



Winter 2025

alumninews

St. Joseph's College of Nursing at St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center



Class of 1974

Front row, left to right: Julie Dudley, Lynn Purcell Rinella, Barb Catanzarita Mottinger, Ellen Krupka Stottlar, Martha Broomfield Alexandrovich, Cheryl Scarcella Barnes
Back row, left to right: Connie Spadafore Semel, Jill Holmes Long, Carol Noga Dillon, Debbie Ryan Johnson, Nancy Grasko Butler, Chris Madden Kelly, Nancy Reynolds, Ginny Hable Turley

Celebrating 50 Years

THE CLASS OF 1974 REUNION AT ST. JOSEPH'S SCHOOL OF NURSING

On September 14, 2024, the Class of 1974 from St. Joseph's School of Nursing gathered at St. Joseph's Health Hospital to celebrate their 50th anniversary. The reunion, held in the hospital's conference center, allowed classmates to reconnect, reminisce, and reflect on their journey since graduating from the School.

The day began with lunch, during which attendees shared fond memories of their days at St. Joseph's. Scrapbooks filled with photos and mementos from their time at the School were available, sparking laughter and heartfelt conversations.

During lunch, Dean Lenore Boris updated the group on the College of Nursing, sharing insights into its continued growth and accomplishments. She also engaged in a lively Q&A session, answering questions about the future of nursing

education. Vice President for Development Vincent Kuss followed with remarks about the unwavering support alumni have given to the College of Nursing. He highlighted the success of the recent campaign to raise scholarship funds, which will benefit future generations of nursing students.

After lunch, the group enjoyed a guided tour of the hospital and the College of Nursing. For many, it was their first visit since graduating in 1974, and they were excited to see the changes and advancements.

The event was filled with nostalgia, laughter, and a renewed connection to St. Joseph's School of Nursing. The Alumni Association plans to host the Class of 1975 in September 2025, ensuring the tradition of celebrating the bonds of St. Joseph's School of Nursing alumni continues.

Celebrating 50 Years, Class of 1974 – continued

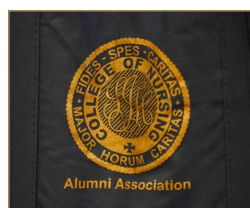
St. Joseph's College of Nursing is Proud to Celebrate its Alumni



Class of '74 members reminisce while viewing memorabilia at the reunion.

Background, left: Nancy Grasko Butler

Foreground, left to right: Ellen Krupka Stottlar, Ginny Hable Turley, Connie Spadafore Semel



Martha Broomfield Alexandrovich and Cheryl Scarcella Barnes (both class of '74) arrive at the 50th Anniversary Celebration

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

annual meeting and breakfast

A Gathering of Generations: Celebrating Alumni and Service Excellence

On September 15, 2024, the Alumni Association of St. Joseph's College of Nursing hosted its annual meeting and breakfast at the DoubleTree by Hilton in East Syracuse. Alumni from classes spanning the years 1952 to 2022 gathered for this cherished event.

This year's meeting was particularly special, marking the inaugural presentation of the Service Excellence to the Alumni Association Award. The Alumni Awards committee was chaired by Phyllis Petrivelli '14. Established by the board in 2024, this award honors individuals who have exceeded their daily responsibilities to help the Alumni Association fulfill its mission of supporting the College of Nursing and its students.

Their dedication and contributions have greatly strengthened the Alumni Association's efforts, and we are grateful for their outstanding service.

Award recipients of the "Service Excellence to the Alumni Association"

(standing left to right):

- **Peter Mathe**
Retired Librarian/Archivist and
currently serving as Volunteer Archivist
- **Laurie Files**
Clerical Support Coordinator
- **Matthew Dwyer**
Supervisor, Client Technologies Analyst
- **Lori Costello**
Administrative Assistant for Admissions
- **Adam Ward**
Client Technologies Analyst



ALUMNI ASSOCIATION annual meeting and breakfast, continued

Celebrating Tradition and Luck: A Special 50/50 Raffle Moment

As in past years, the event included a 50/50 raffle, which is always a highlight of the annual meeting. This year, Gina Famolaro Cusworth '83 who has traditionally led the raffle—was the lucky winner herself! Congratulations to Gina on holding the winning ticket! Gina and Rhonda Youmans Reader '86 also managed the registration table, ensuring a smooth start to the event. A special thank-you goes to Mary Headd Ryan '72 for her invaluable assistance in making the event such a success.



