was no different. We met at a new Mexican restaurant on campus named for one of Biondi’s dogs, Iggy. We both ordered the “Biondi Burrito.” (How could he resist? And, frankly, how could I?) It didn't take long before we were interrupted several times. First by students who wanted to know if he came up with the recipe for the burrito. (No.) Then by the restaurant owner. Then by some SLU staff members dining nearby. When we finally got up to head back to DuBourg Hall, Biondi noticed the owners of the nearby Coronado apartments across the room, so he promptly went over to say hello.

Because he can’t talk to everyone personally (though he sure tries), here’s a candid conversation with Biondi about his 20 years at Saint Louis University.
That's just surface stuff. How I've really changed is that — believe it or not — I'm not the person I used to be. There are all kinds of tests that we've passed that you can't measure.

UTAS: Did you ever imagine you'd be doing this for 20 years?

Biondi: No, the years have flown by since 1987. This may sound bad, but I never thought that I'd be here long because, frankly, I'm usually only good for seven or eight years before I get antsy. But there's such variety to this job — every day is a new experience, and I don't think any day has been the same. So I've never been bored. So much of what I have to do every day is actually exciting, and most of the time, rewarding.

Sure there are days when it feels like two decades, but most days it does not. There is still more that needs to be done, more contributions that I can make before moving on.

UTAS: Has the job changed much in 20 years?

Biondi: The issues are different, but the problems are often similar.

I used to look at the book Good to Great [by Jim Collins]. In it there is an analogy of an organization being like a bus, and the president is the bus driver. It's the driver's job to get the right person in the right seat so everybody can do his or her job and get the bus moving in the right direction. You may not know the direction for the first few miles, but eventually you'll figure it out as everybody starts to collaborate, contribute and determine the direction. SLU's like that. The bus hasn't changed. My job of getting the right passengers hasn't changed. But sometimes our routes do vary.

UTAS: How have you personally changed?

Biondi: Well, my physical changes are evident — I've got less hair, more wrinkles and a few extra pounds. I have less energy, and I can't make those quick decisions anymore. I'm getting tired a lot faster than I used to.

I think the changes here are due to a combination of several things, including a greater awareness of SLU's mission and vision, plus a greater articulation of what we expect from faculty, staff and students. I think that expectations have been set, and they are being met. We are doing what we said we were going to do. We have a greater alignment of the University and the community, plus a greater commitment to service, to teaching and to research.

In fact, I know our vision is ingrained because when students want something significant — for example, when they wanted the expansion of the Simon Recreation Center — they say to me, “In order to be the best Catholic university, you've got to do this.” They said the same thing about the renovation of Busch Student Center. So they have adopted our vision, they're aware of it, and they're pushing the staff, faculty and administrators to get there too.

I certainly hope our alumni and supporters agree that Saint Louis University has changed for the better. Of course, the physical campus has seen the most visible changes. I inherited a weak infrastructure, but the financial resources have improved significantly. I'll always be grateful to [former SLU president] Father Tom Bione and [former SLU president] Father Tom Fitzgerald, S.J., for making the hard decisions that left SLU financially sound and positioned us to move forward positively and definitively.

But, as I've said before, I am most proud of what we have accomplished: the quality of our academic programs, the depth and quality of the research being conducted, the care that we offer our patients, the quality and contributions of our students and alumni, the loyalty and commitment of our faculty and staff, and especially the fact that our Jesuit, Catholic mission continues to be our guiding and driving force.

SLU has undergone a remarkable transformation, moving ever closer to that vision of being the country’s finest Catholic university. I am very proud of this, but I know that it took many, many University people working together for years to build the SLU of 2007.

UTAS: What are your biggest successes?

Biondi: I'm proud of many things. In particular, I'm pleased with our higher academic standards and reputation, our $797 million endowment as well as the impressive credentials of our faculty and staff. Our Madrid campus is one of the premier programs in Europe. And overall campus beautification — though I hesitate to focus on it — has really transformed our campus life for our students.

I think the Edward A. Doisy Research Center and the growth in our funded research efforts are great signs of the standard for even greater success. And the sale of the hospital to secure the future of our School of Medicine is something I look at as an investment.

All this building we’re going through right now — it’s an investment for the year 2010 and beyond. You can’t think about just the here and now. It’s a strategic investment in the University to maintain it and to strengthen it for the future.

So growing the endowment also is very important. Building up our SLU tradition and culture of values and ethical behavior is also important, as it continues to attract highly qualified and committed people to teach and learn here. And I've been able to use the relationships that I have made to attract highly qualified and committed leaders to become dynamic champions for social justice.

UTAS: When you took this job 20 years ago, were you apprehensive? If so, how did you overcome that fear?

Biondi: In a way, I was intimidated by the knowledge that I had full responsibility for SLU and was accountable for it to the trustees, the Jesuits, almost 100,000 living alumni, the staff and students. I also had the financial resources to improve SLU and was accountable for it to the trustees, the Jesuits, almost 100,000 living alumni, and the physical campus.

But, as I’ve said before, I am most proud of what we have accomplished: the quality of our academic programs, the quality and depth of the research being conducted, the care that we offer our patients, the quality and contributions of our students and alumni, the loyalty and commitment of our faculty and staff, and especially the fact that our Jesuit, Catholic mission continues to be our guiding and driving force.

So much of what I have to do every day is actually exciting, and most of the time, rewarding.

