La Roche College recently launched CC Square into the 21st century.

La Roche College President Sister Candace Introcaso said that the Zappala College Center Square, the college’s main gathering space, was in need of a renovation.

She said that other than new carpeting and little projects—such as upgrading the sound system—the area has never gone through such a drastic change since 1987 when it was built.

“I don’t think there was ever a major overhaul as there was this summer,” Sister Candace said.

She added, “The whole project cost $350,000. That includes the contractor’s cost, the furniture and fixtures, and the labor. That’s everything and the design cost.”

She said that the money for the renovation was from the college’s capital expenditures and not a fund raiser. The renovation began in June and was completed in August, Sr. Candace said.

“There were a lot of chipped tiles, the paint was dated—the colors were dated. We’ve been talking about wanting to do something there and planning for it. This was just the right year,” she said. “We worked with a design firm called LGA Partners and they came up with the scheme that you see.”

Before the renovation, Sr. Candace said she noticed how little seating was available to students.

“You just weren’t enough places for people,” she said.

The new CC Square has a lot of places to sit now. There are plenty of seats around the new high top tables and lower tables and there are new comfort chairs, as well.

Sr. Candace said she sometimes sits in the Square and takes it all in and often sees people engaging more in the renovated space.

“I think the furniture is so cool,” President Introcaso said. “They had a Mass in there—Father Peter came back. I sat with one of our former employees; she’s in her 80s so she was sitting in those couches. I sat back there and I loved it! It was so comfortable.”

She continued, “I like everything. I like the bistro tables and the lower tables. I like all the chairs.”

Sr. Candace said that Vice President of Student Life and Dean of Students Colleen Ruefle led the effort for selecting the furniture. However, she said everyone involved in the project had a hand in choosing the tile and wall colors.

“Now we aren’t done, you know” said Sr. Candace. “We want to change out a few things in the Ryan Room. Carrying the carpeting and the paint colors into there. We want to bring that tile and paint color probably into the Redhawk Cafe. And the big thing is to go all the way up the hallway.”

Renovations for these remaining things will be addressed starting next summer, she said.

“The College Center Square isn’t the only area to undergo a renovation. The classroom SCI03 has been under construction since August, Sr. Candace said, and is slated to be finished in November.

“There will be all new furniture and the technology will be much better. There will be a big technology upgrade. If you recall, there were three screens in there. It will be two flat screens basically,” Sr. Candace explained.

She also said that a new ramp will make the classroom wheelchair accessible. The classroom’s lighting will also be updated, she said.

La Roche College’s president of 11 years said she hasn’t been in SCI03 to see the progress but can’t wait to see the outcome.

“We have some grants from foundations and we are still fundraising,” she said. “We’re also fundraising for the top floor of the Science Center. We think that SCI03 is phase one of the Science Center renovation. It’s a major lecture room—not just for the sciences—but for lots of different programs. As I said, we have at least two foundation grants. That helped us pay for the architect.”

Sr. Candace said, “The Ryan Room has become a classroom for part of the time. We had to move everyone out that would usually use SCI03. That means everybody who used the Ryan Room and Fischer Room is being accommodated somewhere else.”

Study Abroad program offers unique opportunity

La Roche College will offer eight Study Abroad/Study USA trips this year, Study Abroad Coordinator Nicole Gable said.

“This year we’re going to Denmark, France, England, China, Cuba, the Galapagos Islands, Italy, Ecuador, and Los Angeles,” Gable said.

La Roche’s Study Abroad/Study USA is a relatively new program.

“The program came into existence six to seven years ago,” Gable said. “We’ve had five successful years of trips. And we’ve received 50 applications in the last week.”

According to Gable, since La Roche’s motto is “Engaging Minds, Embracing the World,” it makes sense that the college offers Study Abroad/Study USA.

Gable said, “Part of the mission statement is global awareness. We want our students to be more globally aware citizens.”

Gable explained the eligibility requirements for the program. “You must be a full time student with at least a 2.0 GPA. You must be in good standing with the school and have completed 60 La Roche credits. Transfer students must pay a fee,” Gable said.

