

BOLD

WINTER 2016



THE *Marvellous* MERCATO

TIM D'SOUZA SERVES UP DELICIOUS
DISHES AND EXPERIENCES

"M'm M'm, Good!"

LEANNE BLOMMAERT '94
LOVES CREATING NEW
DISHES AT CAMPBELL'S

Learning From Experience

THE PRECEPTOR EFFECT



MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Ready for a Challenge

A Message from Dr. Susan Mumm

In September at a fundraiser for the London Food Bank, a member of the media challenged me to an arm-wrestle. No, I didn't win, but I lasted quite a while and then decided to lose gracefully. Next time, I'll do some weight training before I go!

I hope that is a sort of metaphor for the rest of my job. I'm always ready to take on a challenge. I give it my all. And I try to be prepared.

Apart from feats of strength, one of the things I've enjoyed about my first 90 days in the job is interacting with students. I take the bus to work, so I have a great opportunity for informal conversations and even a bit of eavesdropping. I hear about the student experience on the frontlines, something I would recommend to any university leader.

Another pleasure is getting to know the team of people around me. I've always felt that when most of the people in the room are smarter than me, I'm in a good place. At Brescia, I'm in a good place.

I've come to the University at a very exciting time. We're launching our Brescia Competencies – not just as an "add-on" but as the foundation of a new approach to curriculum development. I'm thrilled that our Competencies focus not only on hard skills, but also on the ethical and moral dimensions. That's a critical part of our responsibility as educators, and one that sets Brescia apart.

Moving forward, we will be working to implement the ambitious and creative five-year strategic plan devised by our Board of Trustees. We have a clear vision of the future we aspire to, and now are developing a plan to get there.

We will be looking closely at what it means to be a Catholic university and Canada's women's university. Our Ursuline founders gave us both those characteristics, which are central to our identity. Although I don't see Sisters on campus every day, I see them in my mind's eye, walking the corridors, tending the pigs and vegetable garden and lending their courage, dignity and faith to everything we do. What we are and will be is because of what they were and are. ■

BOLD

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NEWS COVER STORY STUDENTS & FACULTY COMMUNITY ALUMNAE

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Editor: Colleen Aguilar
Editorial Consultant and Writer:
Pat Morden
Cover Photo: Caitlin Core
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BRESCIA NEWS

VIEW FROM THE HILL



New Principal Keeps the Focus on Students

In an inspiring break from tradition, Dr. Susan Mumm chose to skip the formal Principal's installation ceremony and direct the cost savings to create new student awards.

"Our vision centres on our students graduating as women leaders who contribute actively and positively to society," said Mumm in explaining the decision. "We know that 46% of our students receive some form of financial support funded by Brescia and I want to ensure the focus continues to be about our students and their success."

The cost savings are estimated at \$25,000, and Mumm has challenged Brescia supporters to match the contribution, creating a new \$50,000 student award fund. For more information, contact Cathy Vitkauskas at 519.432.8353 ext. 28298 or to make a gift, visit brescia.uwo.ca/give.



Girls LEAD Camps Continue to Thrive

For the ninth year, Brescia University College held its summer day camp, Girls LEAD (Leadership, Education and Development), for girls in Grades 3 through 6.

The six two-week sessions focused on promoting healthy self-awareness and a positive body image, and developing social skills, self-discovery and self-esteem. Campers made their own lunches in the Brescia food lab under the guidance of Foods & Nutrition students.

Visitors to the camp included corporate, political and sport leaders like Jessica Zelinka, Olympian, and top Canadian track athlete. "Every athlete you watch at the Olympics is feeling nervous and scared," she said. "And that's okay!"

Samantha Hayes, Girls LEAD Program Coordinator says, "Having the opportunity to see and interact with all these professionals gave campers the empowerment and knowledge that 'I could totally do that job!'"



Homecoming

More than 100 alumnae returned to campus to celebrate Homecoming Weekend on October 1 and 2. They participated in campus tours, an open house and brunch, an intriguing lecture by Professor Jamie Seabrook entitled *Smart Moms, Smart Kids – The Effects of Family Structure & Education*, the traditional football game, the special Homecoming Mass and the Principal's Reception and Reunion Luncheon.

During the weekend, two alumnae were recognized for their achievements.

CARMELLE MURPHY ALUMNAE AWARD OF DISTINCTION

Wilma de Rond '81 retired as Director of Education of the London District Catholic School Board in 2013, and currently serves as Executive Director of WIL Employment Connections. de Rond has lent her talents to many organizations, including the United Way of London and Middlesex, Junior Achievement and St. Peter's Seminary.

SISTER MARY LOU MCKENZIE YOUNG ALUMNAE AWARD OF MERIT

After Brescia, Dr. Sara Dungavell '06 completed medical school and trained as a psychiatrist. She has been providing psychiatric services to young adults and those living in remote Northern communities in Saskatchewan, and recently began working with the LGBTQ community in Saskatoon. ■



PICTURED ABOVE Award winners Wilma de Rond and Dr. Sara Dungavell

NEWS

NEWS

Foundress Day Celebrated

It brings the past and future together. Foundress Day, celebrated on September 6 this year, officially welcomed first-year students, while paying tribute to the University's Foundress, Mother Clare Gaukler. Mother Clare played a key role in the establishment of Brescia nearly one hundred years ago.