During those 20 years, Saint Louis University has undergone many changes. Most obviously, the physical campus has grown and greened. But it’s the improvements you can’t see — on a map that really show the impact of Biondi’s presidency.
UNIVERSITAS

For one day I’d like to trade places with: Pope Benedict XVI
If I couldn’t have my present job, I’d love to be the: Owner of a Tuscan, Lucchese cuisine restaurant in Midtown St. Louis
My dream vacation: Three weeks on a deserted island in the Bahamas
I’d like to meet: The Dalai Lama
The best advice my mother ever gave me: Don’t talk so much, and eat your food!
My proudest moments: Training my dog Iggy not to do his business in the house. Seriously, making people happy whenever I can do so reasonably.
Guilty pleasure: Cigars (occasionally!)
Pet peeves: People who drive slowly in the left lane and talk on their cell phones.
Favorite food: Maryland steamed crabs.
A book I’d recommend: Good to Great by Jim Collins
Favorite TV show: The Sopranos
— A quote to live by: “Holding resentment in is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die. It doesn’t work.”

4,000 or so faculty and staff and more than 10,000 students, I had been a SLU trustee for three years, so I knew there were some significant challenges, but I also believed that there was great potential for SLU.
But, I was never trained to be a president of a major university. And I had to start somewhere. I jumped right into this job from being the dean of the large College of Arts and Sciences at Loyola Chicago, where we had a small student body.
Traditionally, a person is at least an academic vice president before becoming a president, but I skipped that step.
Also, there was a definite learning curve to understand SLU’s culture because I was not from St. Louis or a graduate of Saint Louis University. I had only been a SLU trustee for three years, which really gave me a limited amount of knowledge and experience — attending quarterly board meetings did not amount to a lot of time spent on SLU’s campus.
Eventually I got over my apprehension by listening. I listened to a wide variety of people and their problems. At that time, there were some people who were jockeying for me to take the job in Chicago. I needed to listen, to distinguish facts from fiction, so I decided to give myself more time to understand what motivated them. I listened with my Jesuit brothers at Jesuit Hall than in a five-star restaurant.

I believe it or not, I’m actually a bit shy. I have to work at making small talk. And it would probably surprise people know that I am very casual and prefer to be formal. At home, I am most comfortable in a T-shirt, walking shorts and Birkenstocks. I’d rather hang out with my Jesuits, brothers at Jesuit Hall than in a fine
ter restaurant.

And, oh, yes, I’ve told I have a weird sense of humor.

What is your childhood indicated that is what you’d be doing?
Nothing. I bunked first grade because I grew up speaking Italian and wasn’t as fluent in English as I needed to be as a first-grade school kid growing up in the northwest side of Chicago. I was one of those kids in the shadows.

I don’t consider myself a celebrity, but I know some people watch carefully what I do and say. So I’m more careful. Of course, I try to be as natural as possible. But I think I’m much more on guard with the business community and with people I meet for the first time because they’re evaluating me on what they’re told about me as a person or about my role as president of SLU.
But I’m more like myself, especially like to joke around with them, which sometimes surprises them.

What are the differences between your public persona and the “real” you?
I have a reputation for being direct, tough and outspoken with a “take no prisoners’” approach to business situations, but those who know me well would probably describe me as quiet, somewhat introverted. I really enjoy time alone with my two golden retrievers (Giancina and Ivy), especially at the end of the day. So believe it or not, I’m actually a bit shy. I have to work at making small talk.

How did your parents prepare you for this job?
Nothing. I flunked first grade because because you are not teaching anymore, you can come up to Chicago and visit me more often. You have no teaching responsibilities. She was happy for my commitment to my priesthood. And I’m sure that if my mother were still alive today, she would continue to chastise me and say that it’s inappropriate for a Jesuit priest to go out around without wearing socks during the summer!

Are your parents prepare you for this job? Yes. In my personal life, they certainly kept me in my place.

Once I got this job, my mother would say, “You’re the president of the university. You can do what you want because you are not teaching anymore, you can come up to Chicago and visit me more often. You have no teaching commitments.” She was happy for my success, but I don’t know if she ever fully understood my obligations and the challenges of the job.

I know that both of my parents were very proud of me for my commitment to my priestly life. And I’m sure that if my mother were still alive today, she would continue to chastise me and say that it’s inappropriate for a Jesuit priest to go out around without wearing socks during the summer!

What can alumni do for SLU? And what do they think when you got it?
Sure, I think about the future. There is still more to be done and that SLU needs their support and involvement.

What do alumni mean to SLU? What can they still do for SLU?
I hope our alumni are proud of their University education in their personal and professional lives. We hope they value the relationships, the friendships, that helped them become informed and transformed into better individuals.

As I remind my staff, Charles de Gaulle once said: “Cemeteries are filled with indispensable people.” I believe that future the future. There is still more to be done and that SLU needs their support and involvement.

What do you think SLU still needs?
If you have a timeline for retirement or perhaps a career change?
Retirement is not in my vocabulary! I guess a career change is always a possibility. As I remind my staff, Charles de Gaulle once said: “Cemeteries are filled with indispensable people.”
Grand
Once More

DUBOURG HALL’S LONG-DORMANT FOURTH FLOOR HAS UNDERGONE A TRANSFORMATION.

Covered in boxes and dust for years, one of the oldest and grandest locations on the Saint Louis University campus was restored to its former luster this fall. Used as storage for many decades, the fourth floor of DuBourg Hall, which was the entire University when the building opened in 1888, received a multimillion-dollar makeover this year. SLU’s growth and demand for office space caused the administration to take the space out of room boots. And the results are stunning.

Since fall 2006, SLU’s design and construction team has been renovating the unhabited space into offices and hallways resembling — and even improving on — their glory days. Though replaced and updated, the tall, arched windows remain, and new plaster and wood improve the structure and safety of the space.

The biggest change, though, can be seen in the Grand Hall. Located at the southern end of the Grand wing, the cavernous hall is filled with the solid craftsmanship of the 1800s. Architectural detailing abounds throughout the windows and floor, and the wooden vaulted ceiling gives the illusion of being in a cathedral. During the storage years, the hall grew dim with grime. Now, though, wood that’s more than 100 years old is taking center stage as the room hosts important events and meetings.

