



RETIREES ASSOCIATION
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RETIREES ASSOCIATION LUNCHEON DETAILS INSIDE!

JOIN THE ST. JOHN'S RETIREES ASSOCIATION FACEBOOK PAGE TODAY!

facebook.com/stjohnsretireesassociation
or @StJohnsRetireesAssociation
www.stjohns.edu/retirees

UPCOMING EVENTS

Power Hour Series
www.stjohns.edu/powerhour

St. John's University Alumni Book Club
www.stjohns.edu/bookclub

Every Saturday till the end of November
@10AM - 11AM EST
Power Hour Series: Josephine's Total Body
Fitness Class for Active Adults!
www.stjohns.edu/josephinesfitnessclass

Tuesday, November 2, 2021 @7:00PM
Power Hour Series: Insider's View with
Museum Specialist Dylan Hammond '18G
www.stjohns.edu/powerhour84

Thursday, November 4, 2021 @12:15PM
Bereavement Mass
Location: St. Thomas More Church,
Queens Campus
www.stjohns.edu/campusministry

Wednesday, November 10, 2021
@12:15PM - 3:30PM
Retirees Association Mass and Luncheon
Location: Mass 12:15PM
St. Thomas More Church
Luncheon 1:15PM D'Angelo Center, 4th Floor
www.stjohns.edu/retireelunch

Monday, November 15, 2021
@1:30PM - 3:30PM
Veterans Day Ceremony
Location: D'Angelo Center Room 128
www.stjohns.edu/VeteransDay

Saturday, November 20, 2021
@10:30AM - 1:00PM
Three Things Talk: Lecture 2 - "Go to
Joseph" - In-person and Virtual
www.stjohns.edu/VincentianCenter

Saturday, December 4, 2021
@5:30PM - 8:00PM
Lessons and Carols
Location: St. Thomas More Church
www.stjohns.edu/lessonsandcarols

Saturday, December 11, 2021
@2:00PM - 3:30PM
Christmas Spectacular with the Rockettes
www.stjohns.edu/Christmasspectacular

Friday, December 24, 2021
@9:00PM - 10:30PM
Christmas Eve Mass
Location: St. Thomas More Church
www.stjohns.edu/ChristmasMass

For more events visit:
www.stjohns.edu/alumnievents

M1-13244/LR

ESTABLISH YOUR LEGACY THROUGH THE MCCALLEN SOCIETY

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



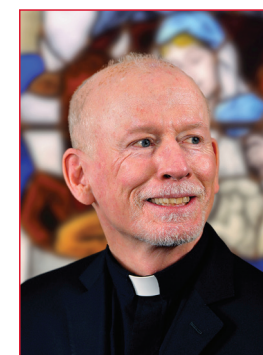
ST. JOHN'S
UNIVERSITY

RETIREES Association NEWSLETTER

Volume 19

October 2021

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Retirees Association Members,
On behalf of the entire St. John's
University community, I offer you
the latest edition of the *Retirees
Association Newsletter*.

While many of you have long-
standing, deeply rooted connections
to the University, my time with St.
John's began in February. However,
I have long admired St. John's for its

commitment to the Vincentian's founding mission to provide
a Catholic education for all people, particularly those who lack
economic, physical, or social advantages.

I believe the future of St. John's is especially bright, despite
the long-standing challenges facing higher education.
This year, we enrolled a robust class of first-year and transfer
students, and construction on our new Health Sciences
Center is expected to begin next year. Around campus,
things are steadily returning to normal, and we remain
steadfast in our commitment to ensuring that ours is a safe
and inclusive environment.

As I stated in my Investiture address, for St. John's to flourish,
we need to emulate St. Vincent's genius for collaboration and
for drawing out the talents of others. This not only includes
our alumni, but retirees, as well. I hope you will join me as we
work to ensure that St. John's mission endures.

Thank you for your continued support of our University, and I
look forward to seeing you on campus in the near future.

Sincerely,

Brian J. Shanley, O.P.

