Building a bright future, one educator at a time

Valuing our voices
Alumna Teaira McMurtry challenges us to confront our biases when it comes to language
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Best of both worlds
Alverno’s partnership with the Montessori Institute of Milwaukee offers new opportunities to future teachers
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On the cover: Through her scholarly research and daily work, Teaira McMurtry '09 '11, PhD, finds new ways to celebrate identity and challenge the status quo.

Story on page 4

Creating Curiosity At Alverno, a new partnership trains future teachers in the Montessori method of education.

Love and Light Natalie Sorrentino '04 illustrates a series of stories that spark joy.

Alverno at Work Maricruz Talavera-Pettis '99 and Betty Suárez '12 proudly serve the students of Cristo Rey Jesuit High School.

Our Sisters Sister Ann Oestreich, IHM, is fighting to end human trafficking.
From the President

Greetings, friends near and far!

Alverno began 2019 with a devastating flood and yet we are edging closer to the completion of this year with so much for which to be grateful! A lot has happened between then and now, with much more still in progress. The flood and its attendant challenges (five months in duration) are fading into distant memory. I am grateful we had such wonderfully comprehensive insurance coverage and, of course, incredibly resilient staff and faculty who weathered it all with grace and good humor.

Like most small colleges across the nation, we continue to have enrollment challenges. I am grateful for the engagement and energy of many faculty and staff now engaged, under the leadership of Jill Desmond of the Office of the President, in a “whole team” effort to refresh our strategic plan, informed by the knowledge, challenges and opportunities that were not known or available even two years ago. Embedded in that work is our recent submission of extensive documentation to the Higher Learning Commission to support Alverno College’s absorption of the Columbia College of Nursing. A first for Alverno!

Sparkling out on my thought horizon are many recent opportunities to witness our students speaking, singing, acting, playing and dancing with skill and lovely energy, inspired and strengthened through the careful coaching of their professors and mentors. In another venue, I attended one of our volleyball games a few weeks back, a typical “best of 3” match. Alverno won one set and lost two, but that was not what I was taking into account. We are in a rebuild mode in Athletics at Alverno and only had seven players on the roster to the other team’s 25. So, we only had one reserve player to send in during the entire three sets of the match. Exhausting! Yet our team, down to each player, played hard and well, in spite of the disadvantage the team size dealt.

I was proud of each of player and of their coach and grateful that at Alverno, while winning is important, it is not everything. These Alverno Strong women learned valuable life lessons about resilience, about pushing forward without complaining, even when the deck is seriously stacked against you. Look for more in upcoming months as our talented and energetic new athletic director, Brad Vanden Boogaard, leads his coaches and teams to get stronger and better — at winning of course — but at much more.

Whether it’s someone telling me of a hospital experience under the care of an Alverno nurse, a CEO lauding the skills of a new Alverno graduate on her team, or a principal thrilled to have an Alverno-prepared teacher in her building, gratitude bubbles up and over for the talent, maturity and competence of our graduates, and for the faculty and staff who teach and prepare them for a world that badly needs what they bring to it. In no less enthusiastic and deep ways, my gratitude overflows for you, who help us in so many ways to make it all possible. So much gratitude! So much more good work ahead. This issue will give you a taste and a hint. Enjoy!

Alverno Strong women learn valuable life lessons about resilience, about pushing forward without complaining, even when the deck is seriously stacked against you.
Alverno Launches Direct Entry Nursing Degree

Alverno is now offering a path to an advanced nursing career for women and men who already have a bachelor’s degree in a field other than nursing.

Students who enroll in Alverno’s new direct entry master of science in nursing (DEMSN) program will earn two degrees — a bachelor of science in nursing and a master of science in nursing — in as few as 18 months (with full-time study).

Graduates of the new DEMSN program will enter a rapidly growing nursing field with a master’s degree, ready to treat patients and lead health care teams, as well as ready to make a difference.

“The demand for nurses is outpacing the supply, and the DEMSN will graduate highly trained nurses more quickly so that they can provide immediate impact to those most in need,” says Patricia Varga, dean of the JoAnn McGrath School of Nursing and Health Professions. “We know what will result are Alverno nurses who are compassionate caregivers and competentely support innovation and adaptation in today’s evolving health care systems.”

The DEMSN and Alverno’s new online doctorate in education (EdD) program are being launched through a partnership with Synergis Education, an Arizona-based premiere service provider. Both programs will begin enrolling students in January.

To learn more, visit msn.alverno.edu or edd.alverno.edu.

Decades of Dedication

A lot can change in a decade. But at Alverno, we’re proud to say one thing has remained constant in the past 10 years — our unwavering commitment to student success.

This fall, U.S. News & World Report ranked Alverno as one of the Midwest’s top universities for our strong commitment to teaching, the 10th consecutive year we’ve been so honored. That means the dedication of our faculty and leadership has been lauded each and every year that U.S. News has published this ranking. (We’d venture that if this ranking had existed at the time of Alverno’s founding, we’d be holding onto a century-plus streak right now.)

“This recognition is deeply meaningful to our faculty because we are so committed to our students,” says Penny Alt-Gehrman, assistant professor of nursing and president of the Alverno Faculty Senate. “It’s an honor to receive this accolade 10 years in a row, but it’s an even greater honor to serve our students.”

The 2020 America’s Best Colleges guidebook recognized Alverno’s achievements in the following categories:

- Most Innovative School in Wisconsin (and #4 in the entire Midwest)
- Ethnic Diversity
- Best Value School
- First-Year Experience
Women in Public Life

In most elections, women vote at greater rates than men do. Men, however, are elected at higher rates than women. How can we make sure women’s voices aren’t just heard at the ballots but also in the rooms where decisions are made?

Alverno’s Research Center for Women and Girls (RCWG) will tackle this question in an upcoming report on women in public life. Working with the St. Norbert College Strategic Research Center, Alverno’s RCWG will survey Wisconsin’s current female political leaders to identify the challenges women face as well as successful pathways to elected office.

It’s a timely question, as 2020 brings a presidential election (with female candidates in the running) as well as the 100th anniversary of women’s suffrage.

The resulting report, sponsored by the Women’s Fund of Milwaukee and the Wisconsin Women’s Council, will seek to identify ways to increase women’s representation among elected officials. The report will be shared with the Alverno community, lawmakers, nonprofits and the general public.

Check in with alverno.edu/report in March 2020 for a sneak peek at the initial survey findings.

The RCWG is turning 50!

Next year marks the 50th anniversary of the Research Center for Women and Girls’ founding! The RCWG was established in 1970 by women like Sister Austin Doherty ’54 “in the hope of contributing empirical and historical data to the study of women.” Today, it is led by Jodi Eastberg, Alverno professor of history.