The hall was once home to SLU’s museum, which contained oil paintings brought from Europe, Native American relics, geological specimens and mementos from the history of the University, among other items. At its peak in the late 1800s, the museum was considered a must-see for anyone visiting St. Louis. It closed in the 1930s, and the space then housed physics labs. Later it was used for storage, its majesty long forgotten.

“We’re going back to the natural wood look, rehabbing the existing conditions to match what was originally intact in the 1800s,” said project manager Dave Florek. “Everyone is excited about what’s going on up there.”

Florek also said that as crews continued renovating DuBourg Hall, they realized that they were witnessing something special.

“The renovation consisted of a vast uncovering of incredibly detailed architecture that would not be economical today,” Florek said. “The materials that were uncovered would be considered high-end materials, even in this age of construction.”

Now that the craftsmanship on the fourth floor is shining through, the new occupants are appreciating the beauty of wood from a bygone era.

“The Grand Hall is magnificent! The amount of work that went into restoring the wood is hard to imagine,” said Mary Ann Fox, staff assistant in the provost’s office.

In addition to the Grand Hall and new offices, the fourth floor now boasts men’s and women’s restrooms, conference rooms and a kitchen prep area. A new elevator on the western end of the Lindell wing allows easy access.

— Allison Babka
Those who believe you cannot judge a book by its cover could learn a little something from Dr. Gregory A. Pass.

He is in the basement vault of Pius XII Memorial Library carefully holding a small book with a well-worn cover. The volume, a New Testament in Syriac bound together with a lexicon of Syriac and critical notes, is a rare and important early printed edition in the history of the Bible.

“These books were printed between 1664 and 1667, and bound together in 1686, as indicated by the date stamped in gold on the cover. The top, bottom and front edges of the pages have been elaborately gilded, and the entire volume is bound in vellum. Vellum generally is less expensive than leather, but the gold-stamped designs on the cover and the elegant details suggest this volume did not belong to a starving Syriac scholar. The gauffered (tooled) edges of the pages also indicate that someone with considerable means would have owned this.”

Pass slides the book back onto a shelf in the vault that is filled with thousands of ancient volumes. To Pass, however, these are not just old books. They are artifacts. His mission as head of Special Collections is not only to preserve these artifacts and their texts but also to make them accessible to SLU students and to scholars worldwide who are interested in exploring how the written word was produced, consumed and understood over the centuries.

Page Turner

Evidence indicates SLU began a separate collection for its rare books around the time of the Civil War. Some of the books were purchased. Some were donated. Many came to the University from monasteries and mission houses when they closed. In all, the University has collected approximately 12,000 volumes printed before 1820 and 15,000 after 1820.

Librarians use 1820 as the dividing line because books were printed on hand presses until around 1820 and then increasingly on steam-driven presses at a higher volume and with greater uniformity after 1820. SLU's rare book collection is strong in Catholic theology, history and philosophy, including various editions of works by St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine. It contains numerous titles by members of the Society of Jesus, including Ignatius Loyola, Francis Xavier and Francisco Suarez. Nearly half of the collection is in Latin. The collection also has strengths in American history, the Civil War, St. Louis area history, American Catholic Church history and Jesuit missionary activities in the Americas.

Lois T. James, special collections librarian, can assist you in finding information on any rare book or manuscript in the vault. Librarians use 1820 as the dividing line because books were printed on hand presses until around 1820 and then increasingly on steam-driven presses at a higher volume and with greater uniformity after 1820. SLU's rare book collection is strong in Catholic theology, history and philosophy, including various editions of works by St. Thomas Aquinas and St. August. It contains numerous titles by members of the Society of Jesus, including Ignatius Loyola, Francis Xavier and Francisco Suarez. Nearly half of the collection is in Latin. The collection also has strengths in American history, the Civil War, St. Louis area history, American Catholic Church history and Jesuit missionary activities in the Americas.

Books not kept in the vault are in closed stacks like those in the St. Louis Room on the third floor of Pius, where Pass is displaying several of the collection's treasures. He places them on soft gray book rests to protect their bindings.

From the shelf he has pulled:

• Several volumes by Athanasius Kircher, a 17th-century German Jesuit scholar who published broadly, most notably on China, Egypt, geology, science and medicine. SLU has a rare 1667 copy of Kircher's China Monumentis — complete with fold-out maps and rich illustrations of Chinese dress. This book provided the West with some of its earliest images of China. Also in SLU's collection is Kircher's Sphinx Mysteriea, an early attempt at deciphering hieroglyphics that remained the standard work on the subject until the 19th century.

• Five manuscript leaves from the famous 15th-century Llangattock Breviary (a liturgical book of prayers and hymns) illuminated in Italy. SLU has one of the largest concentrations of leaves from this book.

• A second edition of Oliver Twist printed in 1839 in three volumes (known as a triple decker) with original illustrations.

• First edition copies of Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn and Life on the Mississippi with original illustrations and publishers' decorative bindings.

