

# the newsletter of the School of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

# ahss

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SAINT VINCENT  
COLLEGE

## a note from the dean



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Summer is upon us, and in the academic world, it comes with the bittersweetness of sending off our accomplished graduates. They join the network of Saint Vincent College alumni, prepared to integrate their professional aims with the broader purposes of human life.

It has been a joy to work with them over the last four years. At the same time, we feel a bit of sadness for ourselves, because we will miss regularly engaging with these excellent people whom we have grown to admire and appreciate. It has been an honor and a privilege to be a part of our graduates' education, helping them advance their goals while they have enriched our community.

This experience of connection and community is what our students, faculty and alumni cite as the essence of their time at Saint Vincent, and it is a major reason a Saint Vincent education is so effective. To be at Saint Vincent is to be part of building and shaping this community as we move forward. It is no surprise that community is at the heart of the Saint Vincent experience, as "community" is one of the hallmarks of a Benedictine education. Our community is strong, and it runs deep through generations.

In the last few years, I have connected with many Saint Vincent alumni, both recent and from decades past, and it always felt like catching up with an old friend, even if it was the first time we'd met. Our common dedication to and appreciation of the Saint Vincent mission made for an instant connection.

We look forward to keeping up with the members of this graduating class and connecting with them and all our AHSS alumni in the upcoming year. We have numerous events to which all our students, faculty, alumni, friends and family are invited. Some of these events are mentioned in this newsletter and others are still being planned, so keep an eye out for more opportunities to connect or reconnect with us!

Thank you for reading this newsletter to learn about members of our community near and far and to find ways to engage with our ongoing mission. ♦

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## Jonah Weaver studies in Wales as part of Fulbright Summer Institute program

Rising sophomore Jonah Weaver received a place on a Fulbright Summer Institute to study at Aberystwyth University in Wales on one of the world's most prestigious and selective summer scholarship programs.

As a Fulbright UKSI participant, Weaver studied at Aberystwyth from June 23 to July 12. His program examined the impact of economic and social change, structural and political reform, the relationship of the British



monarchy with the Welsh nation in the wake of Queen Elizabeth II's death and shifting perceptions of Welsh identity and nationhood.

Weaver, of Danville, is studying public history and liberal arts with a focus on language and culture at Saint Vincent College.

"When I saw the notification in my email, I jumped off the couch and I was like, 'I got the Fulbright!'" Weaver recalled. "I hope this will enable me to pursue a postgraduate Fulbright Scholarship later."

Fulbright Scholars are postgraduate, postdoctoral academics or professionals who conduct research and/or teach at an institution in either the United States or the United Kingdom. The Fulbright Summer Institute is a short-term session conducted under the auspices of the Fulbright program

The Summer Institutes are part of the US-UK Fulbright Commission's work to promote leadership, learning

and empathy among nations through educational exchange. The UKSI program is designed for students who have little or no travel experience outside of America and is open to freshmen and sophomores with at least a 3.70 grade-point average.

In one of his application essays, Weaver described spending a week at an educational camp at Dickinson College the summer before his senior year of high school. "It was my first time away from home alone," he said. "I talked about how making friends and meeting professors there helped me transition to college."

Weaver's group at Aberystwyth consisted of 16 students, including eight from the United States. The program involved class study and field trips. "It interested me a lot because it involved history and socio-cultural identity," Weaver said. "It [was] a lot like my camp at Dickinson."

At Saint Vincent College, Weaver works at the Verostko Center for the Arts as a gallery assistant. He also has worked an internship with the Saint Vincent College Archives. Weaver is eager to share his experiences in Wales when he returns to Saint Vincent in the fall.

"I want this to be the start of something more—more studying abroad," Weaver said. "In my essays, I've focused a lot on American politics and American history. I'd like to expand my horizons into something that's connected to where I'm from and is also very different from me."

As a high school senior in 2023, Weaver was the first-place finisher in Saint Vincent College's 42<sup>nd</sup> annual Wimmer Scholarship Competition. He was awarded a four-year, full-tuition, room and board scholarship valued at more than \$200,000.