Gina Famolaro Cusworth '83

In addition to the awards and raffle, Dean Lenore Boris provided an insightful update on the College of Nursing. Attendees appreciated the opportunity to learn more about the College's current programs, student population, and future plans and to have their questions addressed directly by the Dean.

Honoring Service and Welcoming New Leaderships

Connie Spadafore Semel '74, president of the board, thanked the following board members for completing their terms of service. She expressed appreciation for their efforts and gratitude for everything they have done. We wish them continued success in their endeavors and hope that they will remain connected to our alumni community. Thank you, again, to **Jennifer Austin Cerio '07 and Olivia Fedele '17**.

We are deeply grateful to the board members who have generously committed to serving a second term. Their dedication and leadership continue to strengthen our organization. We also warmly welcome our newly appointed board members and look forward to collaborating with them to achieve our shared goals for the 2024-2027 term.

Board Member	Class	Term
Mary Ellen Barrett	'69	2nd
Christine Kelly	'16	2nd
Christine Tancredi	'94	1st
Reneé Granato	'94	1st
Karen Alsever	'14	1st

The Alumni Association extends its heartfelt thanks to all who attended and contributed to making this event a success. We look forward to another year of meaningful collaboration and connection with our alumni community!



Several members of the class of '64 celebrated 60 years since graduation, and attended the annual meeting and breakfast. **Front row left to right:** Holly Short Jankowski, Nancy Dullen Hudson, Elaine Owens Taylor, Karen Orr

Back row left to right: Nora Donovan Sheehan, Susan Collins Roberts, Vickie Dwyer Rivette, Joanne Kochman Kiggins, Carolyn Miskell Araujo, Marsha Branish Pross



Left to right: Jill Holmes Long '74, Judy Hoysak '65, Linda Purcell Rinella '74, Connie Spadafore Semel '74 Alumni Association President



Alumni board members, left to right: Kimberly Garofalo '20, Rhonda Youmans Reader '86, Renee Jastrzab Granato '94

nurse group AT THE NOTTINGHAM

Three St Joseph's School of Nursing grads from the class of 1962 started a "Nurse Group" at the Nottingham Independent Living Community in Jamesville a few years back. Barb (Moreth) Connolly '62, is the leader. Two of Barb's classmates Ellen (Pendergast) Canella and Joanne (Kozlowski) Whelan are members of the group. With so many retired nurses at the Nottingham, the group thought, why not?

The nurses at the Nottingham formed the group to share about what their educations and clinical experiences were like. They enjoy reflecting on their accomplishments in their nursing careers, they share some laughs about their student days and talk about their student clinical experiences. They have come to the conclusion that nursing is a special calling they are proud to be a part of.

This past spring, they learned the story of a fellow nurse and Nottingham resident, Marcia Barnes. Marcia was one of the very first grads from Niagara University's nursing program. Marcia had an illustrious career as one of the first civilians to work for the Veteran's Administration hospital, caring especially for World War II veterans.

Plans were set in motion by the group, with help from administrators at Loretto such as Kim Townsend, to invite the Central New York/Syracuse Nurse Honor Guard to present a tribute called "Honor the Living" for Marcia. Most of the time the Honor Guard presents a tribute at a deceased nurse's calling hours, funeral or celebration of life gathering. Occasionally the group honors a living individual who has had a long nursing career. Such was the case with the event honoring nurse Marcia in June, 2024.

Barb Connolly was the master of ceremonies. It was standing-room-only in the meeting room at the Nottingham. Barb welcomed everyone and briefly described Marcia's career before the tribute. Barb explained the group was delighted to honor Marcia, whose son was an honored guest. Niagara University and Loretto sent flowers. Marcia herself said a few words as well. Barb noted that, as a result of some publicity about the event honoring Marcia, by her home-town (Buffalo) newspaper, Marcia and her family have been delighted to receive notes, phone calls and messages from old friends, congratulating Marcia on her career.