Pass believes these books are important to further the story in people's lives. "You're holding history." "You can go into any bookstore and buy a modern Italian history. But if you're an English professor trying to help your students understand how the novel was read and how it fit into society, it's much more effective to show them a first edition copy with original illustrations and binding. Together these elements influence how the texts originally were read and circulated. "You can go into any bookstore and buy a copy of Huckleberry Finn," Pass said. "It's a very common text. But if you're an English professor trying to help your students understand how the novel was read and how it fit into society, it's much more effective to show them a first edition copy with original illustrations and binding. Together these elements influence how the texts originally were read and circulated. "You’re holding history."
The Vatican apologized for the short notice, but Vatican and needed to rearrange their plans. Further grants or students are writing dissertations already significant holdings,” Pass said. He said applications for VFL fellowships are accessible and by expanding its Web site. Madden, director of SLU’s Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies. “If they’re applying for grants or students in writing dissertations for this time, microfilm was limited largely to official records, photographs, publications and personal papers (notably the archives of the late University Professor Walter J. Ong, S.J.). The VFL hosts a fellowship program (another is offered by SLU’s Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies). “It was a remarkable project,” Pass said. “Before this time, microfilm was limited largely to military or industrial purposes. The impact of using microfilm on such a large scale for this project, capturing 12 million manuscript pages, was in some ways comparable to the application of computing technology to the humanities over the past 10 to 15 years.” The VFL hosts a fellowship program (another is offered by SLU's Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies) and an annual manuscripts conference to help achieve its mission of making its abundant resources available to scholars. For the past 50 years, it has edited and published Manuscripts, a scholarly journal devoted to research on medieval and Renaissance manuscripts. It is the only journal of its kind in North America. Two years ago, Special Collections hired its first rare book cataloguer to make the collections more accessible to researchers and to see that original work and to interpret it for themselves teaches critical thinking in a way nothing else can.”

Treasures in Microfilm

Rare books and manuscripts are only one part of Special Collections. The department also includes the University Archives, which serves as SLU’s memory — documenting its history from before its founding in 1818 to the present with a wide variety of materials including official records, photographs, publications and personal papers (notably the archives of the late University Professor Walter J. Ong, S.J.).

Big Draw

When the VFL opened in 1953 in Daboll Hall, scholars traveled from throughout the world to see the microfilmed treasures. They still do.

“We often have European scholars visiting, even some from Italy, who find it easier to work with our resources than with the originals in the Vatican Library. This is partly because of the high demand on the Vatican Library’s limited reading space, but also because of the limited number of manuscripts that scholars are allowed to consult in a single day,” Pass said. “We’re preparing for an even greater influx of scholars with the temporary closing of the Vatican Library in Rome.”

The VFL is unique to SLU and was the catalyst for construction of Pius XII Memorial Library.

Although the initial microfilming project ended in 1957, the VFL did not stop acquiring material. It continues to assemble a comprehensive reference collection of books, serials, microforms, electronic materials and other media in all areas of manuscript studies — illumination, paleography, codicology, book production, library history, etc. It now has more than 57,000 manuscripts on microfilm — slightly better than half of the Vatican’s collection. Among the most significant holdings are:

- Codex Vaticanus, one of the oldest surviving manuscripts of the Bible written in Greek sometime during the middle of the 4th century.
- Vergilius Romanus (The Roman Virgil), produced between the 5th and 6th centuries. It is one of the oldest surviving copies of the works of Virgil and one of few surviving examples of Roman miniature painting.
- Commentaries written in the hand of St. Thomas Aquinas.
- Poetry written in the hand of Petrarch, the famous Italian scholar, poet and Renaissance humanist.
- Suntop observations by Galileo.

Greater Access

The VFL is unique to SLU and was the catalyst for construction of Pius XII Memorial Library. As a result, the number of rare book queries from researchers worldwide has increased substantially. The recent addition of a rare books librarian will further expand knowledge of the collections and the ability to assist patrons.

All of this activity fits with the University libraries’ ambitious five-year strategic plan, which includes for Special Collections expanding its reading room, creating climate-controlled storage areas, increasing acquisitions budgets and providing digital access to its materials. But while digitization allows wider access, University Archivist John Wade believes that nothing beats the real thing. "Vision is just one of our senses," said Waide, as he holds a journal handwritten in the 1850s by Pierre-Jean DeSmet, S.J. "We also have touch and smell. Holding this book is a total sensory experience. I'm not the first reader. I'm sharing it with someone who lived 180 years before me. You can't fully appreciate that unless you hold the book in your hands. These are true treasures on our campus."
Standing in that Nicaraguan dump, McCullagh vowed to change things for the homeless boys and girls in front of her.

“No one deserves to live like this,” McCullagh said. “No one.”

Wandering through garbage in Nicaragua on a Saint Louis University theology summer immersion program is just one way McCullagh has opened her eyes to the importance of social justice and diversity. Growing up with a father of Irish descent and a mother from the Philippines, McCullagh’s childhood overflowed with cultural distinction. To add to her worldliness, she was born in Malaysia and has lived in seven different countries — mostly Third World — before her family settled in the United States when she was 12.

McCullagh, a senior from Sugar Land, Texas, is putting her diverse upbringing to work with her three majors: international business, international studies and Spanish, plus a minor in theology.

“My friends always make fun of me because I’m so all over the place,” McCullagh said. “I really wanted to grow up and realize that there were so many things!”

Another passion of McCullagh’s can be found outside of the classroom, between the lines of the tennis court. As a member of the Billiken tennis team, she ranks 13th on the SLU singles career win list and 16th on the doubles win list.

Still, it’s service, not serves, that gets McCullagh excited.

As a theology minor, McCullagh stumbled upon an opportunity that transformed her life: the Mev Puleo Scholarship. Puleo (A&S ’95) brought awareness to the dignity of the poor by living in solidarity among the people of Latin America. At the age of 32, Puleo’s parents established a scholarship that hopes that recipients would become advocates for social justice.

With the scholarship and her acquired classroom knowledge about what it means to be a woman for others, McCullagh was prepared to fulfill the hopes of the Puleo family.

Summer in Nicaragua
Voluntarily leaving behind the comforts of the United States, McCullagh immersed herself in the Nicaraguan culture for two months this summer. She lived with a family of eight in a small house that had no air conditioning or running water. Every morning she woke up, sweat dripping down her back and bugs crawling on the floor. Every day she ate a bowl of rice and beans for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

“You learn the most by living someone else’s life — by putting yourself in someone else’s shoes,” McCullagh said.