## Dr. Sr. Gabriele Aušra Vasiliauskaitė, O.S.B., is inaugural Stephans Family Visiting Benedictine Professor

Saint Vincent College welcomed Sr. Gabriele Aušra Vasiliauskaitė, O.S.B., as the inaugural Stephans Family Visiting Benedictine Professor for Spring 2024. Sr. Gabriele taught Catholic bioethics and delivered several lectures on campus

Sr. Gabriele has a Ph.D. in humanities (theology) and is an associate professor of theology and a senior researcher at the Research Center of Marriage and Family at Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas, Lithuania. During a recent internship with the Archdiocese of Toronto, Canada, Sr. Gabriele took part in consultation and hands-on training related to pastoral care in a hospital setting. She has been honored in Lithuania and abroad for her research and scholarly activities.

The Stephans Family Visiting Benedictine Professor program is funded by a grant from the Rossin Foundation. Saint Vincent College recruits one scholar from the Benedictine community to teach and lecture for at least one semester in each academic year.

## Communication students query Bishop Zubik in mock press conference

The Most Reverend David A. Zubik, bishop of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, took questions from Saint Vincent College students for 90 minutes on April 25 during a mock press conference at the Dr. Frank J. Luparello Lecture Hall in the Sis and Herman Dupré Science Pavilion.

The event was part of a broadcast journalism class run by adjunct professor Jennifer Antkowiak. A former news anchor at KDKA-TV, Antkowiak is chief communications officer for the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

“I try to bring as many real-life situations to the class as possible,” Antkowiak said. The course work includes deadline reporting, feature writing and story research. In mid-April, the class virtually monitored a live press conference with the Diocese’s director of safety and security at the pastoral center in Pittsburgh.

“We’ve gotten a lot of hands-on experience this semester, and this [mock press conference] was a wonderful capstone to our class,” said Natalie Homison, a senior communication major from Zelenople.

Twenty students participated in the event with Bishop Zubik. He took questions on a wide range of topics, including evangelization,

communication with parishioners as well as non-Catholics, and the reorganization of the Catholic school system in the Diocese.

After serving four years as Bishop of Green Bay, Wisconsin, Bishop Zubik was installed as 12th bishop of Pittsburgh on Sept. 28, 2007. A native of Ambridge, he served as associate spiritual director at Saint Vincent Seminary from 1989 to 1996. In 2016, Bishop Zubik was elected chairman of the Saint Vincent Seminary Board of Regents.

“I was a little nervous coming into this, considering it was the bishop and I’ve heard about him all my life,” said Jacob Bacasa, a junior communication major from Glenshaw. “It was probably a little nerve-racking for all of us coming up with questions.”

Homison asked about Zubik’s move to suspend in-person Mass attendance in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. “Of all the decisions I’ve had to make in my 28 years [as an auxiliary bishop and bishop], that one was the most difficult,” Bishop Zubik said. “But we had to do it in order to protect people.”

Homison said pondering a quote from Saint Padre Pio—who noted, “The Earth could exist more easily without the sun than without the Holy Sacrifice of the

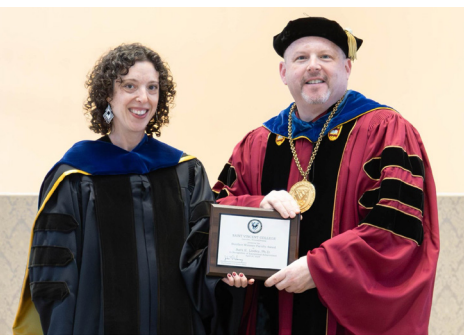


Mass”—spurred her to ask the bishop about the shutdown.

“During [the pandemic], we were without the Eucharist and many other important things for so long,” Homison said. “I can’t imagine, as he said, how hard of a decision that was to make, and I was really curious to hear his insight into that.”

Bacasa followed up by asking what Zubik and the Church learned from the pandemic shutdown, and the bishop mentioned the approval by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops of a three-year National Eucharistic Revival in November 2021.

“When we reopened the churches, I expected a large number of people to come back to Mass right away,” the bishop said. “My greatest disappointment was to see that it didn’t happen. That’s one reason the bishops in the United States called for a Eucharistic Revival. Lately, there has been an increase in the numbers of [churchgoers], so maybe it’s working.”