On the Day, students, faculty, staff and upper year students gathered outside the St. James Building to cheer the Class of 2020 as they processed from the Mercato. The official ceremony included remarks from Principal Dr. Susan Mumm, Sister Kathleen O'Mara, and alumna Cristina Palombo. Sister Theresa Mahoney gave the blessing, walked the students through the meaning behind the Brescia crest and led the new students in the reciting of the Brescia Pledge.



PICTURED LEFT
Dr. Susan Mumm, Cathy Vitkauskas, Sister Kathleen O'Mara, Cristina Palombo, Dr. Donna Rogers

Just Own It Boot Camps Foster Entrepreneurship

For the second year, Professors Colleen Sharen and Melissa Jean organized the unique *Just Own It* Boot Camps, designed to expose high school girls to the opportunities and challenges of entrepreneurship. Three sessions were offered in May and June.

During the camp, participants were put into teams of three and had four days to generate and assess a business idea, before presenting it to a panel of local entrepreneurs. Along the way they were exposed to many aspects of running a business, including business models, financial management, product prototyping and pitching an idea.

Research conducted by Sharen during the 2015 events found that they increased participants' entrepreneurial knowledge and confidence. Natalie Thuss, a 2016 participant, summed up her experience: "It's really been eye-opening to see the different aspects of being an entrepreneur and to learn all the aspects that go into making a company."



THE Marvellous MERCATO



Food Services Manager Tim D'Souza brings his creativity and business acumen to Brescia and the results are delicious!

“

I READ ABOUT FOOD EVERY DAY – IT'S AN OBSESSION. I REALIZED THAT I'D NEVER DONE ANYTHING THIS BIG BEFORE, SO I WAS INTRIGUED.

Tim D'Souza is not your typical cafeteria manager. But then the Mercato is not your typical cafeteria. As second-year student Rachel Ogilvie puts it, "It's like walking into a restaurant every day."

That's not surprising, given D'Souza's background. The son of an Indian father and a mother from Labrador, he grew up in a household where food was a big part of family life. As a school kid, he got up early and made breakfast for the family. On Fridays he often prepared his mother's recipe for fish cakes, so dinner was waiting when she got home from work.

He studied history in university, but spent a lot of time finding and experimenting with new recipes. His friends were often treated to elaborate themed dinner parties. After his degree he trained at George Brown College in Toronto and then worked at Michelin-starred restaurants in Italy and England. He returned to Toronto and made a name for himself at several high-end restaurants. His mentor was Chef Nigel Didcock, Executive Chef at the Sutton Place Hotel and later the Granite Club. "He taught me that wherever you go and whatever you do, you have to keep building every day," says D'Souza. "Improvement won't happen overnight, but if you keep raising the standards, you'll get there."

D'Souza carried those wise words with him when he joined a struggling roadhouse in Thornbury, Ontario. He turned it into a foodie destination, earning a rave review from Toronto Life Magazine. Wanting his daughter to grow up close to her grandparents, he relocated to London and became Executive Chef at The Idlewyld Inn & Spa, a boutique hotel in London's south end. He was exploring the possibility of opening his own restaurant when he saw that Brescia was advertising for a food service manager. Curious, he applied. During the interview he displayed both his passion for food and his understanding of the realities of the food business. "I read about

food every day – it's an obsession," he says. "I realized that I'd never done anything this big before, so I was intrigued."

D'Souza thrives on the challenges of the university environment. "We have to provide value for our students," he says. "I can't offer a \$16 main course here, but I come from a background where \$42 mains weren't out of the ordinary. At the same time, you don't want to give up on being creative and introducing new flavours." The Mercato features a global section with 40 dishes offered on a revolving basis. The pasta, pierogi and mac-and-cheese bars are perennial favourites. D'Souza and his staff also offer carefully-prepared gluten-free, dairy-free, vegan, vegetarian and Halal options. He admits that the kitchen is equipped with a deep fryer: "Sometimes students want French fries or chicken fingers!"

Ottawa native Ogilvie doesn't get home often, so she eats most of her meals at the Mercato. "You know you're getting really high quality food, and they'll help you find anything you need," she says. "It's clean and the staff are friendly. It's a very nice overall feel." She admits the pasta bar is her favourite, especially the stuffed cheese pasta, but says there are always a variety of healthy foods. "You go into Foods class and learn about all the right foods to eat, and then you know you can go into the Mercato and get those foods." ■

↓ PICTURED BELOW
Tim D'Souza and some of the team from The Mercato





FACULTY

FACULTY

LEAVING A LEGACY



Passing of the Torch

PICTURED ABOVE
Dr. Alicia Garcia &
Dr. Paula Dworatzek

The current and former Chairs of the School of Food & Nutritional Sciences share how their own experiences have contributed to the growth and evolution of the program.

“I love interacting with students, knowing they will become my future colleagues. It’s very gratifying to know that somehow you had a hand in their growth and career development.”

That’s Dr. Alicia Garcia, who stepped down as the Chair of Food & Nutritional Sciences in July, after 11 years in the demanding role. Dr. Paula Dworatzek, a Brescia graduate, has stepped into the job. Garcia leaves a remarkable legacy. Under her leadership the number of students in Foods & Nutrition grew from 200 to nearly 600, and the number of full-time faculty doubled. The Master’s program, the Diploma in Dietetic Education and Practical Training and a variety of international exchange programs were also introduced under Garcia. She oversaw several successful accreditation processes.

