

Retirees Association Luncheon Details Inside

Upcoming Events

Sunday, October 15, 2017
Breast Cancer Walk

Location: Flushing Meadows Corona Park
RSVP: Contact the Office of Community Relations at 718-990-1912; communityrelations@stjohns.edu

Saturday, October 21, 2017
Oktoberfest

Location: Plattduetsche Park Restaurant
1132 Hempstead Turnpike
Franklin Square, NY 11010
RSVP: Contact the Office of Alumni Relations at 718-990-6232; alumni@stjohns.edu

Tuesday, October 24, 2017
Annual Salute to Italian Heritage

Location: Marillac Terrace, Queens Campus
RSVP: Contact the Office of Community Relations at 718-990-1912; communityrelations@stjohns.edu

Friday, November 3, 2017
30th Anniversary Jazz Band Concert

Location: The Little Theatre, Queens Campus
RSVP: Contact Ferdinand Motley at 718-990-2973; motleyf@stjohns.edu

Saturday, December 2, 2017
Lessons and Carols

Location: Queens Campus
RSVP: Contact the Office of Alumni Relations at 718-990-6232; alumni@stjohns.edu

Tuesday, December 5, 2017
Winter Carnival

Location: Queens Campus
RSVP: Contact the Office of Alumni Relations at 718-990-6232; alumni@stjohns.edu

Saturday, February 10, 2018
Blessing of the Couples

Location: St. Thomas More Church
Queens Campus
RSVP: Contact the Office of Alumni Relations at 718-990-6232; alumni@stjohns.edu

Save the Date

Saturday, March 17, 2018
St. Patrick's Day Parade

RSVP: Contact the Office of Alumni Relations at 718-990-6232; alumni@stjohns.edu

Friday, June 1–Saturday, June 2, 2018
Grand Alumni Homecoming Weekend

RSVP: Contact the Office of Alumni Relations at 718-990-6232; alumni@stjohns.edu



ST. JOHN'S
UNIVERSITY

RETIREES Association
NEWSLETTER

Volume 14

September 2017

Join Us! Retirees Association Luncheon

Wednesday, November 15, 2017

Mass
12:15 p.m., St. Thomas More Church

Luncheon
1 p.m., D'Angelo Center Ballroom

Student Talent to Shine at Retirees Association Fall Luncheon

By Nigel W. Gretton, Director of Performing Arts



There's a special treat in store for everyone at the upcoming Retirees Association Luncheon on November 15, 2017. Led by Nigel W. Gretton, Director of Performing Arts (Queens campus), St. John's student performers will entertain our guests.

Combining the creative expressions of acting, singing, dancing, and instrumentation, these talented young men and women enjoy many opportunities to inspire and delight audiences, on and off campus. "It's very important for students to have a variety of outlets to express themselves through the creative process," said Mr. Gretton. "It's a learning and growth experience for them, as well as a way to embrace the University's Vincentian mission of service and its core value of love."

Mr. Gretton came to St. John's in 1988, when he heard that the University was about to start a gospel choir and needed a director. Now, nearly three decades later, the dedicated musician and teacher is proud of the joy, hope, and inspiration the talented young singers bring to audiences around the world.

"When Voices of Victory began, it was actually a club with 18 students, under the umbrella of Student Government, Inc." Mr. Gretton noted. "Over the years, the group has been the connection to so many aspects of St. John's, including some fantastic tours

in places like Norway, West Africa, and throughout the United States. We've also performed locally, from small churches close to home to venues such as Carnegie Hall and the Apollo Theater."

Sharing highlights of his work with the group, Mr. Gretton recalled their minitour with recording artist LL Cool J, when they performed back-up vocals for his song "Father Figure." The tour included a televised presentation during the highly acclaimed Showtime at the Apollo.

"I have so many wonderful memories that it's impossible to pinpoint just one," he acknowledged. "Watching the growth of the University's Performing Arts Department—the Chappell Players, Mixed Chorus, Jazz Band, and Voices of Victory—has been an amazing journey."

While gospel music aims to spread the good news, Mr. Gretton said, it also bears witness to those who hear the message in relation to their own lives. "It's the exemplification of God's love," he said, "both by serving the community as well as projecting the universal message that unites us all."

The Voices of Victory and Director Gretton will celebrate their 30th Anniversary on the first Saturday of May 2018. The entire St. John's family is invited to what will surely be a memorable experience.

Office of the Provost

Mentoring Activities Add a Unique Dimension to St. John's

By Robert A. Mangione '77P, '79GP, '93PD, '99Ed.D., Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs



The transition from high school to college is a significant milestone in a young person's life. But for many young people, it also can be a daunting and frequently confusing experience. St. John's University is committed to helping students adjust to their new role through a variety of mentoring opportunities.

Dedicated faculty members, students, and alumni share their

time, talents, and experiences with the goal of guiding students as they make their way into our University community.