Dr. Sara Lindey (left) receives the Wimmer Faculty Award from Saint Vincent College President Fr. Paul Taylor, O.S.B.

## Dr. Sara Lindey receives Wimmer Faculty Award

Dr. Sara Lindey, professor of English and chair of the English Department, was presented with the Boniface Wimmer Faculty Award on April 24 during the 2024 Spring Honors Convocation at the Saint Vincent Archabbey Basilica.

Named in honor of the founder of Saint Vincent College and Archabbey and a pioneer of Benedictine

monasticism in the United States, the Wimmer Award annually recognizes a senior faculty member at the College who has demonstrated sustained excellence.

“Sara Lindey is a collaborative, insightful and open-minded colleague,” said Dr. Elaine Bennett, dean of the School of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. “Her work

with the Fred Rogers Institute and leadership of the Campus Writing Program, including Core Writing, exemplifies the kind of interdepartmental collaboration that makes Saint Vincent College strong.”

A member of the national liberal arts honor society Phi Beta Kappa, Lindey directs the Campus Writing Program and teaches widely in American

literature, including environmental literature and women's literature. She has been the faculty sponsor of the Saint Vincent chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the only accredited national English honor society, for the past 15 years.

"Post-tenure, I enacted a mid-career shift which has been a great motivation and joy," Lindey said. "Now, I work on Fred Rogers, thanks in large part to Junlei Li, former Fred Rogers Center director, who promised me that Fred's simple, yet deep messages were worthy of academic study."

In addition to presenting 10 conference papers on Rogers, Lindey also is a co-author of "The Green Mister Rogers:

Environmentalism in 'Mister Rogers' Neighborhood." The book focuses on the messages of environmentalism in Rogers' long-running program on public television, especially expressed during his themed week "Caring for the Environment," produced in 1990 to mark the 20th anniversary of Earth Day.

Lindey is working on a project related to the representation of childhood and the sociality of technology in Rogers' work. The project also will explore Rogers' themed "divorce week" of five shows in February 1981.

## Dr. Lucas Briola receives Quentin Schaut Faculty Award

Dr. Lucas Briola, C'13, assistant professor of theology, was presented with the Quentin Schaut Faculty Award on April 24 during the 2024 Spring Honors Convocation at the Saint Vincent Archabbey Basilica.

Named in honor of Fr. Quentin Schaut, O.S.B., S'27, H'66, an English professor and the seventh president of Saint Vincent College, the award recognizes the contributions, leadership and achievements of a junior faculty member to the curriculum and life of the College.

"Luke Briola is a gifted teacher-scholar," said Dr. Elaine Bennett, dean of the School of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. "His love of theology, ability to distill complex ideas for undergraduate students and dedication to engaging students are exemplary."

In addition to teaching systematic theology and social/environmental ethics, Briola directs student theology internships, serves as associate editor of "Conversatio: A Journal in the Tradition of Catholic, Benedictine, and Liberal Education," and helped establish the Rev. Nathan J. Munsch, O.S.B., Scholarship for junior theology majors. In 2022, along with his colleagues, Briola was awarded the Saint Vincent College Projektmacher Award for his work with Saint Vincent's Center for Catholic Thought and Culture.

In 2021, Briola's "Praise Rather Than Solving Problems: Understanding the Doxological Turn of *Laudato Si'* Through Lonergan" was named Article of the Year by the College Theology Society. His book "The Eucharistic Vision of *Laudato Si'*: Praise, Conversion, and Integral Ecology," was published last year by The Catholic University of America Press. His second book, tentatively titled "*Ora et Labora* in Our Common Home: A Benedictine Invitation to Care for Creation," is under contract with Liturgical Press.

Briola holds a bachelor's degree from Saint Vincent, an MTS from the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry and a doctorate from The Catholic

University of America. The opportunity to teach college students is the fulfillment of a dream, and he never takes it for granted.

Alfred, Briola's grandfather, attended Saint Vincent in hopes of one day teaching medicine, but left college to serve as a medic in World War II. "He never returned to Saint Vincent, instead laying concrete the rest of his life," Briola said. "He would often fantasize out loud about how neat it would have been to teach college students." Briola's father, Frank, got a degree from Penn State University, but his plans to teach after graduate school were derailed by the Vietnam War.