Lacing up a pair of her own shoes every morning at 5:30 a.m., McCullagh began her daily routine with a jog along a dirt path through the city. By 7:30 a.m. she was taking a 15-cent bus ride to work in one of the most dangerous neighborhoods outside of Managua, the capital of Nicaragua.

McCullagh spent her mornings working with a group of children, ages 2 through 10, at a tutoring program. In addition to teaching basic letters and numbers, she was in charge of feeding the children, most of whom were malnourished. She was often handed a 10-pound bag of rice with the task of removing anything that moved.

“I picked out animals, anything from small mice to one-inch ants,” McCullagh said. “I thought, ‘I can’t cook this food for these kids.’ But they don’t have anything else. They have to eat it.”

McCullagh was experiencing everything a Third World country had to offer, both the good and bad, when her Nicaraguan routine was drastically interrupted.

After treating her host family to dinner at a restaurant with a $20 bill, which would have been enough to feed that family for a week, a quarasines came over McCullagh. Things took a turn for the worse the following morning, as she passed out at church and awoke in the hospital. Diagnosed with an intestinal and urinary tract infection caused by parasites in the food or water, she was given antibiotics and sent back to her host family.

“I realized how lucky I was that I had enough money to go to the hospital,” she said. “If I were a Nicaraguan, I couldn’t have done that.”

Through her illness, McCullagh learned the true meaning of dependency.

“I’ve never been in a state where I couldn’t take care of myself,” McCullagh recalled. “I would sit up in bed and get sick all over the floor, and my host mother would clean it up. This lady had nothing. She stood over me, held me and fanned me with a piece of paper just to make me feel a little bit better.

“They don’t have much to give, but everything they have, they’re just so happy to give to you.”

Out of concern, McCullagh’s father flew to Nicaragua with the intent of returning to America with his only daughter. With three weeks of the trip left, McCullagh was faced with a difficult decision: return to the States for a proper recovery or struggle through her illness and complete her mission to help Nicaraguans in need.

“I really wanted to finish my experience. My parents really wanted me to come home,” McCullagh said.

“I decided to stay.”

A New Perspective
In the end, McCullagh’s decision to finish what she started gave her a new perspective.

After two months in a Third World country, McCullagh still describes herself as passionate, but now, she said, with a healthy dose of practicality. Some advocates of social justice strive to make a difference through protests, grassroots organizations or the Peace Corps. McCullagh has a different path in mind. She hopes to use her SLU John Cook School of Business degree to initiate economic change across the globe.

“The problem with Nicaragua is that they have no way to make money, except sweatshops,” she said. “They have no oil, poor leadership and few exports.”

Inspired by her SLU education and her summer abroad, McCullagh feels a newfound obligation to solve that problem.

“If you want to actually make change, you need a profession,” she said. “Volunteering is great, but having the tools to make a difference is key.”

By working to support initiatives such as NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) or CAFTA (Central American Free Trade Agreement), McCullagh believes she can pioneer policy change and improve the standard of living in Third World countries.

Walking along the dirt roads and through the city dump of Nicaragua, McCullagh made a promise to herself and to humanity that just might change the future:

“No one should live without running water or electricity,” she said. “That should be a standard.

“No one should live in a trash dump. That should be a standard.”

If McCullagh has anything to say about it, it will. 
John Schneider (A&S) is the CEO of SkyFire Technologies in St. Louis.

Marvin Martin (Park) is a chief test pilot for Northrop Grumman Integrated Systems, west region, in Palm American, Calif.

Rob Scoene (Law) was located in the Los Angeles Regional Journal for “What's Wrong with L.A. Law?” He was one of two Southern California “Super Lawyers” by Los Angeles Magazine and Law & Politics Management and in a number of the “Best Lawyers” in Los Angeles. He is the founder and managing partner of the Los Angeles office of Somerschein Nash & Rosenfeld. He also is president and editor of boards of directors of the Los Angeles Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

Robert Telfer (A&S), an alum from a law firm—Curfey, Telfer, Riedl, Faury, and Anderson in Tivoli, N.Y.

Dr. Jan Sekutsky (A&S), director of the educational opportunity program at SUNY-Cobleskill, received the Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Professional Service this May. He has worked there since 1984.

Kenneth Chapman (A&S) is the president of the North American Earth Science Liaison Committee of the United Nations Committee on Geoscience education of women geologists. She lives in St. Louis.

William Hall (Cook) and his wife of 57 years, Deane (Parks) Hall, live in Fort Worth, Texas. They have three sons and four grandchildren. William previously was the director of accounting at Lockheed Martin in Fort Worth.

Mary Higgins (SW) is a spiritual director at Trinity University. She is married to Dr. David Klein (Med ’73), who practices oncology and hematology in Northern California.

Dr. Richard Kostewicz (A&S ’70, Grad ’75) retired from the biology department at Central Connecticut University after 29 years of service. He lives in Connecticut, CT, but plans to move to Trinidad.

Dr. Theresa (Nash) Durner (A&S ’70; Med ’72) and her husband, Thomas S. Diemery (Cook ’69) live in Anchorage, Alaska. They have four children: Thom, Nick, and Tommy are pursuing careers as medical doctors, and twins Margaret and Matt as in Reckaybe, California.

Barbara Sacco (A&S ’71, Grad ’74) has completed her first year as president of Marquette University High School in Milwaukee.

Sarah Schecter Rux (Pub) is a clinical nurse specialist at the VA outpatient clinic in Columbus, Ohio, where she works with veterans who have post-traumatic stress disorders. She and her husband have four children and two grandchildren.

Dr. John T. Andrew (Grad ’73) is a principal of the Cadum Group Inc. and former assistant administrator for service at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. He has been appointed to the Water Science and Technology Board of the National Academies’ National Research Council in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Dophi Myra (Grad ’77) is chair of the Catholic Charities board of directors in the Diocese of Venice, Fla. She is on the faculty of Florida Gulf Coast University.