A great example of a very successful St. John's mentoring program is the Student and Faculty Engagement (SAFE) program, designed to offer first- and second-year students unique insights into how to be successful at the University. SAFE mentors include extensively trained faculty members, administrators,

and students who meet individually and in groups with our first- and second-year students, lending a helping hand academically, culturally, spiritually, and socially.

The University's mentoring activities also focus on students' lives after graduation. Successful alumni serve as a resource both for current students and new graduates by providing information about internship and employment opportunities. Many graduates report that their careers began through an interaction with an alumnus or alumna who inspired them to follow in their footsteps in a specific field. Of particular note is the Aspire Mentor Program, a year-long, one-on-one initiative in which alumni mentors guide individual students in learning about their industry of interest, develop career competencies, and hone the skills necessary to succeed.

Students also enjoy interacting with alumni at various University events. These informal meetings frequently build into more permanent interactions, ultimately providing a vital connection that paves the way to a great career after graduation.

Office of Human Resources

Open Enrollment for Retirees

By Mirian Cepeda '14CPS, Senior Benefits Representative Employee Benefits



St. John's will hold the Open Enrollment period for retirees from October 1 to 31, which is earlier than last year. As long as you are currently enrolled in medical, dental, and/or life insurance, you can make changes to your existing coverage or elect to enroll in new coverage. Elections made during the Open Enrollment period will be effective January 1, 2018.

The medical plan offered to all retirees is the Oxford Freedom Premier Plan. This is a robust plan offering in- and out-of-network as well as prescription drug coverage. There are two dental plans to choose from—the Cigna Plan or the Aetna DMO Dental Plan. The cost of each plan will be provided to you in the Open Enrollment materials mailed to your home.

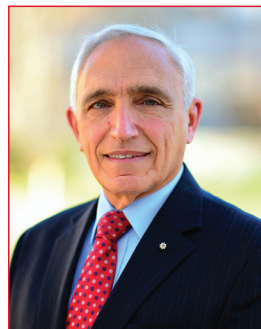
Discovery Benefits, our retiree billing carrier, will adjust your bill for any changes you make. If you currently have automatic payments through Discovery Benefits, the amount of the deduction from your checking account will be adjusted to reflect the changes you make during Open Enrollment.

For more information about Open Enrollment or any of the plans offered to retirees, please contact **Mirian Cepeda** at 718-990-6683, cepedam@stjohns.edu.

Office of Community Relations

St. John's University in the Community

By Joseph Sciame '71Ed, Vice President for Community Relations



Through the efforts of the Office of Community Relations, St. John's has earned praise as one of New York City's top blood donation universities. Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio honored St. John's as the top Catholic college in blood donations. The University also received a platinum award at the New York Blood Center's Annual Long Island Donor Organization's Recognition Event for over 800 pints

of blood donated by our students.

On June 25, the University welcomed the Richmond County Orchestra to the Staten Island campus for a special performance of "Americana! A July 4th Celebration in Song and Dance."

Looking forward to the fall semester, St. John's participates once again in the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk on Sunday, October 15, in Flushing Meadows Corona Park. The University honors our nation's veterans with ceremonies on Thursday, November 9, at the Queens campus, and on Friday, November 10, at the Staten Island campus.

For more information about the Office of Community Relations, please contact **Paul Lazauskas**, Associate Director, at 718-990-1941; lazauskp@stjohns.edu.

Department of Art and Design

The Creative Voice of St. John's University

By Belenna Lauto '81C, Chair, Department of Art and Design



The Department of Art and Design at St. John's aims to inspire creative and critical thinking in the belief that creative thought is the basis for innovation in all fields of study. We provide a rich and challenging educational environment that emphasizes the creation of visually sophisticated works and concurrently develops the whole person: intellectually, ethically, and critically.

This year, the fruits of our labor were showcased in several areas: the renewal of our NASAD accreditation, the Annual BFA Student Exhibition, the Thesis and Senior Exhibition held at Dorsky Curatorial Projects in Long Island City, and our first cohort of graduates from our new MA program in Museum Administration. In addition to these wonderful events that some of you attended, BFA alumnus, Gerald Yarlborough, received the St. John's College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Alumni Award during Grand Alumni Homecoming Weekend on June 3. Like Gerald, many of our BFA and now MA alumni have a vision beyond the scope of making a living in art: they hope to make a difference in the world by sharing their gifts with others. As a department in a Catholic and Vincentian University, we challenge students to become the best version of themselves—not just to make a living, but to make a life. We love to hear that their successes in the arts also foster awareness and hope in the world.

Establish Your Legacy Through THE MCCALLEN SOCIETY

Please consider supporting St. John's endowment by designating your planned gift for scholarships. Your gift will be invested and the earnings will allow financially burdened students to realize their dream of a St. John's University education.



"Students who have financial difficulties tend to suffer in silence and quietly bow out; I know, I could have been one of them. But thanks to people like you, I had a chance to complete my undergraduate degree and start building a career for myself. All I can offer now is my gratitude and a promise to give back to students just like me at this great institution."

—Josh Ossai '17TCB

Retirees Association 2017 Luncheon