In the 2018 midterm elections, 55% of women nationwide cast their ballots versus 51.8% of men. And while the election led to a historic number of women elected to the U.S. Congress, they still remain the minority, accounting for 23.4% of members of the House of Representatives and 24% of the Senate.

Sources: Pew Research Center and the Center for American Women and Politics at Rutgers University
Growing up, teachers had always praised **Teaira McMurtry ‘09 ’11, PhD**, as a gifted writer. So when one of her first college composition papers was returned with a “come see me” note scrawled on it, she wasn’t worried.

“I thought — wow, the professor was really impressed with my work. Heeeyy now!” recalls McMurtry, then a student at a public university. “So I went to her and she says, ’Teaira, you know, you’re just not writing at the college level. I think you need to read more.’”

The professor red-penned grammatical errors of standard English in McMurtry’s writing, chipping away at her identity as a strong communicator and introducing doubt as she worked to become a teacher.

McMurtry, however, persevered, and junior year brought a breakthrough. In a college textbook on linguistics, she discovered that scholars recognized African American English as a distinct communication style.

“These are some of the things that I say! This is what my parents say. This is how my community talks,” she recalls thinking.

Her epiphany spurred her to write an undergraduate thesis called *Ebonics: A Distinguished Dialect*, which prompted yet another call into a professor’s office. This time, however, she was validated.

“My thesis advisor told me she learned so much. That’s when I realized that you could teach teachers,” McMurtry says.
This discovery sparked a desire to learn more, and she felt called to advocate on behalf of children who faced censure and discouragement for the way their intelligence and talent manifested itself to a world limited by its own lack of knowledge.

Her quest brought her to Alverno, where she became a licensed teacher and, in 2011, earned a master of arts in education. Her capstone research project focused on students’ awareness and use of African American Vernacular English and Standard English, helping them become adept at switching between the two styles.

As McMurtry continued her studies at the doctoral level, her research evolved to focus on preparing teachers to teach African American adolescents in a manner that respected their culture and linguistics. She earned her doctorate in philosophy, language and literacy from Cardinal Stritch University in 2018 and then won a highly competitive fellowship from the National Council of Teachers of English.

As a Cultivating New Voices Among Scholars of Color fellow, McMurtry shares her research through speeches and conference presentations. She recently spoke at the Race, Inequality, and Language in Education conference organized by Stanford University’s Graduate School of Education.

In the Alverno way, McMurtry also applies her research to her job as a writing curriculum specialist for Milwaukee Public Schools. She designs and facilitates professional development to ensure that teachers and school leaders are using culturally responsive teaching practices.

“I am connected through and through to this topic,” McMurtry says. When she realized why her writing was different from what one professor expected, and that she wasn’t alone, she came to accept that her use of language was just as valid as the next person’s.

“It was extremely empowering, so much so that you just want to tell the world,” she says.

A big part of McMurtry’s work now is helping teachers shift their mindset. Instead of viewing deviations from so-called Standard English as a deficit, she urges educators to see this form of student expression as an asset. In the process, she confronts, and encourages others to confront, long-held biases.

“These ways of thinking have carried on for so many years. We don’t stop to question it,” she says. “Being able to present on these national platforms now, I’m able to play with language and dance on linguistic boundaries.”
“An education capable of saving humanity is no small undertaking; it involves the spiritual development of man, the enhancement of his value as an individual, and the preparation of young people to understand the times in which they live.”

— Dr. Maria Montessori, founder of the Montessori method

The Best of Both Worlds

A growing partnership opens new doors for aspiring teachers

BY PAULA WHEELER

During high school, Maddie Tripp decided she was destined to become a teacher. Among the education programs she researched, one stood out for its early field experiences and abilities-based curriculum. “Alverno,” she says, “was so unique.”

Now a sophomore, Tripp is in the first cohort of an integrated undergraduate program that further distinguishes what Alverno can offer aspiring teachers. Upon completion, she’ll be eligible for not only her Wisconsin teaching license but also an international license as a Montessori educator.

Tripp had never heard of Montessori — an educational approach founded in the early 1900s that emphasizes multi-age, self-directed, hands-on learning — until her introductory course with Kathy Lake, professor of education. She was intrigued enough to visit Lake during office hours, hoping to learn more.

“We talked about how great Montessori programs are, how well they look after the child, and how big of a difference it can make to their learning and growth,” Tripp says. After representatives from the Montessori Institute of Milwaukee (MIM) visited Lake’s classroom to share the Montessori theory and outcomes, Tripp says, “I fell in love.”

When she learned Alverno and MIM were developing an integrated bachelor’s degree program, Tripp told Lake she was all in. “I was so for it,” she says. “I was like, ‘Kathy, we have to make this program happen!’”

By Tripp’s second semester, the program — the only such integrated bachelor’s program in the country — was up and running, with MIM’s executive director, Andrea Fleener, teaching a Montessori theory class to the inaugural cohort of six students. Fleener says the new program “prepares teachers to navigate the public-school system as practitioners of the Montessori method, which, to me, is the best of both worlds.”
This fall, Fleener’s commute from institute to classroom shrank significantly: MIM relocated from Milwaukee’s Bay View neighborhood to the Alverno campus, paving the way for new programs to fortify the pipeline of Montessori-trained educators in southeastern Wisconsin. A program for paraprofessionals in Milwaukee Public Schools’ Montessori schools to obtain dual licensure is already under way with at least 13 participants. In summer 2020, MIM and Alverno will launch a post-baccalaureate Montessori training program that spans three summers (those who also want a master’s degree in education can add additional academic-year credits).

Creating a pipeline

The new programs are not only perfectly timed, but their Milwaukee location also provides an immediate market. Montessori education is in high demand in the city and region, and although the city’s public Montessori schools are the largest such group in the contiguous United States, demand far outpaces supply. For MPS, which enrolls about 3,500 students in eight Montessori schools, Montessori represents a way to potentially help reverse declining enrollment — if only there were more licensed teachers.

“Milwaukee has a huge need for trained Montessori public school teachers, but we don’t have a pipeline, and that is what we are creating with Alverno,” Fleener says. The integrated bachelor’s degree, she adds, is ideal for would-be educators who already know they want to teach using the Montessori method, as Montessori has historically been a post-baccalaureate certification: “We’re taking that hurdle away.”

This year, MPS approved a Montessori strategic plan. Research found that that MPS’s Montessori students outperform peers academically. What’s more, 30% of families on the long Montessori waiting lists opt out of MPS if they can’t enroll their children by age 3.