Graley (Gee) O’Hara (A&S ’74; Law ’77) is an aerospace engineer working for Avion Inc. as a support service to the U.S. Air Force. He is the CEO for two years and is trying to start his own vineyard and winery. He lives in Maple Valley, WA.

Dr. Dorothy Corrigan (A&S ’73, Nurs ’88) is a board-certified gynecologist and is an executive for the Adam’s Disease Research Center of the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis.

Barbara Feldman (Grad ’77) is the managing director of Campus CARES, a division of the Aggie Group dedicated to student health, wellness, and safety program.

Dr. Robert H. Davis (A&S ’70, Grad ’74) has been appointed to the Murray Civic Foundation Chair in Distinctive Teaching in the Liberal Arts. He is a professor of philosophy at Texas A&M University. Davis is a scholar in the field of modern philosophy.

Dr. David F. Stengel (Grad ’81) is the director of the National Center for Postsecondary Research in Washington, D.C.

Dr. David Podolski (A&S) is a biostatistician at the Bloomberg School of Public Health and director of the Center on Disease Prevention and Control.

Dr. Joseph C. Friske (Cook ’80) is a senior portfolio manager for UBS Financial Services in Philadelphia.

Dr. David DeShazo (Grad ’74) is a professor of the Civil Engineering and is a national non-profit organization for the study of transportation and traffic control.

Dr. George Dwan (Med ’70) is on the faculty of Baylor College of Medicine and is chief of theuclear section of the VA Medical Center in Houston.

Dr. Larry Venegas (Grad ’72; Park ’82) lives in a rural community in the Fulton County District of the state of Oklahoma. He is the principal of the Cadum Group Inc. and a fellow with Fedex in a line check position.

Dr. Leonard Bovenschen (A&S ’70) is a professor of economics at St. Charles Borromeo School in St. Charles, Mo., and director of the music at Bluffton Theological Semi- nary and its Center for Public Policy. He also has written several novels on the history of World Library Publications.

When crisis struck the crew of Space Shuttle Atlantis on a mission to the International Space Station, it was Kelly (Bond) Beck (Parks ’88) — test piloted firmly on the ground, as usual — who helped to bring order to the seven-person crew millions of miles away from home.

When news broke that Atlantis had a torn heat-shield blanket, space observers could not help but think of the woman who led the Shuttle Columbia on its re-entry four years earlier.

It was an odd site of Beck — the mission commander — and the rest of the STS-103 crew, beaming aboard an Airlines plane in Atlanta. It was an odd one for Beck. She was a flight engineer, Aviation and Technology, and Beck was always drawn to the science and math classes she would eventually need to be a successful engineer.

“I think it’s the purity of mathematics and being able to solve problems and move to a higher level that I like about math,” said Beck. “And a lot of my math teachers I can think of my biology and physics teachers that made it interesting — same with my chemistry teachers.”

In those classes, as in her career, Beck was one of the few women in the room. But it’s something that’s never really mattered to her.

“I never perceived it to be a problem or a handicap,” she said. “I know I have to go do my job well no matter what. Maybe that was just that I wasn’t paying attention to feel intimidated because I was a woman.”

Her recent work as mission commander is not the final frontier for Beck. She sees her career continuing up the ladder at NASA. She already is the deputy chief of flight directors and thinks an opportunity for chief of flight directors might be in her future. But there is one goal she thinks is out of her reach.

“I’d love to see a manned mission to Mars,” she said. “I really think that eventually we will be like Star Trek, with easy access to an interplanetary ship, but probably not in my lifetime.” — Nick Sargent

UNIVERSITAS | FALL 2007
The freshmen and their alumni relatives. break from move-in and meet their dents and their alumni family mem -

Dinah (Tillotson) Evans (Parks) has been an Amer-

This “legacy” students during Wel -

These “legacy” students during Wel -

aunt or uncle who graduated from

have a parent, grandparent, sibling,

Grad Cook ’76) of Laguna Hills, University is all in the family.

freshman class, Saint Louis

and her dad

and her dad

Patrick (Cook) is director of patient services for

Andrea Beckemeyer (Grad Cook) is chief ex -

St. Louis Health, St. Louis’ largest independent

and air service.

of expanding the number of air carriers

Dr. Dennis Castellano (A&S) has wel -

He is the technical research lead at

Dr. Juna Sone (Cook) was named one of New York City’s best

Herhair, Antaguoli, Rowland, Short and

the Ohio state playoffs in 2006. He

He is the technical research lead at

Dr. Dan Zabrowski (A&S) is the global head of Roche Pharma Partners, en -

Dr. Thomas Reilley (A&S) is an attorney -

an assistant professor of nursing at the West Suburban College of Nursing in Oak Park, Ill.

Dana Sibley (A&S) is an assistant profes -

Brendan McQuillan (A&S) is the director of corporate real estate with

Michael Foll (A&S) has been named the chief engineer at

Michael Fell (A&S) is director of operations and director of operations for Rocking M Radio.

Kevin Spenner (Parks) has been a legal expert

Abigail Parks (Parks) has been an Amer -

Erick Anderson (A&S) has received the 2007 St. Louis Business Journal Business Women in St. Louis award.

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John Roadman (Law) is the inspector general for the office of the Illinois Auditor General. He lives in Sprin -

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Martin Acosta (A&S) is the director of the cardiovascular disease

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BOSTON
MEN’S BASKETBALL VS. BOSTON COLLEGE
Tuesday, Dec. 4; 7 p.m.; spc; Conte Forum
Cost is $35 per person and includes the pregame party and game ticket.

CHICAGO
The admissions committee of the Chicago Alumni Club is looking for more volunteers to help recruit the next generation of Chicago Billikens. To learn more about how you can help, please contact president Joe Havel.

WICKED
Wednesday, Jan. 2; Oriental Theater
Cost is $85 per person, including preshow reception.