So what majors are most likely to offer trips?

“Design and Marketing offer the most trips,” Gable said. “Interior Design and Graphic Design switch off.”

Gable had advice for students preparing for a trip.

“You have to be in control. You have to be prepared,” Gable said.

“Do your research, get a passport, pack light and for the weather, and wear comfortable shoes. It’s an exciting opportunity for our students. I don’t know any other college that includes trips in the tuition. It encourages a love of travel, and gives students an opportunity they might not have otherwise,” Gable said.

Celeste Reed, a senior majoring in marketing management, described her experience with Study Abroad in March 2015.

“I went on a sports marketing trip to Greece,” Reed said. “It was better than I expected. I was blown away by the beauty of the country and all that I learned.”

Reed had gone abroad previously, but this trip was especially exciting, she said.

“I flew out of the country before since I’ve been to Jamaica, but I’d never sat on a plane for 12 hours,” Reed said.

Once arriving in Greece, Reed said she was pleasantly surprised by how the country didn’t meet her expectations.

“Reed said, “I expected certain things to be beautiful. Athens was very dirty and overcrowded. I didn’t expect to love the mountains and countryside so much.”

She said, “I was most excited about riding a donkey. They’re the only form of transportation on the island of Hydra.”

Reed also had advice for students. “Do your research,” Reed said. “You’ll learn a lot while you’re there, but it’s nice to know what you’re getting into. You’ll be on a bus for hours, you’ll have bad jet lag—but it goes by fast. Take lots of pictures, but also just take it all in.”

Gable agrees. “They’re very memorable. One of the biggest challenges is adapting to a new environment. But it’s important to go outside your comfort zone.”

Students can apply for Study Abroad/Study USA online at laroche.edu under Study Abroad Online Application.
Health & Wellness

A student’s journey with immune disorder

Meet Ian Zacharias

By Sydney Harsh
Associate Editor

Diagnosed in sixth grade, sophomore Ian Zacharias, started his immunoglobulin replacement therapy for primary immuno-deficiency disease, or PIDD, largely because Zacharias was not going to let PIDD stop him from pursuing his goals.

“When I found out that I had PIDD, it was life changing,” Zacharias said. Zacharias said he had some serious illnesses, such as meningitis, when he was younger. He also said a few of those illnesses put him in a coma. However, Zacharias said he didn’t know that this was the beginning stages of a serious disease.

“It was funny because when my parent’s insurance policy changed, Zacharias said, “they forced me to go to a new asthma doctor.” Zacharias said the asthma doctor told him that he should get tested for a new disease that a lot of people are finding out they have.

“I got tested,” Zacharias said. “The results came back positive for this noncontagious disease.” He said the doctors changed everything, including his medications and current treatment.

“Having PIDD isn’t that big of a deal to me,” Zacharias said. “It just means that I have to watch out for getting sick, take care of myself more, make sure I take my medicine, watch out for other people around me who are sick, and wash my hands a lot.”

Zacharias said he has a lot of long term goals ahead of him, so he can’t and won’t let this disease stop him from pursuing those goals.

“I want to finish Physician Assistant school at Duquesne University, work as a PA for a couple of years, then go back to med school somewhere,” Zacharias said. “And then hopefully open up my own practice.”

Zacharias said that he has many other goals that he wants to pursue as well.

A balanced diet: The first step towards a healthy lifestyle

By Mike Weaver
Outdoors correspondent

In a world full of fast food, sugary beverages, and artificial flavorings, many encounter health problems. Because of an unhealthy diet, you may experience high sugar, weight gain, and heart problems. While deciding your next meal, I urge you to consider healthy alternatives.

Fast food and candy provides high calories with little nutritional value. McDonald’s “Big Mac” sandwich contains 540 calories, 29 grams of fat, and 45 grams of carbohydrates. In order to burn off the sandwich alone, over one hour of steady jogging is required.

A typical daily caloric intake, as suggested by the US Department of Agriculture, is roughly 2,100 calories. A meal at McDonalds, including fries and a drink, may be well over half of your suggested caloric intake. The 1,000 calories, in essence, are unhealthy calories full of fat, sugar, and sodium.