Rev. Brian J. Shanley, O.P.
President

JOIN US!

RETIREES ASSOCIATION LUNCHEON
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2021

MASS
12:15 P.M., ST. THOMAS MORE CHURCH

LECTURE BY
SIMON GEIR MØLLER, PH.D.
(SEE BELOW FOR MORE DETAILS)

12:15-12:30 P.M.,
D'ANGELO CENTER BALLROOM

WINE AND CHEESE RECEPTION
12:45-1:30 P.M., D'ANGELO CENTER LOBBY

LUNCHEON
1:30 P.M.,
D'ANGELO CENTER BALLROOM

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PARKINSON'S DISEASE, VIRAL INFECTIONS AND COVID-19

By Simon G. Møller, Ph.D., Provost and Vice President for
Academic Affairs



The Severe Acute Respiratory
Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-
CoV-2), the causative agent
of human COVID-19, not only
causes flu-like symptoms and
gut microbiome complications
but a large number of infected
individuals also experience a host of
neurological symptoms including,
loss of smell and taste, seizures,
difficulty concentrating, decreased
alertness and brain inflammation.
Indeed, a number of the neurological
symptoms seen in COVID-19 patients,

as well as alterations in the gut microbiome and biochemical
pathways, are also prevalent in patients with Parkinson's Disease.
In my talk I will describe and compare the numerous similarities and
intersections between neurodegeneration in Parkinson's Disease and
RNA viral infections, emphasizing the current SARS-CoV-2
global health crisis. I look forward to sharing these findings with
you and having insightful conversations with all of you.

For more information, and to RSVP, contact the **Office of Alumni Relations** at **718-990-6232**; **alumni@stjohns.edu**.

OFFICE OF THE PROVOST

Renewed Energy and Optimism Evident during Fall Semester at St. John's

By Simon G. Møller, Ph.D., Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs



It has often been argued that humans are extremely adaptable to change, and we have most certainly seen this over the last 18 months or so during the pandemic. The dedication, hard work, resilience, and adaptability by the entire St. John's University community to ensure that our community remains safe, allowing us to welcome back students for a near-to-normal fall semester, is simply incredible. I wish to extend my sincere appreciation and gratitude to our

students, faculty, administrators, and staff for their commitment to our great University.

There are a number of new developments and initiatives underway at St. John's that we are very excited about; I will highlight some of these below.

With the arrival of our new President, Rev. Brian J. Shanley, O.P., earlier this year, the campus has experienced renewed energy and optimism for the future. His wisdom, experience, and vision are having a tremendously positive impact both on and off campus. Under his leadership, the entire St. John's community is now engaged in a strategic planning process that will set the course toward new heights.

During the last academic year, we spent considerable time assessing how we best ensure access and success for our students. To this end, we have developed a number of very successful strategies that allow a high level of personalization and customization as we communicate and interact with students as part of the admission process and beyond.

We also continue our development of student engagement practices as we know that students who are highly engaged are much more likely to succeed. Our students deserve the best possible services we can provide; although we have made great strides, our work is not finished.

Academic programs lay at the heart of any institution, and St. John's has tremendous strengths within the health sciences field. We now wish to not only bring together all existing health sciences programs under one roof, but also expand our offerings into new health sciences areas with the vision of training the next generation of caregivers.

To this end, St. John's will construct a new 70,000-square-foot Health Sciences Center, which is projected to be completed in 2024. The Health Sciences Center replaces St. Vincent Hall; work will commence at the beginning of 2022. The new building will house state-of-the-art technology combined with flexible room layouts to allow for a multitude of teaching and learning environments.

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Open Enrollment for Retirees

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



This year the Open Enrollment period for retirees will take place from November 1–19, 2021. As long as you are currently enrolled in medical, dental, and/or life insurance, you can make changes to your existing coverage or elect to enroll in new coverage. Elections made during the Open Enrollment period will be effective January 1, 2022.