Garcia is also a prolific researcher. Her work focuses on how elderly immigrants adapt to Canada in terms of social functioning, physical activity and eating patterns. She is now on sabbatical leave.

Dr. Paula Dworatzek has experience as a community dietitian, and did a stint as Director of Research Programs at the Canadian Diabetes Association before joining Brescia’s faculty. *BOLD* had an opportunity to speak to her in late August.

WHAT ARE YOUR HOPES FOR THE FUTURE OF FOODS & NUTRITION?

I hope we can continue to produce excellent graduates who are respected in our discipline. We’ve grown very quickly over the past 10 years, so we will continue to work together to ensure that we are offering outstanding courses, and continued experiential learning and leadership opportunities for students. I’m also hoping that we will be able to update our facilities and create a state-of-the-art food lab. Ultimately I’d really like to see our graduate program grow to include a doctoral degree.

WHY NUTRITION?

I had a high school Home Economics teacher who was very influential. When we started learning about vitamins and minerals and their roles in the body, I was fascinated. I started university in Engineering but knew in my heart that nutrition was the subject that drew my interest.

TELL ME ABOUT YOUR CURRENT RESEARCH.

The balanced school day is a new schedule where students have two longer breaks, each with time to eat, rather than one long break and two short recesses. My premise was that if the food in packed lunches is unhealthy, then eating twice during the school day might not be a good thing. We found that kids on a balanced school schedule had more sugar-sweetened beverages and snacks than kids on the traditional schedule. Going forward, we need to educate parents about preparing healthy packed lunches.

WHY WERE YOU INTERESTED IN BEING CHAIR?

I love change. I like trying new things and thinking strategically about the future. I tend to get a grasp on situations quickly and see how to improve things. And I wanted to represent the faculty members in nutrition, to ensure that we are working together to serve the growing student body and find new ways of doing things.

WHAT ARE THE STRENGTHS OF THE FOODS AND NUTRITION PROGRAM?

The faculty and staff. They go above and beyond the call of duty to assist students in realizing their vision to get a degree and pursue work in the field. We have many extracurricular, experiential learning and leadership opportunities for students. Another strength is our growing research productivity, the result of having a graduate program. Lastly, our students and their diversity are a tremendous strength for us.

WHAT DO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY EAT?

Lots of different things — we rarely repeat the same meal over two or three weeks. One of my favourite weeknight dishes is spaghetti al tuno. I use a good quality jar of spaghetti sauce with a can of solid tuna, some capers, peas, and roasted red peppers. It takes 10 minutes to make, and it’s very good. ■



M'im M'im, GOOD!

Leanne Blommaert '94 used her Brescia education as a spring board to her dream job



"I'm lucky enough to have the opportunity to influence what people eat. I can go into a restaurant anywhere in Canada and say, 'Wow, I had a hand in making that!' That makes me feel really good."

That's Leanne Blommaert '94, talking about her job as Senior Research Technologist with Campbell Company of Canada.

Blommaert grew up in the small town of Delhi, Ontario, surrounded by farmland. "I got my first work experience doing really dirty jobs on farms." Her parents had a two-acre garden, and Blommaert loved cooking with the fresh produce.

When it came time for university, she followed in her sister's footsteps to Brescia. "It was a community, and coming from a small town that's what I needed," she says. "The residence experience was great and the faculty were very approachable."

After a general first year, she realized she had to choose a major. She considered many possibilities, but in the end decided to try the Foods & Nutrition program for one year. "I liked the idea of wearing a white coat and working in a hospital," she says with a laugh. The moment she stepped into the food lab, she knew she had made the right decision.

In addition to the academic learning, Blommaert says her time at Brescia helped her develop life skills she still uses. "I got comfortable speaking up with my own opinion and I learned that it was okay to have a different opinion from everyone else," she says. "I also learned how to really listen."

When she graduated, Blommaert took a temporary job in quality assurance with Good Humour Breyers. It was there that she first became interested in food research and development. "My degree got me in the door," she says. "I knew I didn't have the experience for R&D right away, but I did have hands-on experience in food and chemistry labs. It wasn't too hard to take it from there."

Next she worked at Richardson Foods Limited, a maker of wet sauces and salad dressings. "My family was very disappointed – they like ice cream better than salad dressing!" Her role was quality assurance, and this time she worked right on the plant floor, testing and adjusting batches to ensure consistency. Then it was off to Cuddy Foods, a turkey processor, where she started off in quality assurance but eventually moved into an R&D role. Her work involved helping to develop private label products for stores like Loblaw.

Since 2002, Blommaert has worked at Campbell Company of Canada. Blommaert's focus is on the Food Service division, working with some of Canada's largest food service companies to develop soups and entrées. A specialized healthcare line includes texture-modified and low-fat, low sodium options.

Blommaert does her best to encourage commercial clients to offer better nutrition. "We gently influence," she says. "I'm pretty passionate about that. If someone is launching a soup, it doesn't need to have 1300 mg of sodium in it. I'm doing my part to bring down the amount of salt and still make really good food."

Blommaert and her husband live on a one-acre property north of Burlington — what she calls her "country in the city." Despite vowing as a child to 'someday buy my food at a grocery store,' she has a large garden, and cans, preserves or freezes whatever she can.