Foods and drinks with a high amount of sugar encourage your body to store the excess sugar as fat. Additionally, the more sugar you eat, the more sugar you will crave. For example, a 20-ounce bottle of Mountain Dew contains 77 grams of sugar. This is equivalent to over five tablespoons of pure sugar. Because it creates a craving, soda and other sugar-filled beverages become extremely addicting.

In order to control your health, I suggest three healthy eating habits. First off, avoid anything that is wrapped. Fast Food, candy, and potato chips provide no nutritional benefits. Instead, plan on consuming lean meats and vegetables. Baked chicken and fish, paired with fresh vegetables provide a smaller amount of calories than fast food; however, their nutritional values are much higher than fast food. In addition, sluggish feelings will disappear.

By drinking water only, your health will improve. A suggestion is to drink half of your body weight of water, in ounces. For example I weigh 175 pounds; this would equal almost 9 glasses of water (8 ounces). Drinking water is used by many as a weight-loss strategy; it makes you feel full and may prevent over-eating. Finally, when grocery shopping, evaluate the nutrition labels. Nutritional labels are helpful in providing all of the nutritional information of a product. First and foremost, look at the serving size. Labels may be deceiving in how many servings come in a package. Secondly, evaluate the amount of calories, fat and sodium. If the caloric, fat, or sodium content is above 20%, avoid it. Finally, evaluate the bottom half of the label. Read the vitamin content that the food provides. Supply your kitchen with healthy items based on your readings of the nutritional labels.

Healthy eating is the first step towards living a healthy lifestyle. Avoid eating foods high in fat, such as pizza, fast food, and soda. Provide your body with generous amounts of water, and use caution when grocery shopping. When you combine healthy eating with exercise, you will improve your health.
“Nuances” gives students, faculty chance to share their creative voices

By Lauren Villella

Writers walk among us every day, hidden and obscure, but “Nuances” provides their creative voices and inner visions with an indispensable outlet.

“Nuances” is La Roche College’s online literary journal. It publishes once a year, including this fall 2015, the poetry, works of fiction and, occasionally, creative nonfiction that it receives from not just students, but also faculty, staff and administrators.

“Nuances” has been in existence at La Roche since 1983, and the creative pieces it publishes have been featured solely online since 2002.

“Nuances” is, in essence, an intimate mosaic of voices woven together with creativity and individuality. Its goal is to provide a resource for students and staff to be able to publish their work and gain experience in the editorial process.

At the heart of “Nuances” is a group of faculty advisors and student editors who have the responsibility of selecting which submissions will be featured in the upcoming issue. Dr. Michelle Maher, an English professor at La Roche and faculty advisor for “Nuances,” is always on the lookout for students interested in cultivating their editorial skills.

“Each year we have a different editorial board comprised of students who either volunteer for a position or I recruit them,” she said. “Some of our editors are English majors, but many are not. We welcome writers from all disciplines to serve as editors. We’re always on the lookout for strong readers and writers who want to learn the editorial process and participate.”

While “Nuances” is a literary journal and a great resource for journalism or professional writing majors, the advisors and editors are also interested in pieces from students and staff from a variety of academic departments.

Rita Vinski, a senior majoring in journalism and professional writing, has been an editor for “Nuances” since her junior year. She said she would love to see more diversity in the range of majors of students submitting their work.

“Anyone can write and submit for it; you don’t have to be a writing or literature major/minor to write for it. I feel like that’s who mostly submits pieces and I would love to see other people outside the English department writing and submitting,” Vinski said.

“There is no doubt that “Nuances” has a prime and vital importance to the La Roche community, especially for those specifically interested in the editorial process or having their work published.

Dr. Maher said she thinks that “Nuances” is important to the La Roche community because “it enables our writers to get experience in sending their work out for publication. If our writers also serve as editors, they gain experience in completing tasks necessary to put an online journal together. It’s also good to encourage our writers to risk putting their work out there and sharing their voices with a larger community.”

Vinski said, “Having a way to write creatively is a wonderful way for college students to express themselves.”