“Montessori is something that parents want,” Lake says, “because it’s a strong, successful education.”

An aligned partnership

Enrollment is also on Lake’s mind as Alverno builds awareness about the new programs.

“This program strengthens our presence in the community, and it’s very consistent with our mission to meet the community’s needs and prepare well-qualified teachers who can teach in a variety of diverse settings.” Lake adds that the new post-baccalaureate summer program with the optional master’s in education can potentially attract students from countries like China, where Montessori’s popularity continues to expand.

In Alverno, MIM has found a partner aligned with its very approach to education. “Alverno is interactive in the classroom, hands-on learning and performance assessment, and all of that is consistent with Montessori,” notes Lake. “One of the goals of Montessori is that students become independent learners, very much able to take charge of their own education, and that’s congruent with Alverno’s underlying principles.”

Looking ahead, Fleener says program recruitment efforts may target school districts with Montessori programs, seeking out Montessori-educated students who want to become teachers. “As we build the program, we’re looking at how it can be something that makes Milwaukee a destination and makes Alverno a top choice for future teachers,” she says.

Milwaukee and beyond

Fleener is excited about what the future holds for Tripp and her classmates, whether they choose to stay local or take advantage of the global aspects of the Montessori certification. Tripp is already considering the options and says she would love to incorporate international field experience into her education.

“Ideally, through Alverno, I would want to pair up with a Montessori institution abroad so I can gain that global perspective and see how Montessori impacts other cultures,” she says.

And once she’s dually licensed? “Teaching internationally with Montessori would be amazing if it works out,” Tripp says. “But if not, I want to stay in Milwaukee and be a part of this up-and-coming Montessori movement.”
Characteristics of Montessori education

- Thoughtfully designed classroom environment and specialized materials
- Lessons given individually or in small groups
- Open-ended and uninterrupted work periods to encourage deep concentration
- Instruction from Montessori-trained teachers
- Freedom to learn and explore at a child’s own pace
- Classes include children of different ages

Source: Montessori Public Policy Initiative

To learn more, visit alverno.edu/montessori
As a longtime teacher, Lawahez Suleiman knows the hard work and deep commitment required — the late nights and early mornings grading papers, thinking about students and lesson plans after the closing bell. So she urged her children to take a more lucrative, less emotionally taxing career path.

For daughter Randa Suleiman ’07, that path became dental oral surgery, but it wasn’t long before she decided to trade in her dentistry tools for chalk and an eraser.

“I love science,” she explains. “I wanted to work with students and help them see the beauty in science and love it as much as I do, or at least change their mind about it.”

A job teaching middle school science turned into a career as a K-12 teacher and administrator. “Having love, passion and knowledge is one thing,” Suleiman says. “But you need effective teaching methods, too.” That led her to earn a master’s degree in urban education from Alverno and then a doctorate focused on higher education leadership from Cardinal Stritch University. Now she inspires the next generation of teachers as an associate professor of education at Alverno.

“I like to have that feeling of being students’ coach and mentor, and to celebrate success with them,” she says.

To measure that success, Suleiman launched Lighting the Fire, a pilot study that examines the impact of women’s college-educated teachers on their female students.

“I had no research on what happens to our graduates when they’re out in the classroom...do they still carry the things we hope they do?” she says.
The pilot focused on two recent Alverno graduates who teach math in high-need urban areas. Suleiman observed their teaching and gathered input from their supervisors and students. Because of the time-intensive, case-study approach, she limited her initial focus with the goal of developing an effective research model that other women’s colleges could use to measure the impact of their own education graduates.

While it’s difficult to draw conclusions from such a small sample size, Suleiman hopes to expand the study, and her early findings were positive. “I was really impressed,” she says. “Supervisors reported that our graduates were outperforming more experienced teachers, and both wanted our graduates to mentor or coach other teachers.”

Suleiman credits Alverno’s distinctive approach to teaching and learning for giving new teachers a valuable skillset to use in their own classrooms. “We lead by example here,” she says. “We don’t lecture. We don’t take things lightly. We think through everything that we’re doing. We’re focused on skills that can be transferable, and feedback is big. I tell my students all the time: Teaching is not about perfection, it’s about reflection. At any point, if you feel you’ve reached perfection, then it’s time to retire because there is always room to grow. I think having that growth mindset helps them in the field.”

She cites Alverno’s strong partnership with Greenfield Public Schools as another advantage. The partnership gives Alverno’s education students (pictured on prior page) a head start by getting them field experience before they start their full-time student teaching. Students start their fieldwork by spending two half-days a week in a school, eventually working up to three full days a week.

“You can’t have an athlete sit in a classroom as you lecture about basketball and then send them out to play the game, and it’s the same with teaching,” Suleiman says. “This is a profession of doing. With that vision, we wanted our students to spend more time in the classroom to be immersed in that environment.”

Come Together

September marked the 50th anniversary of the release of Abbey Road, the final album that the Beatles recorded. Alverno’s Rob Collier, assistant professor of music, was among the scholars and musicians who gathered at the University of Rochester’s Institute for Popular Music to discuss the landmark recording.

“To be able to fill three full days with new analysis of a 50-year old rock album is pretty remarkable,” he says. “I left realizing there’s more to do with analyzing the Beatles.”

How did you first encounter the Beatles?
When I was 13, I saw Paul McCartney sing Hey Jude on Saturday Night Live. After that, I became obsessed with the Beatles and would spend my allowance every week on a new Beatles tape. I started reading about them and decided to learn how to play guitar. I started bands and went on to music school. I can trace my life as a musician back to that one performance on SNL.

What’s the biggest legacy of Abbey Road?
Abbey Road was a new approach to recording an album. The first side is a collection of individual songs, but the second side is a medley where the songs are connected. It wasn’t something that was done a whole lot in rock music. Other artists have since followed suit.

What’s the best song on Abbey Road?
You Never Give Me Your Money. It’s at the beginning of the medley, but the song itself is kind of a medley. It has all of these different parts. Every part feels special, and I would miss any part if it wasn’t there.

What’s the best cover of an Abbey Road song?
One of my all-time favorite Beatles covers is Joe Cocker’s cover of She Came in Through the Bathroom Window. The Beatles version of it is really cool, and you hear it as part of this string of incomplete songs. But when Joe Cocker covers it, he takes it out of the context of the medley and presents it on its own.
Through storytelling and art, this creative duo shines a light on the many ways love manifests in our world

BY NICOLE SWEENEY ETTER

The basement of a pharmaceutical company might sound like an odd place to discover one’s creative soulmate, but Natalie Sorrentino ’04 and Courtney Kotloski aren’t afraid to embrace the unexpected.