The medical plan offered to all retirees is the Oxford Freedom Premier Plan. This is a robust plan that offers both in- and out-of-network coverage, as well as prescription drug coverage. There are two dental plans to choose from: the Cigna Plan or the Aetna DMO Dental Plan. The cost of each of the plans offered is provided to you in the Open Enrollment materials mailed to your home. Our retiree billing carrier, P&A Group, will adjust your bill for any changes you make.

For more information about Open Enrollment or any of the plans offered to retirees, please contact me at 718-990-2077 or cepedam@stjohns.edu.

ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Spotlight on University Archives and Special Collections

By Alyse Hennig '11MLS, '16G, Assistant Archivist,
University Libraries



While our formal celebration of St. John's University's 150th Anniversary has concluded, there is still so much exciting history to explore! We encourage your research questions, as well as your shared memories and memorabilia. The University archives might be the best new home for the unique items from your St. John's years.

Keep an eye on our social media at @SJUarchives on Twitter and Instagram as we continue to share archive highlights. You can also check out our digital exhibition at www.stjohns.edu/150th-anniversary/our-history/digital-history-exhibit and other digital resources at digitalmemory.stjohns.edu.

We value your feedback. I look forward to hearing from you as we enjoy delving into many additional stories from St. John's University's history. If you have any questions, please contact me at henniga@stjohns.edu or 718-990-6682.

COLLEGE OF PHARMACY AND HEALTH SCIENCES

The Vaccination Dilemma: The Call for Medical Ingenuity

By CDR (Ret.) Harlem J. Gunness, Ph.D., MPH, Associate Professor and Director,
Public Health Program



As a Vincentian and Catholic University, advancement in medicine, health care, and technology is key to us and our students. We have experienced throughout the course of the pandemic the importance of science and technology. We have learned that the nature of this beast is evolving and changing in ways we least expected. First, we saw the rise in infection rates in the city, and then we saw the disparities in morbidity and mortality, and now we have vaccine hesitancy.

When vaccinations became available, many of us in the medical industry rejoiced. Why?

Because we believe and trust in science. We understood the Pfizer-BioNTech/Moderna study results and learned of its vaccine efficacy. We were convinced that people (representing an array of different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds) would jump at the opportunity to be vaccinated.

While this is true for many communities, there remain subsets of our community that are still hesitant, undecided, and/or just not ready. Unvaccinated individuals now face stigma and discrimination from those who are vaccinated.

There are many reasons why people are not vaccinated. Some may involve allergic reactions to the vaccination. Other reasons may be religious beliefs, political persuasion, and fear or mistrust in government interventions.

Regardless of their motive, I believe these communities need to be heard. Speaking from firsthand experience, there remains a neglect from the medical community to immerse themselves in these vulnerable populations to fully understand their needs.

Throughout history, some communities may have faced horrific medical mistreatment from well-established, renowned agencies. Unfortunately, these experiences have left long-lasting mistrust in many communities that may never go away.

We also know there is a socioeconomic divide in communities right in our "backyard" that have been living with austere resources way before the pandemic. Add issues of mistrust and lack of health-care infrastructure, and it is a recipe for a disaster (within a disaster)—hence the alarming COVID-19 mortality rates in these communities. Ironically, the pandemic unearthed many of the ills that already existed in these communities.

As an academic institution that is devoted to serving the needs of the poor and underserved, we must dedicate our service, research, and resources to fully understanding the needs of these communities. Therefore, I challenge the medical community to develop ways to address vaccine hesitancy and all of the other associated issues.

This may require dedicating a team of health-care professionals and researchers to work with community groups to understand their needs and help them access resources. It may mean providing economic incentives (such as hiring community members) to conduct vaccine education and vaccination campaigns, or simply bringing in subject matter experts to community forums where they can have an open and honest discussions about their hesitancy or mistrust of government agencies, clinical trials, and research. These efforts, which should be well-orchestrated with community leaders, will have a long-lasting and positive outcome—something that poor and vulnerable communities have been missing for a very long time.

"THEN" AND "NOW"