She cited the therapeutic benefits of writing creatively as personal motivation to keep her writing.

“I know I’m not the only one that feels that way,” she said. “So being able to express themselves creatively in either fiction or poetry is a wonderful thing.”

This year’s issue of “Nuances” will be published later this fall. Students interested in becoming involved with “Nuances” may contact Dr. Maher at michelle.maher@laroche.edu.

Students respond to campus renovation

By Rita Vinski

Entertainment Editor

With a new school year in session comes some changes at La Roche College.

One change is the renovation of the College Central Square.

The College Central Square (CC Square) is the main area in the Zappala College Center where students go to eat, do homework, relax and spend time with friends.

At the end of 2015-spring semester, the college announced that CC Square would be updated by fall 2015.

During the course of the summer, while students were away, CC Square was given a make-over.

The walls were repainted, new carpeting and flooring was laid, brand new furniture was brought in, and plugs with USB ports were added to the walls.

Over the course of the last few weeks, students took in the new changes and have formed various opinions.

Zach Williams, senior, liked the new modern feel that was added.

“I really like how it is modern,” he explained. “I think that the outlets in the tables and chairs are really cool. It needed the update.”

Rocco Gagliardi, junior, is optimistic about the recent renovations.

“I like it a lot!” he said. “The couches are comfortable and the charging stations are really neat.”

Tia Macerelli, senior, while she felt mediocre about the renovations, enjoyed the new outlets for charging electronics.

“They’re okay I guess. I like that they have more plugs that before; that’s nice,” she said.

While some students were excited for the changes made to CC, others found to be not so fond of them.

Olivia Nogay, senior, at first was excited for the changes to come; however, she wasn’t thrilled about the end result.

“As nice as it looks, because of the renovation, it’s overly crowded now with people always wanting to be in there,” she said. “The more comfortable chairs also don’t have the proper table sizes to sit with.”

Paul McDonald, junior, explained that he didn’t like the lack of seating.

“There could be more tables and chairs,” he explained. “I feel like there was more before the CC renovations honestly. It feels like I’m at Starbucks or something.”

CC Square is one of the many areas that La Roche College plans to update in the future. Others include SC 103 and the second floor of the Science Center.

Currently, SC 103 is being updated to make it user friendly for big lectures and meetings.

Students relaxing in between classes in CC Square. © Rita Vinski

Read more at courier.laroche.edu
LRC welcomes new health science department chair

BY SYDNEY HARSH
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

La Roche College welcomes Dr. Lauren Ameris, Palmer College Graduate of Chiropractic, to the community.

“I am honored and excited to take on the role as Department Chair of Health Sciences this year,” Dr. Ameris said. “I look forward to not only educating students about the health field, but also advising them in their future academic and career goals.”

Dr. Ameris said she received her undergraduate degree, Bachelor of Science in Biology, from the University of Pittsburgh. Then she went to Palmer College Graduate of Chiropractic to get her Doctorate of Chiropractic degree, she said.

Earning her Doctorate was her biggest accomplishment because she said she received it when she was only 25 years old.

Dr. Ameris said she would not have been able to earn her degree without her mother’s encouraging words.

The new department chair looks up to her mother – her hero.

“She is the most selfless human being. She has sacrificed and worked so hard for my family in order for us to have a wonderful life,” she said.

“Before I came to La Roche, I worked at my own practice – Doctor Lauren Ameris Chiropractic. I still work there part time,” Dr. Ameris said.

“I also used to teach at Westmoreland County Community College and Career Training Academy.”

“At my office, I examine and treat patients, handle billing and coding of patient files, and educate patients on the importance of their conditions and health and wellness. At the other schools I taught at, I instructed students in the classroom and advised them.”

Dr. Ameris said she teaches the following health science courses at La Roche: health assessment, special topics in health science: stress management and wellness, and intro to the health professions.

“My first day here at La Roche was wonderful,” Dr. Ameris said joyfully, “I was extremely excited to meet all of my student and start teaching!”

She said she has always been passionate about teaching.