JERSEY BOYS
Thursday, Feb. 2; Loews Theater
Cost is $85 per person, including preshow reception.

PHILADELPHIA
MEN’S BASKETBALL VS. LASALLE
Saturday, Jan. 26; 2 p.m.; spc; Yim Gala Arena
Cost is $30 per person and includes the pregame party and game ticket.

MEN’S BASKETBALL VS. SAINT JOSEPH’S
Thursday, Feb. 28; 7 p.m.; spc; Alumni Memorial
Cost is $30 per person and includes the pregame party and game ticket.

SPRINGFIELD, ILL.
HOLIDAY PARTY
December 2; Tuscany
Meet fellow SLU alumni for dinner to usher in the holiday season.
Cost is $35 per person.

Tampa, FLA.
JERSEY BOYS
Wednesday, March 6; 3 p.m.; spc; and show, Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center
Cost is $95 per person and includes a preshow dinner.

WASHINGTON, D.C.
HOLIDAY PARTY
December 3; 4 p.m.; spc; J. Thomson’s Restaurant
Meet fellow SLU alumni for this annual dinner to usher in the holiday season.
Cost is $60 per person.

WICKED
Thursday, Jan. 10; 7 p.m.; spc; George Washington
Cost is $85 per person and includes the pregame party at McFadden’s and game ticket.

NEW YORK
CYRAND DE BERGERAC
Wednesday, Dec. 5; 6:30 p.m.; performance; Richard Rodgers Theatre
Come see this hit musical, starring Kevin Kline and Jennifer Garner. Cost is $80 per person.

ALUMNI EVENTS
UPCOMING HOMEGAME GAME NIGHT PARTY TAP into your inner Billiken, and get your Billiken on! 4 TAP into your inner Billiken, and get your Billiken on! THE WEDDING SINGER Saturday, Dec. 16; preshow reception at 5:30 p.m.; curtain time at 7:30 p.m.
The sold-out hit returns to St. Louis, and there isn’t a better way to spend the holiday season. The evening will be highlighted by the magic of theater with University Theatre Professor Jim Burrows. Cost is $50 per person.

WICKED
Saturday, Dec. 16; preshow reception at 5 p.m.; curtain time at 7:30 p.m.
The sold-out hit returns to St. Louis, and there isn’t a better way to spend the holiday season. The evening will be highlighted by the magic of theater with University Theatre Professor Jim Burrows. Cost is $50 per person.

Disney’s HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL
Saturday, Dec. 2; preshow reception at 6 p.m.; curtain time at 8 p.m.
Calling all Wildcats! What time is it? Time for a wedding-reception-themed preshow event. Cost is $75 per person.

Disney’s HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL
Saturday, Dec. 1; preshow reception at 6 p.m.; curtain time at 8 p.m.
Calling all Wildcats! What time is it? Time for a wedding-reception-themed preshow event. Cost is $75 per person.

JERSEY BOYS
Sunday, Dec. 10; preshow reception at 5:30 p.m.; curtain time at 7:30 p.m.
Jersey Boys is the 2006 Tony Award-winning Best Musical of the Year. It is $10 per person for the reception only.

Breakfast with Santa
Saturday, Dec. 2; 3:30-11:30 a.m.; Busch Student Center There’s no place like SLU for the holidays! Come back and celebrate the holiday season with your family, friends and Santa while enjoying music, games, gifts and a fun breakfast for all ages. Cost: $13 for adults, $6 for children ages 5-12, free for children under 5.

MIGHTY DUCKS OF ANAHEIM VS. ST. LOUIS BLUES
Sunday, Dec. 1; 6:30 p.m.; Scottrade Center
Cost is $40 for the pregame party and game ticket.

BILLYBIL TRAVEL PROGRAM 2008 TOURS
Being a Billiken traveler puts the world at your feet. This is your chance to see it all. Here is the schedule of trips for 2008:

JUNE 20-JULY 1
Campus Alumni
Abroad: Scotland
Passage of the Great

JULY 19
Campus Alumni
Abroad: Peru

SEPTEMBER 12-20
Spectacular Swiss Alps and Salzburg
Enchanting Italy

OCT. 5-12
Campus Alumni
Abroad: Greece
Best of Tuscany and the Italian Riviera

OCT. 8-16
Campus Alumni
Abroad: Tunisia

ST. LOUIS-AREA ALUMNI, DON’T MISS ...

MEN’S BASKETBALL VS. XAYVER
Thursday, Feb. 7; 7 p.m.; pregame party at Scottrade Center.
Join us for the biggest basketball party of the year. The cost is $20 per person for a game ticket and the reception. It is $30 per person for the reception only.

ALL ALUMNI TRIVIA NIGHT
Saturday, Feb. 9
Graduates of which school or college at SLU are you? Find out at this exciting trivia night.

SHOP LOCAL FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ANY OF THE CLUB CITY OR LOCAL EVENTS, OR TO REGISTER FOR THESE EVENTS ONLINE PLEASE VISIT WWW.SLU.EDU/ALUMNI THEN CLICK ON “CALENDAR.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT ANY OF THE CLUB CITY OR LOCAL EVENTS, OR TO REGISTER FOR THESE EVENTS ONLINE PLEASE VISIT WWW.SLU.EDU/ALUMNI THEN CLICK ON “CALENDAR.”
I’m 7:30 a.m., and my alarm clock is blaring in my ear. I wildly groan and hit the snooze button. I start to turn over for five more minutes of precious sleep, but then I remember why I’m waking up so early on a Saturday morning: SPENSA. As I struggle to get out of bed after a long week of classes, practices and a late Friday night game, I think, “It will be worth it. It always is.”