"So, a lot went into the comment my dad made [to me] the night before I taught my first class: 'Luke, isn't it amazing that you are teaching college students?'" Briola said. "Generations of Briolas dreamed of this possibility. ... This award only deepens my gratitude to and for my students."



Dr. Luke Briola (left) receives the Quentin Schaut Award from Saint Vincent College President Fr. Paul Taylor, O.S.B.

# Alumnus Chris Golias' fascinating career includes stops in Africa, Argentina and the Silicon Valley

The grandson of a coal miner and the son of a traveling folk musician-turned-butcher, Chris Golias grew up in a mobile home in Johnstown yearning to venture out into the wide world. His launching pad turned out to be a college campus only 33 miles away.

Getting a bachelor's degree in anthropology at Saint Vincent College dispatched Golias, C'06, on a fascinating career path. His journey has included pivotal stops at a wildlife preserve in Africa, a rural village in Argentina, Walter Reed Medical Center in Maryland, a corporate headquarters in Pittsburgh, and Google's hubs in California and Colorado.

Along the way, Golias found his niche as an ethnographer who studies the ways technology fits in people's daily lives. He became a user experience (UX) researcher—an anthropologist who helps a company improve its products by conducting small-sample research.

Some folks hear "UX" and "Google" and mistakenly assume Golias is some sort of computer expert or web developer. "I've never written a line of code," Golias said. "I don't market anything. I have an artistic side, but I'm not artistic in the way that UX designers are—I don't know how to use [design tools such as] Figma, Sketch or Adobe. I

am very much a researcher, a social scientist."

When he enrolled at Saint Vincent College in 2002, Golias planned to major in biology and eventually go to medical school. "A liberal arts school like Saint Vincent was the right choice for me because I was interested in absolutely everything," he said. When his plans for an internship in the biology field fell through, one of his professors steered Golias into a summer internship at Kafue National Park in Zambia. His experiences in Africa motivated Golias to add a second major in anthropology, which altered the trajectory of his life.

In 2015, Golias got his doctorate in anthropology from the University of Pennsylvania. His dissertation was based on 15 months of field work in Formosa, Argentina, where he studied the economic and cultural impacts of alcohol abuse among Toba/Qom villagers.

At Walter Reed, Golias used ethnography (the scientific description of the customs of individual peoples and cultures) to improve the hospital's orthopedic experience for injured veterans. Around this time, there was increasing chatter about UX—the term was coined in the early 1990s, but the field has been around longer than that—and Golias' curiosity again was piqued.

He took a UX job with American Eagle Outfitters on Pittsburgh's South Side. "I did some really fun ethnography, standing outside of the fitting room, [asking] people how their jeans feel and how they decide whether or not they like how they look and feel on their bodies," he said.

In October 2018, Google lured Golias to Silicon Valley to work as a researcher for its first artificial intelligence feature. Golias now lives with his wife and daughter in Boulder, Colorado, where he leads Google's international UX research team for hardware, photos and Google Play apps.

A one-on-one chat is Golias' most common method of research. "You can really get to know somebody, especially a certain facet of their life, in 90 minutes," he said. "Being able to do that with people around the world is one of my favorite things. With Google's infrastructure, I can interview someone in Swahili without having to learn the language first. Where else could I do that?"

Golias' background in anthropology, which was sparked by his studies at Saint Vincent, helps the interview process. So do his experiences as a trailer park kid from Johnstown who made a short trip to Latrobe and became a world traveler.

"I like meeting people where they are, on their terms," Golias said. "People's experiences shape them. Those experiences can be very different, but we're all human and we're all seeking a connection with someone. Everyone has a story tell, it's important to them, and I want to hear it. That's usually enough to keep things going—that level of simple human authenticity."



# new faculty

## Dr. Mary Beth Yount

Dr. Mary Beth Yount will assume the role of Irene S. Taylor Endowed Chair for Catholic and Family Studies. She holds a doctorate in Catholic systematic theology with specialization in ethics and practical theology from Duquesne University. Yount is writing a book that examines how relationships, rituals, sacraments and signs contribute to identity formation and cultural transformation, especially in a family context.