Although she enjoys the strategic aspect of her work, Blommaert has no interest in moving from the frontlines to the board room. "I don't want to step away from getting my hands dirty," she says. "I have no desire to wear high heels every day — I'm comfortable in a lab coat and safety shoes!"

Her advice to recent and soon-to-be Brescia graduates? "If you want it, go after it, but don't expect it to happen overnight. Make the plan, work the plan and it will happen." ■

LEANNE'S SMOKED SALSA

YIELD: ABOUT 11 CUPS

If you don't have a smoker, you can still get a nice smoky flavor using your BBQ. Soak wood chips in warm water for one hour. Drain well. Place chips in a disposable aluminum pan directly over flames (or over lava rocks if they are part of the grill's design). Allow chips to begin smoking, then smoke the vegetables.

- 9 cups Roma tomatoes
- 3 mild chili peppers
- 3 – 9 jalapeno peppers
- Use 3 for mild salsa and increase to taste preference – I use about 7.*
- 1 large Spanish onion
- 1 large green bell pepper
- 1 large red bell pepper
- 5 ½ oz tomato paste (1 can)
- ¾ cup white vinegar
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 1 Tbsp pickling salt
- 2 tsp smoked paprika
- 2 large cloves garlic, minced
- Fresh cilantro, to taste (optional)

1. To Prepare Vegetables: Peel tomatoes and cut in half lengthwise. Cut peppers in half lengthwise and remove stems and seeds. Slice onion into ½-inch thick slices.
2. To Smoke Vegetables: Prepare smoker or barbecue (medium-high heat). Arrange hickory chips in foil pan; place directly atop coals. Allow chips to begin smoking, about 10 minutes. Turn off the side of the grill that does not have the pan with the wood chips on it. Place vegetables in a single layer on cool grill. Smoke for approximately 30 minutes.
3. After smoking, coarsely chop tomatoes (9 cups total), chili peppers, jalapenos, onion, and bell peppers. Add vegetables to large non-reactive pot. Add tomato paste, white vinegar, brown sugar, pickling salt, smoked paprika and minced garlic to vegetables in pot and stir to combine.
4. Bring mixture to a boil, uncovered, over medium heat. Stir occasionally. Boil gently about 1 hour, until thickened to desired consistency. Add fresh cilantro, if desired, at end of cooking process and stir well to mix. If salsa is not thick enough, add a flour/water combination (1 part water to 2 parts flour) and return to a boil.
5. While salsa is cooking, prepare boiling water canner. Heat jars in simmering water until ready for use. Do not boil. Wash lids in warm soapy water and set bands aside. Heat lids in a pot of hot (not boiling) water.
6. Ladle hot salsa into sterilized jars, leaving ½-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles and re-measure headspace. If needed, add more salsa to meet recommended headspace. Wipe rim. Center lid on jar. Apply band and adjust until fit is fingertip tight.
7. Process filled jars in a boiling water canner for 20 minutes. Remove jars from canner and cool. Check lids for seal after 24 hours. Lid should not flex up and down when center is pressed.



PICTURED ABOVE
Heather Thomas '93

GIVING BACK THROUGH MENTORSHIP

Sharing Life Lessons

Brescia Alumnae help to shape the next generation of dietitians by acting as preceptors

When Heather Thomas '93 was a student at Brescia, her preceptor taught her an important lesson. "She said it was always important to give back to the students, and to inspire future RDs." Once she was established in her profession, Thomas, like many other Brescia alumnae, became a preceptor herself. For the past 20 years she has given generously of her time, knowledge and experience. Says Caroline Lawrance '13, who interned with Thomas and now works at the University of Ottawa Heart Institute, "My year with Heather had a huge impact on my academic learning, and on my personal and professional life."

Thomas didn't start out with a burning interest in nutrition. After a year in general science at Western, she found herself paging through the course calendar, looking for a program to pursue. "I literally went through the calendar page by page. I got to the back where the affiliated colleges were and thought I was running out of space...and then I came across the Foods & Nutrition program at Brescia."

It was a perfect fit. Thomas thrived in the program, and spent the summer helping two professors with their research. After graduation she moved to Ottawa to intern, and then worked with the Canadian Produce Marketing Association. When a position in community nutrition became available at the Middlesex-London Health Unit, she jumped at it. She now works in the chronic disease prevention and tobacco control area of the Unit.

In 2006, Thomas ran into a former academic advisor at a meeting. They began talking about Thomas's work, and the advisor suggested that she do a Masters degree. At first, Thomas resisted: she had a full-time job and two young children. But one thing led to another, and Thomas ended up completing both a Masters and a PhD. "I look back now and shake my head! It was hard, but it worked for me."

Thomas's thesis focused on food literacy programs for high-risk youth. She has continued to pursue the interest through her professional work and research. She often visits group homes, working alongside two or three residents to prepare the evening meal for everyone. "These kids have so much going on, but cooking levels the playing field for them. It helps them build skills and feel good about themselves. It's calming, creative and meaningful." She is involved in a collaborative research project to develop a measurement tool for assessing food literacy.

Lawrance's route to nutrition was equally circuitous. After a first degree in neuroscience, she spent a year working as a medical assistant in a primary care clinic, often interacting with children and adolescents who were overweight and suffered from conditions like hypertension and diabetes. "I'd never really thought about nutrition until that point," she says. "But it became blatantly obvious that something was going wrong in healthcare in terms of prevention."