Sorrentino, an artist and art therapist, had been dabbling in stationery and other illustration projects after her day job running creative workshops for corporate clients, “but nothing was really igniting,” she says. Her whimsical watercolor illustrations needed a voice.

One day, Sorrentino started chatting with her husband’s coworker, Kotloski, in their basement office. “Let me see your work,” urged Kotloski, who was blown away. “What are you doing here?” she asked in wonder. “This is beautiful, beautiful stuff.”

Kotloski, who worked as an actress and playwright before becoming a corporate writer, was craving a creative outlet herself. She offered to write three stories inspired by Sorrentino’s artwork in a trial of a possible creative partnership. When Sorrentino read the first drafts, “I started bawling. It was just the voice that it needed,” she recounts.

Five years later, the pair known as Gnat and Corky, a playful nod to their names, have published four books. The fourth, From Malena With Love, hit bookshelves in September. The duo creates “universal stories based on the spirit of real kids,” to quote their book blurbs. But they resist the children’s book label. “We don’t write for children; we write for people,” Kotloski notes.
Telling universal stories

A few months after the women first met, they launched a blog to build their audience. Kotloski crafted quips, poems and other verse to go with Sorrentino’s art.

Kotloski had the idea of posting an online questionnaire where kids could answer questions ranging from “Why was the world created?” to “If you went to the moon, what would you do up there?” to “What does the tooth fairy do with all the teeth she/he collects?” She then spins stories from the kids’ responses. “I love kids,” she says. “They say the greatest things without a filter.”

Their first book was *Addison the Light Catcher*, inspired by the devoted sister of a little boy with Down syndrome. Then came *Ken the Keeper*, spurred by the story of a boy who started a no-kill shelter called the Happy Animals Club. The stories aren’t straight nonfiction, though the real-life kids are featured in a short bio at the back of the books. “It’s more about the spirit of the kids that can speak to the masses,” Kotloski explains.

The questionnaire led them to 13-year-old Will, the namesake of their third book, *Will It*. Will has a rare condition, Bardet-Biedl syndrome, that usually leads to blindness by the teenage years. Kotloski conducted a follow-up interview with Will, and at the end of a wide-ranging conversation about the boy’s aspirations, she asked if he had anything else to share. “I’m going blind,” he said. “I love my family because they help me see in the dark.” Will’s words and indomitable spirit became a story about facing challenges with bravery and humor. The book is available in English, Spanish and Braille.

They’ve since received hundreds of submissions (including several from Sorrentino’s persistent daughter Malena, who enjoys answering the questions again and again). In fact, it was Malena, at age 9, who inspired *From Malena With Love* when she shared her vision of what a world without love would look like — completely gray. Sorrentino painted most of the book’s artwork in stark black and white.

As Gnat and Corky’s following has grown, they’ve responded to requests from the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Down syndrome advocates, and the diabetes community to tell stories of children with those conditions. But their stories aren’t about differences. “We like to highlight that we’re more alike than different,” Sorrentino says. “It really became this world of inclusion, kindness, and sharing other people’s stories. It’s about celebrating all abilities, color and light and love, and the power of kids and people in communities.”

The power of art

Sorrentino has wielded a paintbrush ever since she got her first watercolor kit at age 3. She majored in art and psychology at the University of Wisconsin–Oshkosh and had just a semester left when she decided to transfer to Alverno to pursue art therapy. Her stepmother is a proud Alverno alumna who thought it would be a good fit for Sorrentino. She was right.

“Being surrounded by women and the spirituality and the confidence — I felt born again,” Sorrentino says. “It challenged me every day, but everything I do now is because of Alverno. They put me in the community, taught me how to speak in front of people. The first semester I was here, I was practicing art therapy.” She worked in art therapy at Rogers Memorial Hospital and elsewhere in Wisconsin and Illinois for more than a decade before moving into marketing and team-building work, and now, children’s books.
“This is its own art therapy,” she says of the book series. “One of our biggest dreams is to reach people in a different way — in a larger, more subtle way. With the way Courtney writes and my intent of honoring the spirit of the children with the illustrations, we’re subtly reaching people on a spiritual level and tackling big topics without being heavy-handed. I think that’s the real power of art, which is what made me choose art therapy in the first place. It’s a tool to get us to communicate.”

The books have resonated deeply with readers. A mother of a child with Down syndrome approached them at a book event and said, “Thank you for making a book that includes my son in a way that isn’t offensive, that isn’t the same old, same old, and that my daughters can be proud to read to him, too.” Another time, an 8-year-old stood up during a school visit and tearfully declared the message she took away from a story: “Everybody has a light, and everyone has something special and a story to tell.”

And it’s that mission that keeps Gnat and Corky going.

Visit gnatandcorky.com for books, the questionnaire and more!
At the start of each semester, Alverno gathers at convocation (the word derives from *convocare*, which means *to call together*). As president, Sister Andrea Lee, IHM, calls together the College community to welcome new students and their families in a ceremony that is rich with tradition and the excitement of new beginnings.
Meet the Class of 2023

72% of students are the first in their families to attend college

10% of students are 25 or older

65% are American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic, or two or more races

All data describes new undergraduate students for fall 2019.
Ready to Make Her Mark

In her first semester at Alverno, Ryleigh Provencher already has a plan to change the world.

Provencher plans to major in psychology and biomedical sciences so that she can become a psychiatrist and psychologist. She says these two professional degrees will allow her to start her own therapy and treatment program that integrates medicine and counseling.

“I want to create a holistic approach to how mental illness is treated,” she says. “Today, counseling and psychiatry are very separate, which creates problems in effectively treating a specific disorder. I plan to build a new approach to the treatment of mental disorders and make it accessible to those who need it most.”

Provencher, a Muskego High School graduate, chose Alverno because, quite simply, it felt like home.

“Alverno held a special place in my heart before I even got to middle school. This is because my mom graduated [from Alverno] in 1994,” she says. “Because of her passion for the school, her wish was for me to go to Alverno.”

Still, Provencher says her mom gave her the space to conduct her college search and make her choice. It didn’t take her long to decide.

“I came to find on my own that Alverno is the place where I belong. Everyone at Alverno is so welcoming and genuinely cares about the well-being of every student. I didn’t want to be a number in a college where no one would know my name, and Alverno is certainly not that college. I’m amazed by not only the beauty of the campus but also the people. I see sincerity in the eyes of everyone I meet, and I feel at home. People I have never met express such pride in having me attend Alverno — I feel valued and like a part of a family.”