## Dr. Emily Arledge

Dr. Emily Arledge, C'15, will start a position of visiting assistant professor of history. After graduating from Saint Vincent with a bachelor's degree in history and theology, Arledge earned a master's from Duquesne and a doctorate in American history/public history from Loyola University of Chicago. She is a public historian with a focus on American Catholic history.

## Laura Knoop Very

Laura Knoop Very will start a position of assistant professor of music. She earned a Bachelor of Music from the New England Conservatory and a Master of Music in Vocal Performance from Yale University. She also earned a Master of Science in Higher Education Administration from Duquesne University. She has performed as an operatic soprano in primary and secondary roles in major opera houses in the United States, including the Metropolitan Opera in New York, Houston Grand Opera, Washington National Opera, Santa Fe Opera and Pittsburgh Opera.

# retirements

## Dr. Karen Kehoe

Dr. Karen Kehoe joined the History Department in fall 2006 after completing her Ph.D. at Marquette University and teaching for a handful of years at other colleges. She came to the study of history after first following her passion for music performance and raising two children. A music major as an undergraduate, performed for many years in a Civil War reenactment band. It was our great fortune that Karen determined that her true passion lay in studying and teaching history, especially the history of the American Civil War and the role of women throughout all of U.S. history. In her 18 years at Saint Vincent College, Karen taught more than 2,500 students about U.S. history and ways we might best convey that history in museums, historical sites, and archives. She put Saint Vincent at the center of the region's robust array of public history institutions and trained many of the area's best practitioners. Karen's story began in Wisconsin and will continue there after her retirement from the college, where she will rejoin her sisters in America's Dairyland. We will miss her dearly.

*- Tim Kelly, professor and department chair of history*

## Dr. Kristine Slank

Having served as a professor in the Department of Psychological Science for 33 years, Dr. Kristine Slank retired at the end of the spring 2024 semester. Kristine taught many courses during her time at Saint Vincent College, with her focus in more recent years being social psychology, learning, and introduction to psychological science. She served as director of the Addictions Specialist Training Certificate program and as department chair from 2003 to 2009. Kristine advised many research thesis projects and supervised student trips to the annual meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association. As many graduates know, she has been particularly generous in keeping in contact with psychology alumni and is instrumental in bringing graduates back to campus for the annual Psychology Career Night. She left her mark on the department and the college, and her presence will be missed by both her colleagues and her students. We wish Kristine all the best as she embarks on her retirement adventures!

*- Members of the Department of Psychological Science*

## Dr. Jack Aupperle

Dr. Jack Aupperle served the students of the Saint Vincent College community since 1983. A Methodist minister and a founding member and chairman of United Ministries in Higher Education, Jack taught as a long-term lecturer in the Theology Department and served students through Saint Vincent's campus ministry. Students congregated in his weekly discussion group, "What's on Your Mind," where they could bring up any topic for discussion. He had a gift of touching the hearts of the students. Jack brought to his teaching and ministry a sense of universal kindness and virility, a fearless pursuit of faith and reason and an impeccable sense of humor. As it is written in the Book of Books: "Peoples will speak of his wisdom, and the assembly will declare his praise." (Sirach 39:10) We wish him well in his retirement from formal teaching.

*- Colleagues in the Theology Department and Archabbey*



# academic excellence awardees

At the close of every academic year, each department identifies graduating students who exemplify academic excellence in their majors. These students are recognized at the Honors Convocation. We are proud to acknowledge our 2023-2024 Academic Excellence Award recipients!

Alana Winkler, of Wexford, communication

Christopher Rose, of Boswell, counselor education (MS)

Morgan Constantino, of Butler, curriculum and instruction (MS)

Donovan Baxter, of Pitcairn, digital art and media

Sophie Neubert, of St. Marys, English

Joel Martirano, of Smithsburg, Maryland, history

Azalynn Coblenz, of Bethel Park, middle grade education

Margaret Sullivan, of Waldorf, Maryland, music

Yigeng Peter Feng, of Latrobe, philosophy

Parker Bowser, of Flemington, New Jersey, philosophy and theology

Helen Kish, of Pittsburgh, psychology

Alexander Hancher, of Eighty Four, sociology

Lauren Turkovich, of Jeannette, studio art

Garrett Miller, of Glen Burnie, Maryland, theology

Bridget Doyle, of Pittsburgh, anthropology

Nicholas DeFrancesco, of Greensburg, educational leadership (MS)

Luciana Polk, of Pittsburgh, health and physical education

Zachary Choby, of Windber, secondary education

## Graduates begin pursuits of postgraduate degrees

Fourteen recent AHSS graduates will attend graduate or professional schools this fall to pursue postgraduate degrees.