Kim Townsend of Loretto (left), Marcia Barnes RN (center) and Barb Connolly '62 (right) along with members of the CNY/Syracuse Nurse Honor Guard



Nurse Group leaders at Nottingham, St. Joseph's alumni from class of '62, left to right: Ellen (Pendergast) Canella, Barbara (Moreth) Connolly, Joanne (Kozlowski) Whelan

ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE OF NURSING commencements



Friday, December 8, 2023

Class of 2023 Commencement Evening/
Weekend Program at Believers Chapel in
Cicero, New York.

*Photo: A few members of the 2023
Evening-Weekend program graduating
class celebrate their commencement*



Saturday, May 18, 2024

Class of 2023 Commencement Evening/
Weekend Program at Believers Chapel in
Cicero, New York.

*Photo: Several members of the 2024
Day program graduating class celebrate
their commencement*

ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE OF NURSING commitment to nursing ceremonies



Sunday, April 21, 2024

Commitment to Nursing Ceremony for Evening /Weekend program class of 2024 at Immaculate Conception Church in Fayetteville, NY.



Sunday, September 22, 2024

Commitment to Nursing Ceremony for Day program class of 2025 at Immaculate Conception Church in Fayetteville, NY.

Delores Ostrowski Noonan '55

Sending regards to her 1955 classmates. Delores stated 2025 is the class's 70th Graduation Anniversary. Wow, what many wonderful memories she writes.

Ann Owens McBride '56

Ann let us know she is retired from school nursing and living in a senior residence in Northern California

Sharon Van Parys Griswold '57

Welcoming two new great grandbabies Sharon reports this makes number 9 and 10 in her family.

Mary Herring Brennan '57

At 87yrs old Mary has 5 children, 11 grandchildren, 13 greats!

Marie Savo Bond '61

Retired 6 yrs ago!

Joanne Whelan '62

Joanne has moved to The Nottingham -Independent Living and loves it! Two other classmates are also there.

Sr. Maria Salerno, OSF '62

Celebrating 60yrs as a Sister of St. Francis, Sr. Maria still volunteers at Poverello Clinic at Assumption Church in Syracuse. She also works as assistant archivist for SOSF.

Mary Jean Thomas '63

Retired and enjoying life, family and travel is what Mary Jean wrote.

Carol Cocuzzoli Pacella '63

Carol is retired and offers prayers for all her classmates living and deceased.

Marsha Branish Pross '64

Is now retired

Cathleen Mathews Donegan '67

Following retirement in 2016 as coordinator Cathleen continues to work per diem in St. Joseph's Health Cardiac Rehab.

Jacquelyn Gonza '71

Jacquelyn is enjoying travel and spending time with family and classmates. She also loves sailing adventures with her sister and her husband.

Mary Sherman '73

Attended 50th Class Reunion in October 2023. Mary has transitioned to a part-time position with the VA Clinic.

Linda Miller Stevens '78

Linda retired 2 years ago from her extremely rewarding 43.5 yrs Critical Care career at St. Joseph's. Her seven grandchildren are a daily joy, as she is so lucky to have them all nearby!

With her husband Marty she is enjoying more travel a 2024 highlight was a trip to Alaska.

Ann Hughes Gelgisser '78

Ann and husband Jeff welcomed their first grandchild, a boy, Max Levi Anderson.

Karen Hegarty Allen '78

Retired as of March 2024.

Kathy Stopyro-Whitehead '79

Kathy is enjoying retirement! Retired from Upstate University Hospital as a Nurse Practitioner. She is enjoying their four grandchildren at their retirement home in the Adirondacks.

Diana Marley '80

After 40 years of trauma and cardiac critical care, SWAT emergency response team and radiology nursing Diana has retired.

Julie Grabowski Ozcelebi '80

Julie is the business manager for McAllen Gastroenterology, LP and owner of Endoscopy Center at Medpoint.

Meg Gonza Gross '83

Retired for 3 years and Meg reported she loved seeing the Class of 1983 and Alumni at the 125th College of Nursing celebration. She would love to stay in touch as most of her class are retired or thinking of retiring.

Sharon Payne Steen '85

Continuing to work full time at Buffalo Ambulatory Surgery Center in Buffalo, NY as preadmission manager Sharon says she has been there for 23.5yrs and she got married to Ron on 8/20/2022!!