“As soon as I graduated from Palmer, I got involved in teaching,” Dr. Ameris said. “I feel like I know exactly where the students are coming from trying to prepare for graduate school in a health profession. I want to offer all of my help and past experiences to help them accomplish their goals.”

Her favorite thing about her career, Dr. Ameris said, is educating future health professionals about the importance of their future role in the community and sharing with them her past experiences and skills to help better prepare them.

However, she said it’s important to keep motivated.

Dr. Ameris said mentoring others, watching students succeed, and meeting self-goals motivate her to work hard.

Mark Wilcox, Public Safety Director.

La Roche College has recently welcomed a new public safety director. Mark Wilcox’s first day on the job was on September 21st.

“Our La Roche golf outing was my first day. As a golfer I have to admit it was the best day ever,” Wilcox said.

The Edinboro University graduate said his first couple of days on campus have been busy but pleasant.

Wilcox said, “It’s been wonderful. All of the people have been very nice, very helpful, welcoming, so that’s helped out a lot.”

The newly appointed public safety director is not a new face to La Roche College. He was the operations manager for the contract security company that took charge of the security services here at La Roche a few years back, he said.

The McCandless resident added, “When La Roche outsourced their public safety officers I was involved with coming out here and getting together the policies and procedures for all of the new incoming security officers when we took over.”

Wilcox said he has worked with David Hilke, the previous public safety director, and knows many of the security officers.

Wilcox said he started off as a security officer after school and worked his way up to a site supervisor. He then became an operations manager for 9 years. He said every position he has held has prepared him for his new position.

“I think getting to know a lot of different facilities, sites, can tie into those situations is very important,” he said.

He added that he wants to make sure all of the public safety officers know what to do and to educate students on what do during an active shooter situation.

“Just making sure that people are aware of what they need to do in those situations is very important,” he said.

Wilcox plans to be with La Roche College for a long time.

He said, “I have lived in the community for 12 years now. My family is from here. My wife’s family is from here, so I’m not planning on going anywhere.”

Wilcox said, “If anyone wants to stop by, feel free. I’m not saying that I can fix everyone’s problems but I’ll be happy to listen.”

Contact either Sarah Reichle or Megan Poland for more information on writing for the Courier.

Sarah.Reichle@stu.laroche.edu
Megan.Poland@stu.laroche.edu

Are you interested in joining our staff?

The Courier is always looking for new writers and photographers.

Read more at courier.laroche.edu
Laura Whitman promoted to ESL director

By Lainey Standiford

Laura Whitman was recently promoted to the director of ESL at La Roche College. She works extensively within the department; both as director and as a mentor to the students.

How long have you worked here at La Roche?

“I’ve spent 11 years working as an ESL instructor, and one and a half of those have been spent at La Roche. Almost two years.”

Where did you attend school?

“I went to the University of Pittsburgh for my undergrad, and George Washington University for my masters.”

When did you graduate and from where?

“I graduated in 2004 with my masters from G.W.”

What made you choose to work with ESL students?

“For my undergraduate study, I focused on Latin American and multi-cultural studies. I knew that I wanted to be involved with foreign language and international students. I had a family member who worked in ESL and I got the inspiration from her to work with second language learners. She inspired me to help ESL students, and I knew that’s what I wanted to do.”

What’s the most memorable experience you’ve had working as an ESL instructor, either here at La Roche or elsewhere?

“Being invited into students’ homes to live like learning. I had to stay at home for six months.”

What’s your favorite thing about your job?

“The students! Obviously the students.”

What are some of the responsibilities as the director of ESL?

“I manage the planning and activities of a four level program involving up to 20 teachers and between 100-150 students! Basically, I run the day-to-day operations and keep things running as smoothly as possible.”

What do you enjoy doing outside work?

“I love to help individuals, so when I see or hear about a student’s success story it continues to motivate me to help. Help people be successful, even graduate college. Success stories are definitely my motivation.”

If you could leave one impact on LRC’s community, what do you want it to be?

“That teaching strategies that work in an ESL classroom can one day work in all classrooms. That second language learning won’t stop after someone leaves school. That the learning continues throughout their whole life.”
Pirates
LRC takes students out to the ball game

Top left: students enjoying La Roche College night at PNC
Bottom left: the backdrop of PNC Park
Right: the back of a La Roche College Pirates hat

Here is tonight's starting lineup...