“

THESE KIDS HAVE SO MUCH GOING ON, BUT COOKING LEVELS THE PLAYING FIELD FOR THEM. IT HELPS THEM BUILD SKILLS AND FEEL GOOD ABOUT THEMSELVES.

She chose to study Foods & Nutrition at Brescia. In her final year, she approached Thomas about supervising an independent practicum that aligned with her interests. Thomas agreed, and helped her connect with other dietitians for a variety of placements. Her approach had an enormous impact on Lawrance. "Heather is so honest and direct," says Lawrance. "She's very confident in herself and her abilities, and she helped me to develop confidence in myself." Lawrance is now working with a smoking cessation program that focuses on changing practice in primary care clinics across Ontario. In future she hopes to get more involved in research.

Now expecting her first child, Lawrance says that Thomas continues to be both a support and an inspiration. "I still refer to her as my mentor. She has an amazing career, and she is also an amazing mother, partner and friend — and that's what I've always aspired to." ■

PICTURED RIGHT
Caroline Lawrance '13



Different Perspectives

Aneesa Malik, BSc '17 says her time at Brescia has broadened her horizons

Perhaps it was inevitable. Aneesa Malik grew up and went to school in north London, within walking distance of Brescia. Her aunt graduated in Foods & Nutrition at Brescia and became a dietitian. Her father taught her self-discipline and the time management skills that she still uses. Her mother reminded her to take care of herself.

But Malik is much more than the sum of her influences. She chose Foods & Nutrition at Brescia after careful research and consideration. "I looked into everything, even checking descriptions of the courses I would be taking," she says. "There were so many different subjects involved, from organic chemistry and business to psychology and physiology. It seemed to be a truly holistic approach, in preparation for a truly holistic career."

As a student, Malik soon found there was lots to love about Brescia. "The small classrooms make it an intimate environment, and there's so much to get involved in," she says. "You always have familiar faces around."

As a soph student leader for the past three years, Malik has had many opportunities to share her enthusiasm with future students. She also volunteers as a dietitian assistant with the specialized geriatrics team at Parkwood Hospital. In addition, she has a part-time job with Yurek Home Healthcare, where she is learning about enteral feeding and ostomy care.

And this year, Malik is working on a special project: organizing and promoting Research Ready at Brescia. Research Ready is a series of lectures by Assistant Professor Jamie Seabrook designed to teach students how to critically appraise scholarly articles. "Research Ready involves using data to produce information," explains Malik. "But not all research is good quality and some studies can be biased, leading us to draw false conclusions." She hopes that many students will take advantage of this unique opportunity to learn.

As she begins her final year, Malik reflects on how her time at Brescia has changed her. "I've gained a lot of different perspectives on life, and really broadened my horizons. I've learned that you have to make time for the people and things that make you happy, but you also have to work hard." Malik hopes to eventually pursue an internship or Masters degree, and her ultimate goal is to work in neonatal care at a hospital.

Malik has wise advice for the incoming Brescia students she is supporting as a Soph. "There will be times when you feel like you can't study for five exams at once, or finish all your group projects. I've learned that you have to plan ahead. And remember, there is always light at the end of the tunnel!" ■



Helping Women Reach Their Potential

Brenda Walton
Board of Trustees
Chair, Finance Committee

Born in a small town east of Toronto, Brenda Walton received her BA in Economics from Western and then qualified as a Certified Management Accountant. After working in Toronto for several years, she and her husband and two small children moved back to London in 2001 where she joined Davis Martindale Chartered Accountants and became a partner in 2005. A member of the Brescia Foundation Board from 2013 to 2014, she joined the Board of Trustees in 2014. She runs a successful accounting and tax practice, is an avid nature photographer (500 followers on Instagram!) and is a dedicated yoga practitioner.

WHY DID YOU GET INVOLVED IN BRESCIA?

I'm passionate about helping young women. I'm concerned about the barrage of stereotypes and one-dimensional images that young women are subjected to every day, in movies, television, magazines, music and social media and how that translates into how they think and feel about themselves. I think there needs to be a strong counter-balance to these influences, and I want to be part of that counter-balance.

I'm also interested in leadership styles. There's a different way to lead from the one we typically see in corporate leadership, and Brescia really embraces that other leadership approach. The Bold campaign caught my eye too — I felt instant alignment with that message!

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH AS CHAIR OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE?

Numbers create a story — what's happened in the past and what's going to happen in the future. My goal is to make that story accessible to those who don't deal with numbers every day. It's the same thing I do with my clients.

WHAT ARE YOUR HOPES FOR BRESCIA?

There's a lot of change happening in the post-secondary world. I hope Brescia continues to recognize, adapt and get ahead of those changes, and seize the opportunity to stand out from the crowd. At the same time, I hope Brescia is able to hold on to all that makes it unique, because the world needs Brescia graduates! ■

DONOR PROFILE

Students Give Back

A \$100,000 contribution gives new life to three University spaces

Caitie Cheeseman, President of the Brescia University College Students' Council in 2015–2016, says the Council is very “logical” in what it decides to support. “We want to make sure that every single dollar spent directly impacts the student experience,” she says.

That’s why the Council has contributed \$100,000 to refurbish three spaces — the Merici Lounge, the Ursuline Hall Formal Living Room (now known as the Ursuline Hall Lounge) and the Rose Room — to make them more useable and student-friendly. “The feedback we hear is that students need more spaces, not necessarily to study but to relax between classes, or to have group meetings,” says Cheeseman. “I think these great new spaces will have a positive impact on the student experience.”