- Abbie Bashoum, a public history major from Scottdale, will pursue a combined Master of Arts in Applied History and Master of Science in Library and Information Science at Shippensburg University.
- James Bendtsen, a communication major from Apollo, will pursue a Master of Science in Curriculum and Instruction at Saint Vincent College.
- Azalynn Coblenz, a middle grade education major from Bethel Park, will pursue a Master of Science in Counselor Education at Saint Vincent College.
- Caitlin Cole, a digital art and media major from Cranberry Township, will pursue a Master of Arts in Film and Television with a focus on editing at Savannah (Georgia) College of Art and Design.
- Peter Feng, a philosophy and theology double major from Latrobe, will pursue a Bachelor of Sacred Theology at The Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum) in Rome, Italy.
- Katherine Leonard, an early childhood education major from Greensburg, will pursue a Master of Science in Curriculum and Instruction at Saint Vincent College.
- Joel Martirano, a history major from Smithsburg, Maryland, will pursue a Master of Arts in Applied History at Shippensburg University.
- Bill McClellan, a history major from Blairsville, will pursue a master's degree in library and information science at the University of Pittsburgh.
- Garrett Miller, a theology major from Glen Burnie, Maryland, will pursue a Master of Divinity degree at Saint John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota.
- Gage Mortimer, a history major from New Cumberland, will pursue a Master of Arts in Public Affairs at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.
- Scott Root, a history major from Perryopolis, will pursue a Master of Science in Curriculum and Instruction at Saint Vincent College.
- Madeline Schuck, an early childhood education major from Hunker, will pursue a Master of Science in Curriculum and Instruction at Saint Vincent College.
- Michael Schulte, a philosophy major from Crestwood, Kentucky, will pursue a Master of Arts in Theological Studies at Saint Vincent College.
- Dylan Slebodnik, a history education major from Perryopolis, will pursue a Master of Science in Curriculum and Instruction at Saint Vincent College.

# alumni notes



## Oto commissioned

On May 13, ROTC cadet Dominic Oto, C'24, of North Versailles, was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Army at the Saint Vincent Archabbey Basilica. "I was praying one day by the statue of Mary [in the Basilica] and I just felt right then that I should have my commissioning here," said Oto, who graduated from Saint Vincent with a bachelor's degree in theology two days before he was commissioned. Because he is ranked among the top 20 percent of Army ROTC graduates nationwide, 2nd Lt. Oto earned the designation of distinguished military graduate.



## Elin wins national award

Elizabeth Elin, C'23, won the 2024 Albert Clark Award from Theta Alpha Kappa national honors society for religious studies and theology. The first Clark Award winner from Saint Vincent College, Elin graduated with degrees in theology and English. The Clark Award, which was first presented in 2002, annually honors the best papers in religious studies and all fields of theology. Elin won the top undergraduate award for a selection from her senior theology thesis, "In You, O Lord, I Have Hoped": Disability, Identity, and Dialogic Relationship in Psalm 38."



## Bertone studies in Ireland

Matt Bertone, C'23, of Shepherdstown, West Virginia, graduated from Saint Vincent with a bachelor's degree in psychology and a minor in public health. He was accepted at University College Cork, a public university in Cork, Ireland, and in September began pursuing a master's in public health with a concentration in epidemiology. "I enjoy the data work part of public health," Bertone said. "I like that it is [similar to] psychology in that you help people in personal ways and on global levels as well."



# IN MEMORIAM

## Roman Verostko

After working as an artist for more than 75 years, Roman Joseph Verostko, C'55, S'59, H'21, died on June 1, leaving an indelible impact on generations of digital creators around the world.

On Sept. 5, the Verostko Center for the Arts, located inside the Dale P. Latimer Library, will debut a memorial exhibition surveying Verostko's extensive career.