Brought to you by Sarah Reichle and Megan Poland

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Year/ Position</th>
<th>Favorite Player(s)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nicole Linkes</td>
<td>Crim &amp; Pysch</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Andrew McCutchen</td>
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<td>Brandon Rodriguez</td>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Jordy Mercer</td>
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<td>Erin Parkinson</td>
<td>Psychology</td>
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<td>Jeff Locke</td>
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<td>Dr. Azlan Tajuddin</td>
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<td>Cervelli &amp; Kang</td>
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<td>Andres Ortiz</td>
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<td>Dennis Riosa</td>
<td>International Management</td>
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<td>Francisco Cervelli</td>
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Meet Ian Zacharias, continued from page 2

Ian Zacharias standing next to the Stanley Cup. © SYDNEY HARSH

"PIDD never gets in the way of me refereeing. It just makes it a little bit harder," Zacharias said. "If I had a bad treatment, meaning the treatment was really painful and tiring, it can affect me during the weekend, especially if I have to leave Thursday night to get there for a Friday game." Zacharias said that he has learned how to deal with the side effects of PIDD treatment.

"After I do my treatment, I just tell myself to be 10 times nicer than I usually am because you are just automatically angry after the treatment," Zacharias said.

Refereeing is an amazing opportunity, Zacharias said, because he gets to meet new people.

"With my PA program, I've skated with so many guys that all have different occupations. Refereeing isn't their sole job," he said. "They have other jobs, and it's just funny because we have all these different people with different job, but when it comes to Friday night we forget our day jobs to referee hockey. It's really cool."

Zacharias said those guys are more than supportive when it comes to encouraging him to pursue his goals and overcome PIDD.

"They tell me all the time what's to come in my future, and what to focus on and what not to focus on," Zacharias said.

It was challenging for Zacharias to deal with PIDD in high school because he said he had to go to treatment every Wednesday. Zacharias said the treatment was a four hour long process, which made it extremely difficult for him to learn in high school.

"With the treatment I was receiving in high school," Zacharias said, "there was always a chance that I could get a reaction."

He said his windpipe could close up anytime during the treatment. For that reason, Zacharias said, it was crucial for him to do the treatment while the treatment center was open, which was the hardest part for Zacharias.

"However, they just came out with a new type of medicine and treatment where I only have to do a treatment once a month, as opposed to doing a treatment every week," Zacharias said.

He said the new treatment center was open 24/7 and has nurses there all the time.

"And the best part is, is that it's open 24/7 and has nurses there all the time," Zacharias said.

"It takes 600 people to donate blood to fill one vial," Zacharias said, "so that's 1,200 people donating blood every month to help keep me healthy and alive."

It's simple for Zacharias to receive this new treatment he said.

"After everything that they do with the donor's blood, all I have to do is put a needle into my stomach for about two and a half hours," he said.

"It's an amazing injection. Zacharias said, meaning the medicine will go straight into his tissue.

Zacharias said he hopes that people continue to find new treatments for PIDD because it allows people with PIDD to manage the disease in a more efficient way.

"I can't wait to see what the future has in store for me," Zacharias said, "and I will never let primary immunodeficiency disease stop me from accomplishing my goals."

Student wins AAUW Sister Matilda Kelly Incentive Grant
Michelle Draskovich, senior, is the 2015-16 winner.

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) advances equity for women and girls through advocacy, education, philanthropy, and research. The North Hills-McKnight Branch of AAUW annually awards a La Roche College junior or senior female student a grant in an effort to encourage women to complete their undergraduate education.

This year, the winner of the Sister Matilda Kelly Incentive Grant for $2000 is Michelle (Shelley) Draskovich of Gibsonia, PA. Michelle is currently a senior at La Roche and is majoring in International Management with a minor in International Affairs. She hopes to volunteer abroad and help empower women by teaching them sustainable business skills. Eventually her plans are to return to La Roche College and earn a graduate degree. Congratulations, Michelle!