PICTURED BELOW
Merici Lounge



PICTURED RIGHT
Ursuline Hall Lounge



All of the rooms got a makeover that included new furniture and paint. A wall was added to the Ursuline Hall Lounge to make it into a separate space instead of being used as a pass through to the Marie Rosier Wing.

The Rose Room was updated, with new chairs, seating and window coverings, while maintaining its historical character. “The Rose Room has always been an important and special place at Brescia as it honours our Ursuline heritage,” says Cathy Vitkauskas, Vice-Principal Advancement. “We are delighted that we have been able to restore this beautiful room to make it more functional while paying tribute through an Ursuline history wall.” Vitkauskas adds, “A few of the larger antique pieces have been refinished and will remain in the Rose Room and the other antiques and artifacts purchased or donated over the years have been safely stored until a masterplan is developed for Ursuline Hall.”

She says the University is very grateful to the Council and Brescia students for their generous gift. “It’s wonderful to see today’s students leaving a legacy for future students.” ■



LOOKING BACK

The Way We Were, Part Two

In 2019, Brescia University College will celebrate its Centenary. In the lead-up to the celebration of this important milestone, *BOLD* Magazine is presenting a series of articles about our history and the Ursuline tradition. In the second installment, we learn more about the building of Ursuline Hall.

Although Brescia and Western University both got their start in buildings in central London, the plan was always to develop a campus at the north end of the city, in what was farmland at the time. After the affiliation agreement with Western was signed in late 1919, the Ursulines moved quickly to buy land near the University’s future site — 40 acres near the corner of Western Road and Sarnia Gravel Road. Then came a long waiting period as Western lobbied the City to pass a bylaw supporting the new campus. The bylaw was passed in 1923, and construction of Brescia Hall, now known as Ursuline Hall, began immediately.

That year, the Order purchased a farm beside the existing land, paying \$18,000 for 48 acres. Sister Theresa Mahoney notes that the Order continued to farm the land for many years. “We used to say jokingly that the highest point in London — which is what our land is — was a pigsty, because we had a barn and raised pigs!”

The Sisters sold off pigs to purchase needed supplies. They picked fruit and vegetables, and canned whatever they could to provide for the students. Says Sister Theresa, “When I was a very young Sister at Brescia, there would be an announcement saying the beans were ripe, and we’d all go out and pick the beans for dinner or canning.”

Architects Pennington and Boyde of Windsor were retained to design a grand four-storey stone building in the Gothic style. “It was in keeping with the style of buildings on the Western campus, at Huron and at the Seminary,” says Sister Theresa. “In those days, if you were going to build a grand building, stone and Gothic is how you did it.”

The building cost \$228,000 — about \$3.5 million in today’s dollars — to construct, and the cost was bequeathed by Mrs. Josephine

Gaukler, mother of the Superior General, Mother Clare. Mother Clare’s brother, Francis, provided \$25,000 toward furnishings.

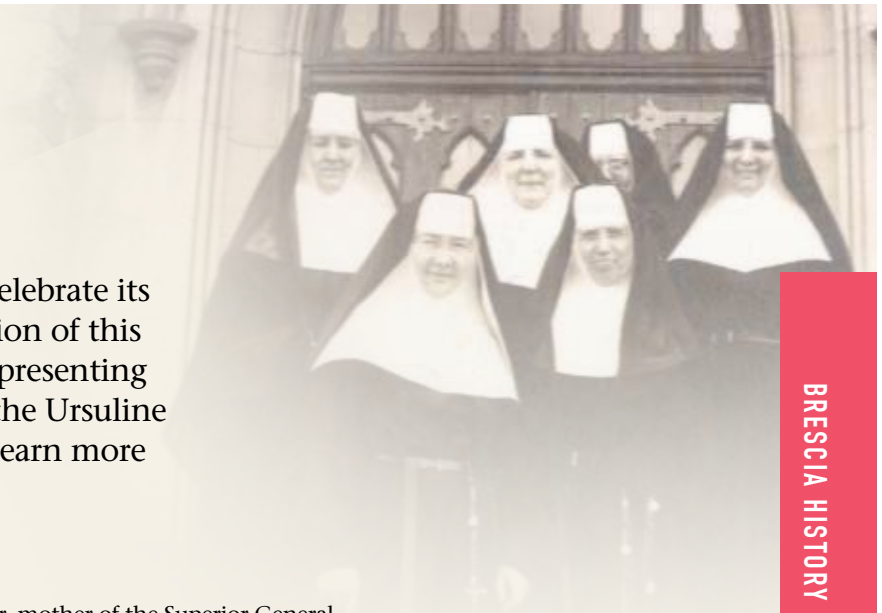
The building was one of the first to use concrete poured in the winter. The building site was encased in a temporary wooden sheathing and small coke fires were left burning inside to ensure the concrete cured. Brescia’s stone work was also unusual, with larger stones, more color tones and a flatter stone face.

During construction a rumour flew around town that the building was out of plumb. It turned out that the rumour — entirely false — was started by an employee of a rival construction company. Construction was delayed when it was discovered that the steps leading to the main entrance were too high. They had to be removed and rebuilt. Still, by August 1925 the building was almost complete and 11 sisters moved in. In late September, 58 students registered at the new facility.