As an artist, educator, author and humanist, Verostko is remembered as a key protagonist in the development of generative art. Co-founder of the Algorist Group, Verostko was formerly a Benedictine monk at Saint Vincent Archabbey and a professionally trained painter and scholar before he began experimenting with electronic media, circuit logic and computer languages. Working at a time when art made in tandem with computers was viewed with suspicion, Verostko anticipated the ways in which algorithms would revolutionize global society.

Before becoming a monk, Verostko was trained as an illustrator at the Art Institute of Pittsburgh. After earning a Bachelor of Arts in

Philosophy from Saint Vincent College in 1955, he studied studio art and art history in New York. He developed an experimental practice of creating abstract

paintings and drawings comprised of expressive, gestural marks teeming with vitality.

In 1968, Verostko left the monastery and began teaching liberal arts courses at Minneapolis College of Art and Design, continuing to create paintings that visualized the polarity between rational and emotive decision making inherent within human existence. Exposure to computer coding in Minneapolis prompted him to convert his studio into a space where pen plotters, driven by extensive coded sequences he devised, would execute drawings informed by approaches to abstract painting he encountered decades prior.

Although he departed from religious life, making art and discussing it would remain an extension of his spiritual life—tangible pursuits to experience the ineffable. Forming friendships with like-minded artists working with recent innovations in computational technology, Verostko mounted exhibitions, organized symposia, and lectured widely on the ways in which concealed algorithmic procedures could be leveraged to create art reflective of the digital age.

As an author and academician, Verostko's understanding of the historical and theoretical dimensions of art allowed him to articulate the efforts of generative artists to the public. Despite staunch resistance from art curators and critics who maintained computer-assisted drawing would never be considered art, Verostko remained resolute in revealing a universe of visual forms that do not "re-present" the world as previous generations has sought to do but rather make visible the invisible.



## Fr. Nathan Munsch, O.S.B.



Fr. Nathan Munsch, O.S.B. (1951-2024) was a pillar of the community—whether in his monastic community, the parishes he pastored or our College. Fr. Nathan served as a longtime member of Saint Vincent’s Theology Department and taught classes such as medieval theology and Benedictine heritage, both of which I took as a student.

My wife Catherine and I were especially enriched by his friendship. What impressed

us most about Fr. Nathan was the ways he brought together intellectual acumen, pastoral concern, and spiritual depth. The strength of this integration especially displayed itself as Fr. Nathan courageously battled amyotrophic lateral sclerosis for the last five years of his life.

In 2019, it was a tremendous honor to help establish the endowed Rev. Nathan Munsch, O.S.B., Scholarship. The Theology Department has awarded the scholarship to five junior theology majors, all of whom have been strengthened in their calling by the scholarship and are currently or are planning to pursue a vocation to theological study or pastoral ministry. It gives Fr. Nathan’s family and friends great joy to see his legacy live on through our wonderful students.

Anyone interested in celebrating Fr. Nathan’s life may contribute to the scholarship by indicating this intention on our donation website. May he rest in peace.

— Dr Luke Briola, C’13, assistant professor of theology

## Fr. Cyprian Constantine, O.S.B.

Fr. Cyprian Constantine, O.S.B., S’77, a monk of Saint Vincent Archabbey for 48 years and a faculty member in the Music Department, passed away Nov. 12, 2023, after a short illness.

Fr. Cyprian served as an assistant professor of music and chaired both the Music and Fine Arts departments. He also served at the Saint Vincent Seminary as academic dean (2004-2007), director of liturgical formation (2007-2023) and schola director (2003-2023). He was concert master, first violinist, and principal keyboardist in the Archabbey Baroque Ensemble and directed the Saint Vincent Camerata, a group specializing in the performance of Medieval and Renaissance vocal and instrumental music.

Fr. Cyprian’s dedication to bringing great music to his students was well-known and appreciated. Students lauded his approach to teaching music history courses, which often involved him playing something in class to help them experience and understand it.



# spring 2024 event highlights

## Heart of Teaching Conference

More than 130 educators and undergraduate students from across the region convened at Saint Vincent College on March 20 for the Heart of Teaching conference. The event, which was directed by Dr. Tracy McNelly, associate professor of education, featured 23 breakout sessions and 10 speed learning sessions focused on active learning of English language arts, social and emotional learning, curriculum, technology and general teaching concepts for grades 4-12.