Provencher is this year’s winner of Alverno’s Eleanor Roosevelt Scholarship, which honors excellence in leadership and service with a four-year, full-tuition scholarship. Provencher was president of her high school’s Best Buddies chapter, which connects differently abled students to form friendships. And she provides respite care to parents of children with disabilities.

“Allowing parents to have a break and the children to have fun and be with friends gives me a feeling that is greater than joy,” she says.

Provencher says receiving the scholarship boosted her confidence.

“This scholarship changed my perspective on my education. I always believed I couldn’t, but now I know I can,” she says. “I think it took Alverno seeing my potential for me to realize it as well.”
Learning Leadership

As an integral part of the Alverno experience, student organizations allow students to explore new interests, make friends and have fun. Importantly, they also give students the opportunity to grow as leaders.

During the 2018-19 school year, Alverno was home to several dozen student organizations, each of which were led by students committed to the success of the campus community. Alverno congratulates two of those students, True Anderson and Kim Otzelberger, who each won the annual Outstanding Student Leaders award for 2019.

Anderson is an art therapy major who successfully started a campus gaming club that connects students, faculty and staff over a shared interest. She was honored for “her tireless efforts for the club, for her fervent energies in her own studies while showcasing how Alverno students perform professionally, and for furthering the mission of the College as a strong woman leader.”

Otzelberger, who is majoring in media design with a minor in film studies, leads two student organizations. She was honored for making “strong contributions to the quality of campus life by being a strong and charismatic student leader” and for being “the kind of student that every faculty and staff member seeks out to be involved on panels, meet with special guests or take on extra projects.”

Congratulations to these #AlvernoStrong students, both of whom expect to graduate in May 2020.

Opportunity

Do you know a high school senior who is interested in Alverno and who plans to pursue a mathematics or science major? Encourage her to apply for the New Futures scholarship, which offers up to $10,000 per year for up to five years! Applications for the 2020-21 school year can be found at alverno.edu/newfutures.
How to Grow as a Leader and Lifelong Learner

BY JACKIE AVIAL
here may have been a Powerpoint slide deck, but it definitely wasn’t your typical corporate presentation.

For one, the audience showed its agreement with key points not with nods or applause, but with a robust “Amen!”

For another, one of the presenters brought cookies baked in the shape of a cross, carefully frosted in brown and ivory. At the end, audience members sang an earnest blessing to the presenters, after which warm hugs were exchanged.

It wasn’t your typical corporate presentation because it was a cohort of Alverno graduate students advising the School Sisters of St. Francis. And an Alverno graduate degree is anything but typical.

“At Alverno, it really is about the learning. It’s about making yourself better. It’s not about a grade,” says Jennifer Johnson ’19. “When I stopped worrying about how I’m going to be judged and started focusing on what I was learning and how to apply my knowledge, that’s when I became better.”

**Rooted in the real world**

Alverno graduate programs prioritize experiential learning, are outcomes-driven and challenge students to apply what they are learning to real life. It is this approach that distinguishes an Alverno education.

“Students pursue graduate degrees to elevate their careers. At Alverno, graduate students not only learn and practice the skills that will help them advance, but they also discover a better way to learn,” says Kate Lundeen, vice president for enrollment. “Our small classes and focus on hands-on learning help students make important connections and get them ready to lead and drive change.”

In connection with Alverno’s strategic plan, the College is expanding graduate programs while maintaining the undergraduate women’s program as our heart and soul. We are now home to 10 graduate programs (including two doctoral offerings) in education, health care, business, psychology and music. Each program offers Alverno graduate students the opportunity to gain valuable experience and to make a positive impact on a workplace, organization or the broader community.

Students pursuing their master of science in nursing, for instance, practice their skills and provide care to underserved populations through service trips to rural Mississippi, and, for the first time this summer, Cuba. International travel is an essential component of the doctorate of nursing practice (DNP) program, and a donor’s generosity has enabled DNP students to travel to Sweden and Ireland to observe health care practices and share their own research. DNP students have also visited Washington, D.C., to practice lobbying lawmakers on health care initiatives.

Teachers earning a master’s degree conclude their studies with a capstone research project (one graduate’s project grew into her doctoral dissertation; see story on page 4), and master of business administration (MBA) students provide strategic planning services to real clients. For example, students in the graduating class of May 2019 spent their final semester working with the School Sisters, the order of women religious who founded the College more than 130 years ago.

“When I stopped worrying about how I’m going to be judged and started focusing on what I was learning and how to apply my knowledge, that’s when I became better.”

— Jennifer Johnson ’19
Ready for impact

For the School Sisters project, five teams of students prepared a 67-page plan and gave a two-hour presentation regarding the sustainability and future growth for associates of the School Sisters. The associate relationship offers laypeople (people who aren't ordained men or women religious) the opportunity to live Franciscan values while serving their communities, furthering the School Sisters’ mission.

Founded between 1969 and 1971, there are 156 associates of the School Sisters in the United States today. A challenge has been spreading awareness as well as maintaining a steady enrollment.

Associates are absolutely critical to sustaining religious life. As vowed membership in religious orders declines across the United States, associate membership is on the rise. Between 2000 and 2015, membership in all Catholic associate programs more than doubled, growing to nearly 56,000 from 25,000, according to the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate.

“In 10 years, the number of sisters will be much smaller, but we as associates will continue to have a relationship of love with the mission and values of the School Sisters of St. Francis,” says Rosaura Solano, associate relationship coordinator and an associate herself. “Our hope is to bring their vision of a world transformed through peace, justice and love into a reality as we touch more people’s lives through the work of our associates.”

It was up to the Alverno graduate students to take a fresh look at the associate relationship. In the weeks leading up to the final presentation, the students met with School Sisters and staff members to discuss everything from plans for growth, budget, staffing needs and marketing. The recommendations included cultivating relationships to promote awareness of the associates and streamlining the process by which someone becomes an associate.

The students have the opportunity to make a real difference, as the School Sisters are working on a new strategic plan for the associates.

“I cannot tell you how supported we feel in what you said and what we’re thinking,” one of the sisters told the students after the presentation. “You gave us a road map.”

What’s more, the Alverno students gained the experience and confidence needed to advance their careers and thrive in an increasingly competitive job market.