At the time, there were only two trees on the property. Many trees were planted in the 1930s, a source of work for the unemployed during the Great Depression. The original drive from Western Road was a winding path. But students decided it was too long to walk to classes at Western and it was eventually straightened.

In the early days, house rules were strict. Students who wanted to leave the grounds had to sign out with details of their plans, and first-year students had to be accompanied by an older student. Everyone had to be back by 6 p.m. every night. Senior students could stay out until 8:30 once a week. “The Sisters would be seated at the front desk waiting for everyone to be signed back in,” says Sister Theresa. “They weren’t happy if you didn’t sign in because they sat up until you did. I don’t think anyone did that more than once!” ■

PICTURED ABOVE
Ursuline Sisters, 1936



Meet Lisa Haagsma '92, '07

Alumnae Association President

When Lisa Haagsma was a student at Brescia, she was inspired by a wall of photographs that included Mother Theresa and Helen Keller. "I remember looking at those pictures while waiting for my next class to start, and thinking how amazing to be someone whose accomplishments are posted to encourage other women."

As Haagsma viewed the gallery, she was inspired to share her life experiences and knowledge with Brescia students as President of the Alumnae Association. "I want to give back to Brescia," she says. "I'm a behind-the-scenes kind of leader, but I like to do what I can in a quiet way."

Haagsma, who grew up in northwest London, was the first in her family to attend university. Her grandfather worked as a custodian at Brescia and often shared stories of working with the Sisters. She had to defer her admission for a year when she didn't get a student loan and needed to save more money. When she finally arrived, she fit in quickly. "I liked it right away," she says. "It's a very welcoming place. I was finding my way through university and didn't have anyone at home who knew about it, so I really appreciated the small classes, the sense of community, and the support."

In fact, she liked it so much that she came back 11 years later, after the birth of her daughter, and completed a second degree at Brescia. Next she took a "huge leap," moving to Australia to complete teacher training and then accepting a one-year teaching job in Trinidad. "I explained to my daughter that it was going to be a different life for us," she says. "But she said, 'okay, you've always wanted to be a teacher, I'll support you.'" Haagsma's other biggest supporter is her husband, Mark. He faithfully attends all of the Brescia events, even if he is the lone male attending!

Back in London she worked at the Wheable Adult Education Centre for four years. Building on her experience in food services at Brescia and at a local hotel, she eventually moved into the hospitality area. After completing her certification, she was hired to start up a new program and commercial kitchen at Montcalm Secondary School in London.

Haagsma says the Alumnae Association has been working hard to target more senior alumnae and has succeeded in creating a more diverse organization. Under her leadership, she hopes the Association will continue to connect with alumnae and students in meaningful ways. "We're around so that students can ask us questions, find a mentor, network and to provide opportunities which keep alumnae connected to each other and to Brescia. It's awesome to be part of the Brescia tradition — encouraging women to be bold and have a voice." ■



A Message from Cathy Vitkauskas

Vice-Principal, Advancement

I hope you're enjoying this issue of *BOLD* magazine. We've packed it full of interesting people and stories, and even a delicious recipe! If you have any suggestions for stories or improvements to future issues, please let us know.

BOLD Magazine is just one of the ways we reach out to you, our alumnae. We see graduates as an integral and very valuable part of the Brescia community on an ongoing basis, and count on you to let us know how we're doing and what we can do better. Recently, we distributed an online survey to all alums for whom we have email addresses, to seek your input about the connection with Brescia. We had an excellent response rate of over 12% and some very positive feedback.

A big thank you to everyone who participated. We'll be taking a closer look at the survey results and identifying action areas in the months ahead.

The survey was suggested to us by Dr. Susan Mumm, who joined Brescia as Principal in July. Susan is very keen to hear from and engage with alumnae. Reunion Weekend was one of her first opportunities to do so, when she spoke to many of you.

Now we're bringing Brescia to you! Over the next eight months Susan will travel to nine different cities across Ontario and Alberta to host alumnae receptions. Check out the dates at www.bit.ly/2e7bFsc and plan to be there to meet our dynamic new leader!

Finally, I want to congratulate our two alumnae award recipients, Wilma de Rond and Sara Dungavell. Thank you both for embodying the values of our Ursuline founders and for carrying the Brescia banner proudly into the world. ■

MILESTONES

ALUMNAE



'10

MARGARET MURRAY NICHOLSON '57 recently celebrated her marriage to John Bessridge on June 18, 2016.



← Congratulations to KELSEY MCLELLAN '10 who married Derek Bron on March 4, 2016.



'57

JOANNA SIROIS '52 recently celebrated her 60th wedding anniversary with her husband Louis, their 5 children, 19 grandchildren, and first great grandchild, Olive Elizabeth. She lives in the Ottawa countryside in the home built by their two sons 28 years ago. Joanna fondly remembers the excitement of o-week, lifelong friendships formed, and the Western swim team travels.

Congratulations to SISTER MARY FRANCES DORSCHHELL '63, '85, who celebrated her 60th Jubilee of Religious Life as an Ursuline Sister on June 27. Sister Mary Frances continues to reside at Brescia in Ursuline Hall and acts as Special Advisor to the Principal.