The keynote speaker was Dr. Richard Koch of the Western Pennsylvania Writing Project at the University of Pittsburgh. Among the presenters were Dave Safin, associate professor of digital art and media at Saint Vincent College; Dr. Sara Lindey, professor of English, chair of the English Department and director of the Saint Vincent College Writtern Pennsylvania Writing Project; and Dr. James Paharik, director of the National Catholic Center for Holocaust Education at Seton Hill University.

# spring 2024 event highlights



## Rabbi Edelstein lecture

The annual Rabbi Jason Edelstein Lecture for Catholic-Jewish Dialogue was held Feb. 28. Dr. Ruth Langer, Rabbi, a Pittsburgh native and professor of Jewish studies in the Theology Department at Boston College, presented “Lent and Easter through Jewish Eyes: Liturgies of Purification, Both Catholic and Jewish.”



## Dr. Todd Whitaker speaks to teachers

On April 18, the Education Department hosted internationally recognized speaker Dr. Todd Whitaker. A professor of educational leadership at Indiana State University, Whitaker has written extensively on teacher leadership, instructional improvement, change, leadership effectiveness, technology, and middle level practices.



## Catholic Rural Ministry presentation

On April 16, Sr. Tina Geiger, R.S.M., and Sr. Marian Wehler, O.S.B., presented “Experiences in Catholic Rural Ministry” at the Fred M. Rogers Center. The Sisters spoke about their experiences running Catholic Rural Ministry in Oil City. The ministry provides pastoral visits to the sick and homebound, spiritual education for youth and adults through reflection days and retreats, Bible studies, prison ministry, and vocation and mission awareness.



## Chinese woodwind concert

On March 15, the Saint Vincent College Concert Series presented “Melodies of the Sheng and Guanzi,” a program of traditional music from China. Hu Jianbing and Bao Jian performed classical, folk and original music on authentic Chinese woodwind instruments, the sheng and the guanzi.

# upcoming events

Our fall calendar is filling up with dynamic events, including art exhibitions, lectures, theatre performances, and concerts. While our calendar of events continues to expand, here is a preview of what we have planned!



## September 6

7 p.m.

### Concert Series: Pittsburgh Chamber Orchestra

*Performing Arts Center*

## September 12

### Flights of Fancy

*McCarl Coverlet Gallery*

"Flights of Fancy," will feature handwoven coverlets with a menagerie of bird motifs. The show opens on September 12 and runs through January 31, 2025.

## October 5

### Marching Band Alumni Day at Homecoming

Calling all SVC marching band alumni and alumni band lovers! You're invited to perform during the football pregame show on Homecoming and Family Weekend. Bring your instrument and gear or borrow items from the College. See the full schedule and register at: <https://forms.office.com/r/guMNVbLC6y>. Send questions to [sean.durkin@stvincent.edu](mailto:sean.durkin@stvincent.edu).

## October 25

7 p.m.

### Concert Series: Halcyon Voices

*Saint Vincent Archabbey Basilica Crypt*

## October 30

Time and location TBA

### Rabbi Jason Z. Edelstein Lecture in Catholic-Jewish Dialogue

Dr. Mary C. Boys, S.N.J.M., will give the Rabbi Jason Z. Edelstein Lecture in Catholic-Jewish Dialogue.

## November 1-3

7:30 p.m. (Nov. 1-2), 2 p.m. (Nov. 3)

### Fall Play: *Pride and Prejudice*

*Performing Arts Center*

## December 6-8

### Saint Vincent Summer Theatre presents *Songs of the Season: A Christmas Concert*

*Performing Arts Center*

## February 20-23

7:30 p.m. (Feb. 20-22), 2 p.m. (Feb. 23)

### Fall Play: *Fiddler on the Roof*

*Performing Arts Center*

## VEROSTKO CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Two exhibitions will open the fall 2024 semester: "**Imagining the Unseen: Roman Verostko**" and "**Fiat Lux: Paintings from the Estate of Frank Mason**," Dale P. Latimer Library, second floor.