Mathiang M. Deng 2023

Mathiang has been fortunate enough to be part of this nursing career journey and is glad he went to St. Joseph's College of Nursing. He sends thanks to the faculty of the College.

Honoring the Legacy of Jay K.

The Alumni Association mourns the loss of Janis (Jay) Giarrusso Kohlbrenner '72, a devoted and cherished member of our community, who passed away on July 6, 2024. Jay's support never wavered, no matter where life took her—professionally or personally.

While her financial contributions were deeply appreciated, it was her kind words and steadfast encouragement that truly made a lasting impact. She lifted us with her generosity of spirit, inspiring us to continue our mission of keeping alumni, faculty, and students connected.

With her final dues payment and donation, Jay left us with a heartfelt message:

Dearest Connie,

I thank you and everyone on your team for all you do to keep all of us connected. You are all a gift to alumni, faculty, and students. Thanks so much,

- Jay K.

Her words reflect the very essence of the community she loved—one built on connection, gratitude, and support. Jay's legacy will continue to inspire us, and we are forever grateful for her presence in our Alumni Association family.

2024 Sprint Flower Sale



Jennifer Austin Cerio, '07 and Tricia Drum Masterpol '11 (chairperson)

The Alumni Association Spring 2024 Plant Sale was a financial success. Chairperson Tricia (Drum) Masterpol '11 was assisted by a team of volunteers who sold the beautiful plants in the hospital lobby over 2 days, leading up to Mother's Day.

2024 Holiday Plant Sale



Jennifer Austin Cerio '07, Karen Alsever '14, Matt Chetney, *Financial Aid Coordinator*

The holiday plant sale in December 2024 was also a success. Chairpersons Christine Tancredi '94 and Reneé Jastrzab Granato '94, along with a team of volunteers sold pointsettias, holiday cactus and other plants for two days in the hospital lobby, the week before Christmas.

In Memory of Our Deceased Alumni 2023 – JANUARY 2025

Class of 1944

Alice McArdle

Class of 1951

Marcy Singer

Class of 1954

Ann Mantel Mulholland

Class of 1956

Theresa M. "Terry" Kalinowski Passero
Sally Boyle Hutt
Joan Giordano Cullen

Class of 1958

Nanette Brown O'Reilly

Class of 1964

Sandra Wilson Murphy
Elizabeth Halsberger Shea

Class of 1966

Kathleen (DeSantis) Avery

Class of 1970

Jerry McCarthy
Cheryl Shaw Sherman

Class of 1972

Janis "Jay" Giarrusso Kohlbrenner

Class of 1989

Aleata Howley Leete
Janice Philpot

Class of 1993

Mary Wilsey Thurston

Class of 1995

Chester Kupczyk

Class of 1999

Terra Crannell-Davis

Class of 2005

Lawrence Beale

Class of 2011

Kristin Leeson

A Note About Our Donors List

Due to an issue with the database that was outside of our control, a record of donations for 2023 is not available to us at the time the newsletter went to press. Our hope is that we can include recognition both 2023 and 2024 donors in the next newsletter.

Alumni Diversity Scholarship

The Diversity Scholarship was established in 2021 by St. Joseph's College of Nursing's Alumni Association to support the need for continued education of Registered Professional Nurses from diverse backgrounds. The purpose of this scholarship is to provide financial support for continued education in nursing (and other specialties as applicable) for a graduate of St. Joseph's College of Nursing from a diverse background; diverse backgrounds include but are not limited to areas of race, ethnicity, gender, culture, age, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, and religion. A graduate of St. Joseph's College of Nursing from a diverse background who is pursuing an advanced degree such as a baccalaureate degree in nursing, master's degree in nursing, or doctoral degree in nursing or other specialty is eligible to apply. Additional eligibility requirements and criteria are specified on the Diversity Scholarship Application which is posted on the St. Joseph's College of Nursing's website.

The Diversity Scholarship is established from funds received from the late Hugh B. Hoeffler, M.D. who had established the Katherine Roach Hoeffler, Class of 1933 Memorial Award in memory of his wife. One Diversity Scholarship will be awarded on an annual basis. The application can be found online at the alumni section of the CON website: <https://www.sjhcon.edu/alumni-scholarships/>. The Application will need to be downloaded and printed, and mailed-in.