“The confidence that I gained from case studies, moving on to actual clients and having professors who provided quality feedback — all of this helped us to grow,” says Chelsey Smith ’19. “When I started this program, I knew nothing about business. Now, I feel like I can go in and help any business!”
Preparation More Alverno Strong Leaders

Alverno’s growing roster of graduate programs, an important component of the College’s strategic plan, include the following programs (bolded programs were launched in 2019 or will be launching in 2020):

- **Doctorate in Education**
- **Doctor of Nursing Practice**
- **Educational Specialist in School Psychology**
- **Master of Arts in Music and Liturgy**
- **Master of Arts in Education**
- **Master of Business Administration**
- **Master of Music Therapy**
- **Master of Science in Community Psychology**
- **Master of Science in Nursing**
  - Adult Gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist
  - Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner
  - Adult Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner
  - Family Nurse Practitioner
  - Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner
- **Direct Entry Master of Science in Nursing**

For more information about Alverno’s graduate programs, visit [alverno.edu/graduate](http://alverno.edu/graduate).

**Online exclusive**

After graduation, Jennifer Johnson ’19 and Chelsey Smith ’19 went into business together. Read more at [alvernomagazine.com/classmates-colleagues](http://alvernomagazine.com/classmates-colleagues).
Empowerment is what Maricruz Talavera-Pettis '99 and Betty Suárez '12 found at Alverno. It’s also what they give back to the next generation of leaders every day.

Talavera-Pettis (far right) is director of finance and operations at Cristo Rey Jesuit High School in Milwaukee, and Suárez (near right) is director of admissions. As part of the school’s administration, they have dedicated their careers to the education and empowerment of their students.

“What really caught my attention at Cristo Rey was not only its mission of helping the underserved but also the work-study program,” says Talavera-Pettis. “It gives our students the opportunity to take part in something they normally would not. Our students come in very shy, very quiet. By sophomore and junior year, they’re holding conversations with CEOs and are comfortable giving speeches.”

Such a transformation isn’t unlike what Talavera-Pettis experienced at Alverno.

“Alverno gave me the foundation not only to be well-educated but also well-rounded. It gave me enough confidence to go out into the world,” she says.

Talavera-Pettis draws on that confidence as she oversees the school’s finances, operations, information technology, food program and facilities. She is also playing an important role as the high school constructs a new building at 18th Street and National Avenue.

“In the accounting and finance field you rarely have a direct impact on the client. Here, I’m having a direct impact on our students,” she says.

As director of admissions, it’s up to Suárez to spread the word about the transformational impact that a Cristo Rey education offers.

“I truly believe that Cristo Rey is the ticket for students to go onto college because we provide a support system that students and families need when it comes to the college process, especially for first-generation students,” she says.

Suárez attends high school fairs, presents to middle school students, plans fun events for prospective students and their families, works one on one with students and parents, and meets community stakeholders. It comes naturally to someone who says she “was born an advocate and change agent.”

Her advocacy doesn’t end at work, either. Suárez volunteers as a breast health educator for Susan G. Komen Wisconsin and has served the UMOS Latina Resource Center, which assists victims of domestic abuse, sexual assault and human trafficking. “I want to make sure no person goes unheard,” she says.

— Reporting by Nicole Sweeney Etter
CRISTO REY opened its doors in 2015 to enroll its first class of freshmen. In May 2019, that class became the first to earn their diplomas from the Jesuit high school. Not only were 100% of students accepted to colleges, but many also earned full scholarships.

Peig Miota ’75 authored *The Power of Love and Awakened Consciousness: A Protocol for Mind, Body and Soul Healing*.

Gothic Milwaukee, the historic Milwaukee walking tour company founded by entrepreneur and author Anna Lardinois ’02, won a GEMmy Award from the Midwest Travel Journalists Association. One of just eight attractions worldwide to be so honored, the award recognizes Gothic Milwaukee as a “gem of travel” for offering an exceptional experience to the tourists (and locals) who get to know Milwaukee in a new light.

Celina Echeveste ’08 received the Educator of the Year award from the Wisconsin Association for Bilingual Education (WIABE). Echeveste, who majored in psychology at Alverno and went on to earn a master’s degree from the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, is a bilingual early childhood special education teacher for Milwaukee Public Schools.

Dawn (Johnson) Evans ’08 was promoted to facilities manager of Perform4Life, a medical fitness and wellness center in Marquette, Mich. She also earned certification as a personal trainer from the American College of Sports Medicine.

Meagan Grosskreutz ’11 accepted a position as a fully licensed outpatient psychotherapist with Shorehaven Behavioral Health Inc. She works out of the Brown Deer and Greenfield, Wis., locations.

Daniela Orozco ’15 was honored as an NBA Voices Champion for her work as a youth organizer at Safe & Sound. She currently is assistant dean of students and culture at Carmen High School of Science and Technology (south campus).

Jessica Pharm ’16 accepted a new role as a talent acquisition recruiter at Athea Laboratories & Packaging. She also authored an essay on navigating career transitions — please visit alvernomagazine.com/voices-career to read.

JoAnna Bautch ’17 was honored as a rising leader by the Hispanic Professionals of Greater Milwaukee in recognition of her commitment to strengthening the organizations she works with and her community. She is a media relations and event coordinator at the United Community Center in Milwaukee.

Share your good news at: alverno.edu/classnotes
Reflect and Renew
Alverno’s new Spiritual Reflections Series gathers alumnae, students and friends for quiet moments and reflections on scripture. Our Lenten reflection will focus on learning to let go.

Saturday, March 7
9 a.m.–noon
Alverno College

We invite people of all faith traditions to join us. Coffee and pastries will be available.

Limited to 15 attendees per event. Visit alverno.edu/alumnae for details and registration.

Ignite Your Network
Looking for ways to expand your professional network and share your experiences with current Alverno students? Join Ignite: The Alverno Mentor Network, our new career-mentoring and advice-sharing network that makes it easy for you to connect with others in the Alverno community.

With just a little bit of your time, you can give students the confidence to pursue the career they want, and you can connect with other alums through the Communities feature.

- Help students navigate the transition from Alverno to fulfilling careers through our easy chat messaging feature or a quick 15- to 30-minute phone call.
- Connect with alums in your field to get feedback on your business questions and grow your professional network.
- Join our Communities to connect with members who share your background and interests, and participate in group conversations.

Our goal is to add 300 alums into the network by Jan. 31 so we can launch the platform for students in January. Set up your profile today at alverno.edu/ignite.

Getting Down to Business
A new year is around the corner. Make it your best yet with workshops that will help you get started as an entrepreneur and ensure you’re on solid financial ground.

So You Want to Launch Your Side Hustle?
Saturday, January 11
9–11 a.m.
Alverno College Alumnae Hall

Free event. Continental breakfast and coffee provided.

Financial Wellness:
Goal-Setting and Budgeting
Thursday, February 20
5:30–7:30 p.m.
Raised Grain Brewery (Waukesha, Wis.)

$15, including first drink and appetizers.