MARGARET A. TEIXEIRA '71 retired from hospital dietetics in 2015 and enjoys volunteering with the Breast Cancer pre-op group and visits at the Misericordia Hospital. She is also a board member for the Volunteer Association.

LOUISE DOBSON '76 retired from teaching Family Studies at Innisdale Secondary School in Barrie, Ontario. She has since moved back to her hometown of Owen Sound, Ontario. She and her husband Ed love living on their beautiful five-acre property and in the same town as her three brothers.

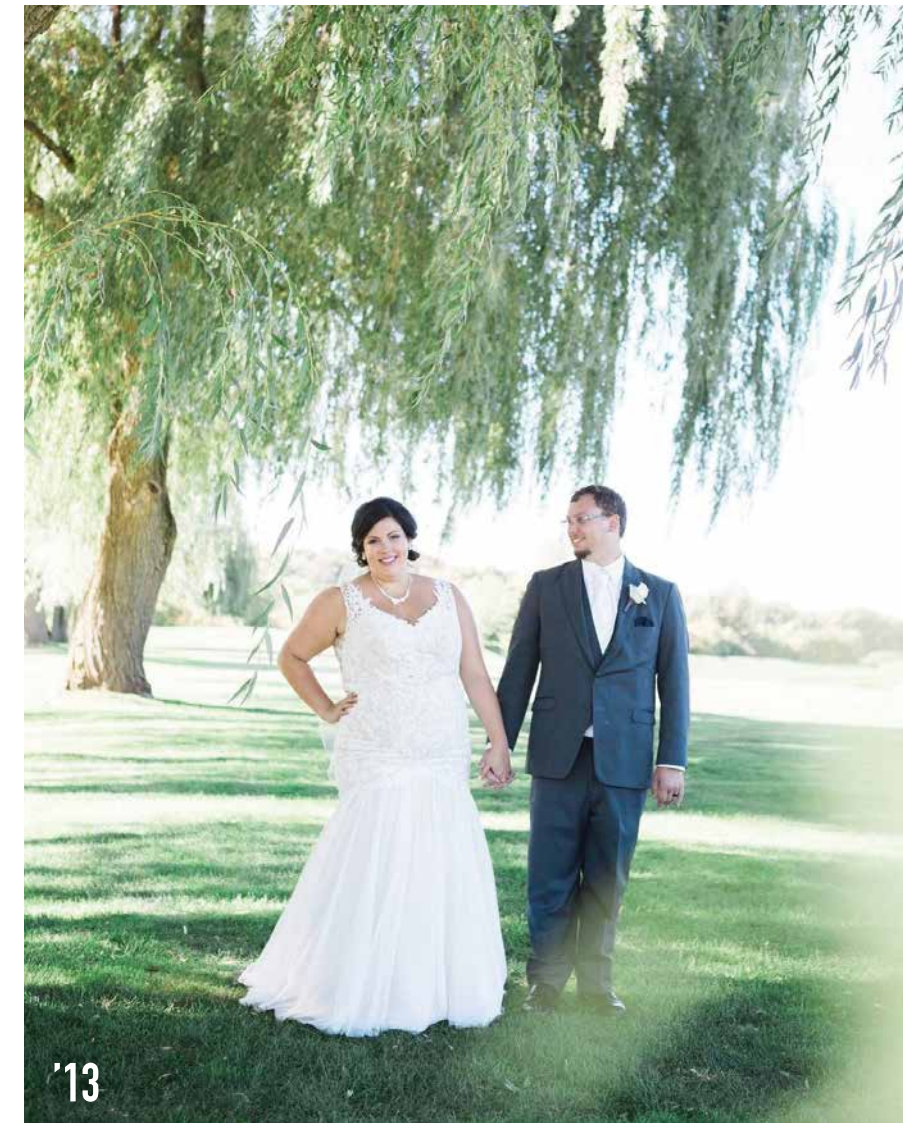
SUZANNE MILES '77 now has two beautiful granddaughters. Eilee Anne born August 24, 2014 and Holland Hope born August 10, 2016.

MARIE-CLAUDETTE D. DERDAELE '83 moved to the Maritimes (Riverview, NB) in 1989 and has remained there doing parish and Diocesan work. Marie-Claudette recalls all of the wonderful people that she met and the positive influence that the Ursuline Sisters had on her life during her four years at Brescia. Marie-Claudette would like to put a challenge out to her classmates to get in touch with *BOLD* and let everyone know what you have been up to since graduation!

LARISSA MELECA '02 welcomed a baby boy on November 13, 2015 named Roman Franco. His big sister, Leila, age 2, is thrilled to have a little brother.

BREENA BLADON '06 lives in Muskoka with her husband and two young boys. She is a consulting dietitian in long term care, and also works as a clinical dietitian and is loving her career.

TAMMY ROSS '14 went on to complete a Masters in Social Work at the University of Windsor. She is the Board Chair of Daya Counselling and was the Treasurer of the Ontario Association of Social Workers – Western Branch. Tammy teaches courses for both Continuing Studies at Western University and Fanshawe College.



'13

↑ SAMANTHA GOVERDE '13 married Jordan O'Brien on September 24, 2016 after eight years together at the Galt Country Club in Cambridge. Former classmates MEAGAN ZETTLER and ASHLEY BOYES stood up for Samantha as bridesmaids.

KEEP US UPDATED!

Send your photographs and milestones to brescia.alumnae@uwo.ca and keep your fellow alumnae up to date!

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