Completed applications and essays are to be completed by **April 15, 2025** and submitted to:

St. Joseph's College of Nursing's Alumni Association
206 Prospect Ave
Syracuse, New York 13203



Dr. Andrew Wolf,
Dean of the College of Nursing

Welcome to the new Dean

In December, 2024, Andrew Wolf EdD, RN, AGACNP-BC joined St Joseph's College of Nursing as Dean. Dr Wolf hails from Rochester, NY and his most recent position was Director & Chief Nursing Officer (CNO) at Marymount University Malek School of Nursing Professions in Arlington, VA.

Dr Wolf has maintained an active practice as an acute care nurse practitioner, along with his many other duties over the years. His previous roles have included dealing with curriculum innovations, online and hybrid learning and accreditation processes, with great results.

Dr Wolf studied history at Empire State University, attended an accelerated nursing program at Johns Hopkins University, and enrolled at University of Rochester for graduate education.

His immediate family includes his wife (who teaches writing to nursing students at the University of Rochester), and two sons. His oldest currently studies nursing at St. John Fisher University, and his youngest is an aspiring artist and published playwright. The family adopted a rescue dog named "Baby".

Dr Wolf explains he is happy to be Dean at St. Joseph's because of the wonderful reputation of the school, great students, faculty who are dedicated to student success, accomplished alumni and a strong partnership with the hospital.

College of Nursing 2024 Statistics: Strong Enrollment & High NCLEX Pass Rates

- **Number of students in the College of Nursing as of 2024 Fall semester**
 - ◆ 143 in Evening/Weekend program
 - ◆ 170 in Day program
 - ◆ over 300 total
- **2024 results for passing grade for first-time test-takers from the College of Nursing in the NCLEX = 94.4%**
- **Number of grads in May 2024 = 67**
- **Number of grads in December 2024 = 64**
- **Approximate cost examples:**
 - ◆ AD, nursing-courses: Science and general-education courses, including tuition and fees = \$45,000 for the 2 years
 - ◆ AD, nursing courses, transfer students: Science and Gen Ed courses transferred from elsewhere = \$30,000 for the 2 years
(approximate costs for both are accurate as of '24-'25 school year, and subject to change without notice)

A Fond Farewell

In December 2024, Dr. Lenore Boris retired as Dean from St Joseph's College of Nursing after three years of service. She made multiple contributions to the school during her tenure, which are appreciated by students, faculty, staff and alumni.

ways to support the alumni association

DONATIONS

Make a Difference Today!

St Joseph's College of Nursing continues with fund-raising attempts to help with scholarships for students during this un-precedented time of nursing shortage. For a limited time, donations made to the College of Nursing will be doubled due to a generous bequest by an alumna back in 2010. As of the end of 2024, approximately \$1.4 Million has been raised in scholarship money and general donations.

It's still a great time for an individual or family to make any donation to the College of Nursing, to establish a scholarship, or add-to an existing scholarship endowment.

To make a general donation, please scan:



Or, you can contact:

St Joseph's Health Foundation
973 James Street, Suite 250
Syracuse, New York 13203
Ph. 315.703.2137
foundation@sjhsyr.org

One of the special initiatives begun this year was the scholarship in memory of our friend, colleague and leader Jay Giarrusso Kohlbrenner '72 who passed away in July, 2024. Please consider donating to her scholarship endowment if you have not already had the opportunity to do so.



Jay Giarrusso Kohlbrenner, Ph.D, RN '72 Memorial Scholarship

Jay was admired and loved by so many. Her greatest joy in life was enjoying time with her family. She also had an illustrious 45-year career as a Nurse Leader. Here at St. Joseph's Health, we were fortunate enough to serve under Jay's leadership as St. Joseph's Vice President for Clinical Services and Chief Nursing Officer.

Jay was a key contributor to great advancement in Nursing here at St. Joseph's Health. She was particularly instrumental in guiding St. Joseph's Hospital to earn Magnet Recognition, which is a national designation to health care organizations who truly value the education and development of nurses throughout their career. Jay

continued to be a supporter of St. Joseph's Hospital long after her career here.