To learn more and register for one or both events, visit alverno.edu/alumnae.
Gary Grunau, a longtime friend of Alverno College, passed away on Sept. 24 after a valiant battle with cancer. Gary served on Alverno’s Board of Trustees for more than 30 years, including seven years as chairman.

A noted champion of Milwaukee, Gary’s work as a developer included the creation of the RiverWalk and the construction of Discovery World at Pier Wisconsin.

Gary’s impact can be felt and seen on Alverno’s campus today, where he has provided counsel to three of the College’s presidents and advised on numerous construction and development projects. As board chair, he helped launch the Alverno Inferno athletics program, an achievement for which he was inducted into the Athletics Hall of Fame as a trailblazer in 2012. Along with his wife Joanne, he was a devoted and generous supporter of Alverno students.
We sincerely thank you for these honorarium and memorial gifts received between Jan. 1, 2019, and June 30, 2019.

In Honor Of...

Molly Conway ’67  
Bob and Judy Steinke

Sister Bernardin Deutsch ’53  
Elfen M. Goldstein ’89

Sister Margaret Earley ’52, on her 90th Birthday  
Karen Cairo and Scott Taylor  
William Darcy  
Gail ’79 and Robert Earley  
Robert Earley families  
Stephen Earley  
Bill Geegan  
Bradley Geegan  
Kortney Geegan  
Margaret Geegan  
Patrick and Susan Geegan  
Shawn and Mary Geegan  
Patrick and Susan Geegan  
Margaret Geegan  
Bill Geegan  
Stephen S. Thompson ’01

Jodi Eastberg  
Kathleen ’95 and Robert Brumder  
Barbara Fullner

Carla Elena Echeveste ’14, as the recipient of Alverno’s 2019 Rising Star Award  
Mari-Anne ’91 and  
Donald Hechmann

Patricia Hoeffer ’63, as the recipient of Alverno’s 2019 Outstanding Alumna Award  
Mari-Anne ’91 and  
Donald Hechmann

Jeff Honoré, for 25 years of service to the Archdiocesan Choir  
Dean Daniels

Lynne Katz-Petted ’03, as the recipient of Alverno’s 2019 Service to the Community Award  
Mari-Anne ’91 and  
Donald Hechmann

Pat Luebke  
Anne H. Vogel  
Mary J. Meehan H ’05  
Maureen K. Barney  
Jeanette Mitchell ’82, as the recipient of the Professional Dimensions 2019 Sacagawea Award  
Mari-Anne ’91 and  
Donald Hechmann

Elizabeth O’Hara ’15, as the recipient of the Young Nonprofit Professionals Network 2019 Emerging Leader Award  
Mari-Anne ’91 and  
Donald Hechmann

Celestine Schall ’48, for her 75th Jubilee  
Sue Leister ’05  
Sandra G. Siira ´97

Sister Mary Jane Wagner ’64  
Anonymous

In Memory Of...

Kevin Andrews, my son  
A. Virginia Andrews ’92

Marlene Thompson Atkielski ’56  
Jean Kolo ’56

James Berkes  
Mary E. Devitt ’82 ’02

Sister Dorothy Bock ’50  
Sister Elaine Hirschenberger ’65  
Greta Martin ’81

Carol Boulet  
Ruth A. Boulet ’94

Rose Delahaut  
Marilyn A. Marks ’65

Sister Austin Doherty ’54  
William Boline  
Gail Lamberty ’93

Maxine and Matthew Florek  
Darlene Florek Ebeling ’71

John David Germanotta  
Caroline and Ray Besasie

Sister Marie Gnader ’32  
Diane Burscheid ’70  
Kathleen Ferbos ’70  
School Sisters of St. Francis—U.S. Province  
Sarellen Schuh ’60

Cassondra Gresl ’11  
Karen S. Drescher ’98

Virginia Hauch, our aunt  
Linda and Michael Scheible

Carol Hibbard  
Kathleen Mateicka ’80

Kathleen M. Kies H ’57  
Louis B. Leduc ’57

David Longanecker  
Ilia Jean Klaas ’44  
Stephanie A. Chedid

John Klein  
Sister Mary Diez ’67  
Sister Marlene Neises H ’99  
Sister Kathleen O’Brien ’87  
Sister Judeen Schulte ’71

Christine Przybyла Long ’53  
Barbara Auerbach  
Jerome Long  
Joan O’Malley ’55

Sister Regina Maibusch ’50  
Dr. Vivien De Back ’54

Betty Maranan ’53  
Anonymous  
Ann and Dan Baker  
Cathi Bartling  
Jan and John Carroll  
Mary Lou Ditore  
Tim and Jayne Duckett  
John Dunn  
Ester V. Eimeren  
Sandra Engel  
Lisa Fernandez  
Mary Gauss  
Wendy and Bob Goldman  
Heidi Harrmann  
Susan and Tom Hickey  
Jerome Hierseman  
Maureen Hilbert  
Jean M. ’11 and Robert Hoffmann  
Barbara Jermyun  
Sandra Johnson  
Yvonne ’90 and  
Lawrence Kaminski  
Daniel and Cecilia Kim  
Dr. Kuang Kim  
Al Alan Luicarcich  
Donna Korsi  
Margaret Korsi  
Kevin Lenci  
Paula and Leah Mcclelland  
Myron McCormack Jr.  
Dawn Monroe  
Bonnie Oh  
Joan O’Reilly Oh and James Oh  
Janelle and Shane Peterson  
Karen A. ’96 and Victor Plantinga  
Jeanne and Gary Pokorny  
Maggie Pray  
Patti and Rod Schey  
Julie Schuller  
The Schulte Family  
Patricia Sheehan  
Christine A. ’90 and  
Peter Stefaniak  
Bonnie L. Steindorf  
Mary Streyjewski  
Kathleen Trott

Patrick J. McGinnis &  
Charles E. Otto, my brothers  
Mary Person ’84

Marcia Mentkowski  
Andrew and Nicole Deguire  
Sister Mary Diez ’67  
Sister Elizabeth Ann Heese ’61  
Sister Marlene Neises H ’99  
Sister Kathleen O’Brien ’87  
Sister Judeen Schulte ’71

Gabriel J. Savaglio and  
Mary T. Klopfstein  
Catherine A. Savaglio ’93

Susan Stang  
Sister Mary Diez ’87  
Sister Elizabeth Ann Heese ’61  
Sister Marlene Neises H ’99  
Sister Kathleen O’Brien ’87  
Sister Judeen Schulte ’71

Sister Iola Stecher ’42, for what would have been her 100th birthday  
Diane M. Wagner ’65

Henry Tiedemann  
Lucy J. Mercado ’95

Marcella H. Trakel  
Mary Kay Pierce ’02 ’05

Irene Brenner Tretowski ’58  
Jean Tretowski-Schmitz ’78

Sister Leona Truchan ’53  
Gwen Drapela ’67

Joyce Wallskog ’77  
Barbara Jean Haag-Heitman ’77
**A Stubborn Hope**

In the face of the extreme evil that is human trafficking, Sister Ann Oestreich refuses to stand down

**BY JACKIE AVIAL**

For Sister Ann Oestreich, IHM, the question isn’t whether it’s possible to end human trafficking. Instead, it’s how can you not try?