As a member of the Saint Louis University women’s soccer team, my teammates and I volunteer with the Special Needs Soccer Association (SPENSA). We spend our Saturday mornings giving back to the community by sharing our love for soccer with the physically challenged children who experience the benefits of team-sport play, whether it be running sprints at soccer practice or writing a research paper, I am reminded that perseverance yields more success than initially envisioned.

I have learned the value of dedication. Kristin is a 22-year-old SPENSA veteran. Rain or shine, she is always on the field waiting to greet you with a warm smile, eager to learn all that she can. When Kristin began attending SPENSA, she struggled to transition her walk into a simple jog. Today, she is one of the most skilled participants in the advanced group. With her always positive attitude, Kristin’s soccer abilities improve with each practice.

To me, Kristin brings new life to the tired old saying, “Never give up.” Although I may not excel at some endeavors, I know that with hard work and self-esteem that soccer brings, I can improve my skills.

I have learned to laugh. At SPENSA, Jack does not want to learn how to pass. Jack does not want to learn how to head a soccer ball. All Jack really wants to do is laugh — and for you to laugh with him. With the cutest giggle that can be heard from one end of the field to the other, Jack quickly became everyone’s favorite player.

Maybe life is as simple as Jack sees it. As the stress from school and soccer starts to build, I think of Jack, and I remember to take time to see each new day as a gift and to enjoy the people around me. Life is too short not to laugh.

I have learned to love. One morning, another SPENSA veteran of six years named Matt unexpectedly ran up behind me, clutched my face and planted a friendly kiss on my cheek. At the time, it caught me off guard. Looking back, it was one of the most memorable wake-up calls I have had in years.

If only we could all love as freely, openly and energetically as Matt does. Without realizing it, I am often blinded by my own busy routine and insurmountable worries. As a result, I am unable to recognize when others around me need a helping hand, a listening ear or a compassionate heart. With his heart-felt, friendly kisses, Matt demonstrates what it means to love your neighbor, whether stranger or friend, as yourself.

I have learned to dream. Brad, a 26-year-old man who has been attending SPENSA for 10 years, insists that everyone call him “Elvis.” By imitating the smooth smile, swagger and sass of his favorite rock star, Brad is always the center of attention.

Brad prompts me to ask myself: “Why not approach each day as if we are someone different, with a new personal identity and new mindset?” As a college student, I have a tendency to see the future through the confines of my academic major. But as I think of Brad, I ask, “Why limit myself to journalism or a future law degree?” Who knows where my Saint Louis University education will take me in life? I can be whoever I want to be. Imagine the possibilities. Brad reminds me to dream often and dream big.

Plate Class

In our last issue, we asked readers to send us photos of their Saint Louis University-inspired license plates. Here is what we’ve received so far.

I have learned to dream. — By Lauren Olson

Plate Class

We’d love to hear from even more alumni who share their SLU pride on their plates. If you have a SLU-inspired license plate, please send us a photo at one of the addresses on this page.

Sign of the Times

“We’re a university, but we’re not just any ordinary university.”

— Senator Charles Percy’s comments on the Vietnam War, 1968

40 YEARS AGO IN UNIVERSITAS

In other news, Saint Louis University announced its installation of a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, the oldest, most respected honorary society in the United States.

The magazine also reported on the destructive Detroit and Newark, N.J., riots of July 1967. During a span of two weeks, 66 lives were lost as violence, looting and fires raged. From the local perspective, Dr. Thomas Neil, a SLU professor of history, addressed the causes of increasing violence in America during the ‘60s, including poverty, unemployment, racism and police brutality.

The fall 1967 issue of Universitas featured a story on the first meeting of Saint Louis University’s newly reorganized Board of Trustees. In 1967 SLU became the nation’s first Catholic institution to vest full legal authority in a board composed of both lay people and clergy.

In addition, the issue announced the opening of Busch Memorial Center, which at the time was the largest single addition to the campus east of Grand Boulevard. The student center included eight bowling alleys, a three-story barbershop, the bookstore, a cafeteria and a chapel. Busch Center was also home to numerous lounge areas, spacious meeting rooms, offices and comfortable study and music rooms.

Plate Class

Florda

Tommie Fleming (‘88) and Patrick Amini (‘96, Law ’99) winter in Destin Springs, Fla., but their plates can be seen around St. Louis every summer.

Ohio

Kristin is a 22-year-old SPENSA veteran. Rain or shine, she struggles to transition her walk into a simple jog.

I have learned to laugh. — By Lauren Olson

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Illinois

Lissa Thier (‘63, ‘66, Law ’69) winter in Bonita Springs, Fla., but their plates can be seen around St. Louis every summer.

Virginia

Stephanie (Wayne) Havran (‘63, ‘66) shows her SLU pride when driving around Ashburn, Va.

Missouri

Patti Raymond Swepz (‘63, ‘66) of St. Louis was captain of SLU’s cheerleading squad for 1959-60 and captures that experience on her license plate.

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BY STANDARD MAIL:
Universitas
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221 N. Grand Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63103

2
BY FAX:
(314) 977-2249

3
BY E-MAIL:
universitas@slu.edu

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Plate Class

Florida

John J. Van Zeyl (‘87) of River Forest, Ill., has had his SLU plates since 1985.

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NEW TAX BREAK: The IRA Charitable Rollover

The Pension Protection Act of 2006 allows assets from an Individual Retirement Account to be directly transferred to a qualified charitable organization such as Saint Louis University. Some specifics and benefits of the legislation:

IRA charitable rollovers must be made by Dec. 31, 2007.

Donors must be at least age 70½ at the time of transfer.

Up to $100,000 in 2007 may be excluded from taxable income by the donor.

The rollover may be applied to the required minimum distribution from the retirement account.

Saint Louis University does not render tax, legal, accounting, insurance or investment advice. Please consult with your own professional advisers in these matters.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE IRA CHARITABLE ROLLOVER, PLEASE CONTACT:

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