In memory of Jay's passion and dedication to all patients, colleagues and students at St. Joseph's Health and in honor of her prestigious career in Nursing, we are looking to endow the Jay Giarrusso Kohlbrenner, Ph.D, RN, '72 Memorial Scholarship. This scholarship will be awarded to future St. Joseph's College of Nursing students who demonstrate leadership, dedication, and passion towards nursing that Jay exhibited throughout her career.

We will Match your Gift!

As a result of a generous bequest received in 2010 from an alumnus of St. Joseph's College of Nursing, any contribution to the Jay Giarrusso Kohlbrenner, Ph.D, RN, '72 Memorial Scholarship will be 100% matched. Please take advantage of this amazing opportunity in support of Jay's tireless contributions to St. Joseph's Health.

For more information contact **Vince Kuss** - vincent.kuss@sjhsyr.org or 315.703.2189

Checks can be made payable to: St. Joseph's Health Foundation. Please reference Jay Kohlbrenner Memorial Scholarship and return to the Foundation in the postage paid envelope. To donate via credit card please scan the QR code.



ways to support the alumni association

ANNUAL DUES



Alumni associations thrive on the generosity of their graduates. Supporting the Alumni Association through donations in honor or memory of someone and by paying dues is an expression of gratitude and commitment. It ensures the alumni association's financial health and helps to tie us to our nursing education roots. Your donation nurtures the growth of future generations of nurses and keeps the spirit of our alma mater alive.

Paying annual dues is a direct and consistent way for alumni to contribute to the ongoing success of our association. These funds support the day-to-day operations, events, and networking opportunities that define the alumni experience.

By paying dues, you ensure that the association can continue fostering connections, providing resources, and celebrating the achievements of its members. Your financial contributions help organize reunions and career development programs, produce the newsletter, and other events that strengthen the bonds among all graduates.

To Pay Annual Dues:

1. Go to the College of Nursing website: www.sjhcon.edu
2. Click Alumni & Giving, then click Alumni Association
3. There are two links:



Pay Alumni dues (Online): This will take you to online payment for dues and donations.

Scan the QR code or click the following link to go directly to the site:

<https://store.getbeyond.com/alumni-association-st-josephs-con>



Pay Alumni Dues (Mail): This will take you to a PDF to print and mail your payment for dues and donations, contact information update, and your news update.

Scan the QR code or click the following link to go directly to the site:

https://www.sjhcon.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/sjcn_dues2021-1.pdf

ways to support the alumni association: active participation

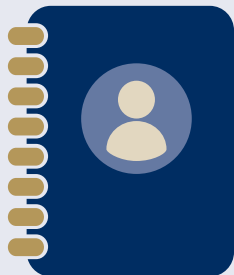
- Attend annual breakfast meeting
- Volunteer to work on projects, activities and fund-raisers
- Volunteer for a role on the board or in a leadership role
- Contact via conalumni@sjhsyr.org with any questions, or to volunteer

reunion news

Class 1975 50th Reunion Update

Class of 1975 50th anniversary class reunion will be Saturday Sept 13, 2025 at St Joseph's Health Hospital...and the annual breakfast meeting will be Sunday Sept 14, 2025 at a location to be determined. More info on this to follow.

alumni database



To maintain an accurate listing of contact information (home addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses) for our Alumni, please notify the Alumni Association

of any changes to your contact information. Send changes to your contact information via email: conalumni@sjhsyr.org or US mail to:

Alumni Association
St. Joseph's College of Nursing
206 Prospect Ave.
Syracuse, NY 13203

alumni association



Alumni Association Officers

President

Connie Spadafore Semel '74

Vice President

Mary Headd Ryan '72

Ex Officio

Dr. Andrew Wolf, Dean

Alumni Association Board of Directors

Gina Famolaro Cusworth '83	Rhonda Youmans Reader '86
Mary Ellen Barrett '69	Phyllis Petrivelli '14
Christine Kelly '16	Christine Tancredi '94
Patricia Drea '69	Reneé Jastrzab Granato '94
Tricia Drum Masterpol '11	Karen Alsever '14
Kimberly Garofalo '20	

Many thanks to the following outgoing board members for their dedication and commitment to the Alumni Association:

Jennifer Austin Cerio '07
Olivia Fedele '17

At the May, 2024 meeting of the Board of Directors, the following alumni were approved to serve on the Board:

Karen Alsever '14,
Renee Jastrzab Granato '94
Christine Tancredi '94