Oestreich joined the Alverno community in late 2016 as part of a nationwide project to connect young women with Catholic sisters. It’s just one of the many things she has been called to work on as a Catholic sister.

Another calling? To stand on the front lines in the fight against human trafficking. More than 40 million people around the world — including in our community — are trafficked, being forced to provide sex, labor, or other services against their will. Women religious like Oestreich educate the public, advocate for survivors and connect men, women and children with the resources they need to start healing.

Oestreich recently visited Rome with Talitha Kum, an international umbrella organization for national networks of religious women dedicated to fighting human trafficking. The group met with Pope Francis, who affirmed this brave work.

**How did you come to take up this cause?**

I’m a member of U.S. Catholic Sisters Against Human Trafficking. Part of our mission is to educate the public about the crime, because a lot of Americans still don’t think it happens here. Milwaukee is actually quite a center for human trafficking.
Do you see signs of hope?

I see that there is a movement in many states to decriminalize and expunge the records of people who have been trafficked, because getting them to commit crimes is a way to control them. I also see that there are more prosecutions [of traffickers] than there were 10 years ago. And there’s beginning to be more emphasis on reparations, to ensure that survivors have the means to live a free and dignified life.

What challenges do you face in this work?

One of the biggest challenges is to recognize that people who traffic other people are damaged people. Something has happened in their lives that has made them willing to completely dehumanize another human being and see them as a commodity. When you see the effect on survivors, it’s very difficult to not just want to see something bad happen to the trafficker — to not hate them or demonize them further. That takes a lot of prayer and a lot of community support.

What do you draw on for strength?

The Gospel. That’s the source of our life and the source of our hope. I think once you get into a struggle like this, you hold onto hope and your hope becomes more stubborn. There’s no way you’re going to take hope away. We’re going to be the ones who offer hope to people whose lives have been completely devoid of hope or joy. We see potential, we see possibility in them, we see dignity. We see everything they can be, and we want to make that possible for them.

As a delegate at the Talitha Kum assembly in Rome, you had the opportunity for a papal audience. What messages did the delegates share with Pope Francis, and how did he respond?

We shared with him our priorities — that besides the on-the-ground work of caring for survivors and trying to end the demand, we really feel called to work on the root causes of the demand. He gave us some very nice compliments. He told us that our work was effective and that we were a model for the Church.

We had the opportunity to thank him or to ask his prayers, especially for our network and for our work, but also for our congregations, our families and to change the hearts of the traffickers. Because we know prayer changes hearts. It might be the only thing that can.

If you think someone is being trafficked, or you yourself are at risk, contact the national human trafficking hotline at 1-888-373-7888 or text BeFree (233733) for support or referrals. Both resources are confidential and operated 24/7. Don’t intervene directly, because you may endanger the person who is being trafficked.

To learn more, visit sistersagainsttrafficking.org or polarisproject.org.

To read a longer version of this Q&A, visit alvernomagazine.com/sister-ann.

Meeting Pope Francis was both awesome and humbling, Oestreich reports. She added that the pope truly enjoyed connecting with everyone gathered on an individual basis.
Ready for What’s Next

An Alverno graduate is ready for success, and employers have noticed. They’re hiring our students long before graduation because they know these women have the skills to thrive. Meet just some of the many Alverno students who are hired before graduation.

Alejandra Gonzalez
Class of May 2020
Major: Global studies and international affairs
Job: Lead youth organizer at Voces de la Frontera
“I had a salaried job with benefits before my senior year started. It really is amazing. That’s what you get here at Alverno. You get actual experience that you can apply to your job.”

Hannah Cobb
Class of December 2019
Major: Business and management
Job: Merchandise assistant at Stein’s Garden Centers
“For the past several months of my internship, I had developed not only a familiarity with the company and its functions, but through the initiatives I was involved in and the talks I had with my mentor, I have truly developed a belief in the Stein’s mission, vision and values. I felt welcomed, appreciated and respected. This was my job, because I felt it my duty, my obligation, to contribute to a company I was so passionate about.”

Teresa Lightfoot
Class of December 2019
Major: Integrated studies (psychology and English)
Job: Backup youth and family specialist at Walker’s Point Youth and Family Center
“We serve kids who may have run away from home or been kicked out. The biggest impact I can have is letting them know that they’re not alone. We’re there to support each other. There’s a lot of working in small groups, just like at Alverno. My experience and the 8 Abilities give me confidence to do my job.”

Nancy Sanchez
Class of December 2019
Major: Management accounting
Job: Commercial banking analyst at JPMorgan Chase
“Alverno prepared me to be a successful professional by allowing me to ask questions to really understand the ‘why’ behind things. I also enjoyed attending networking events in which I was able to connect with different kinds of professionals around the city.”

Laura Sierra
Class of December 2019
Major: Management accounting
Job: Audit associate at KPMG
“When I was an intern, I’ve noticed that most students are concerned about having the work experience and technical skills. However, there is a higher demand for people who have a global mindset, are capable of communicating effectively and are open-minded to new strategies for workflow efficiency. Whether social, personal or professional, the 8 Abilities have transformed me into the woman I dreamt I could be.”

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“Giving back to Alverno is an opportunity to help other students receive an education and get closer to achieving their goals. Everyone deserves a chance at becoming their best self, and I am hopeful that my gifts will help them do just that. It is our responsibility to support the next generation of students.”

Yesica Camacho Vasquez ’14

When Yesica graduated from high school, college seemed impossible. She and her family simply couldn’t afford it. Then she received a life-changing phone call: A generous donor was granting her a scholarship to attend Alverno.

Yesica became the first in her family to earn a college degree. Today, she makes dreams come true as a wish coordinator for Make-A-Wish Wisconsin.

As part of Alverno Loyal, she makes dreams come true for students by supporting her alma mater every year.

Give Every Year. Be Alverno Strong Every Day.

Your annual gift empowers more students to fulfill their dreams at Alverno. Make a gift two or more consecutive years and automatically receive Alverno Loyal benefits.

alverno.edu/loyal
SAV E THE DATE!

A L V E R N O  C O L L E G E

April 23–26, 2020

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