

DIMENSIONS

Winter 2018

MethodistCOL.edu

**\$1.5 Million
Grant**

**GIVING BACK
ALUMNI APPEAL**

**Alumni Reunion
Alumni Awards**



Methodist College
GROWING AND CHANGING

7600 N. Academic Dr. | Peoria, IL 61615



Methodist College
UnityPoint Health



President's Letter

Dear Alumni,

Happy New Year from Methodist College! As you will remember, the New Year brings excitement and enthusiasm for a new semester, and 2018 is no exception! We are orienting the new entering class and course work began in mid-January.

On December 16 we held Commencement for 76 graduates! This was a momentous graduation ceremony at Methodist College, as we hooded the first two Master of Science in Nursing graduates. They had completed their course work in the summer, but returned for hooding. Another milestone was the graduation of the first six students with a Bachelor of Science in Health Science degree. There were also six students who completed the Nursing Assistant certificate program.

Methodist College continues to seek to fulfill its vision of being the premier college of choice for excellence in Health Science and Human Service education within the Midwest. In the fall, we admitted the first students to the Bachelor of Social Work program. This new program, under the direction of Dr. Staci Wolfe, prepares graduates for placement in a variety of settings, including hospitals, mental health clinics, schools, child welfare and human service agencies, or in private practice. The accreditation process through the Council on Social Work Education is underway.

A new graduate concentration, Nurse Leader Executive, in the Master of Science in Nursing program has been approved by the Higher Learning Commission. This concentration is in addition to the current Nurse Educator focus, so now our graduate students have two wonderful options for study. The Master of Science in Nursing program received accreditation from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, effective spring 2017, for a full five year period, the maximum period available as a new program. Thus, our graduates in August have completed a program that is fully accredited.

A needs assessment is underway for the addition of new programs, as well. We welcome your input on this if you have suggestions for graduate preparation.

As you know, Dr. Kimberly Johnston left Methodist College in May 2016 to return to her home state of Pennsylvania. At that time, I was appointed by the Board of Directors to serve in the role of Interim Chancellor and President for the college. It is my honor to fulfill this interim role. The search for the next Chancellor and President is underway. The search committee, appointed by the Board of Directors, has selected EFL Associates as the search firm to conduct this important work. It is anticipated that candidates will be brought to campus during the spring semester, with the appointment of the Chancellor and President being announced shortly thereafter.

Thank you for your legacy to Methodist College. Our current success builds on your contributions to the college over the years, whether you graduated decades ago, or last year. We delight in your accomplishments and look forward to our times together to refresh and renew our relationship. The entire Methodist College community looks forward to welcoming you back on campus at any time, whether it be for the 2018 Alumni Reunion, or a personal visit and tour of our wonderful new campus.

Best Regards in the New Year! Cheers!

Dr. Deborah R. Garrison

Methodist College Awarded \$1.5 Million Federal Grant

Methodist College is the recipient of a Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students grant from the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that will enable the college to recruit and educate future nurses to work in medically underserved communities.

The \$1.5 million grant will be awarded to the college over a period of four years and will enable the college to award scholarships to students who demonstrate a financial need, but also may be members of an ethnic or racial minority, or may be a first generation student. The Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students program is a scholarship program for students to meet the growing demand for nurses to work in medically underserved communities. We were able to award this scholarship to 19 students in spring 2017!

Congratulations to those students who received scholarships and are participating in the program! We also congratulate Methodist College faculty and staff for their efforts to obtain this grant to help our students.

Alumni Relations & Communications Coordinator



Meghan Smith joined Methodist College in July 2017, as the Alumni Relations and Communications Coordinator. Meghan works in our Strategic Marketing and External Affairs department. She will be working with alumni and the Methodist Alumni Association Board of Directors. In the Alumni Relations role, Meghan looks forward to meeting our alumni and coordinating events through the Alumni Association.

Meghan received her bachelor's degree in marketing from Bradley University. She previously worked in Communications at Peoria County Government. Meghan enjoys spending time with family and exploring Central Illinois. She lives in Peoria with her husband and three children.

If you have any questions about the Alumni Association or newsletter ideas, please contact Meghan at 309-672-5598 or msmith@MethodistCOL.edu.

Methodist Alumni Association Board

Abby Ault '11
President

Shelley Riney '80
Vice President of Events

Deb Eagan '13
Vice President of Advancement

Jodi Huffman-Frazee '14
Vice President of Membership

At-Large Board Members:

John Cation '16

Kayla Holtke '16

Lisa Preston '94

Wilma Christiansen '57

Bobby Lucia '15

Jennifer Smith '67

Angela Erickson '15

Jonathan Meyer '16

Stephanie Whitman '15



Commitment to Academic Excellence.



The Faces of Methodist College: Alumni Appeal

In July 2016, Methodist College relocated to its current home in North Peoria. We continue the commitment to nursing education and academic excellence that has existed since the Deaconesses founded the school of nursing in 1900. As alumni, we hope that you are proud of the growth and success. There are many exciting endeavors taking place at Methodist College. This page and the newsletter are just a snapshot of exciting growth at the college. Through the [Methodist Alumni Appeal](#), we invite you to lend support as we continue a tradition of academic excellence. Your support helps the college grow programs and provide students with a strong nursing, health science, and human services foundation. Every donation to Methodist College helps a student succeed inside and outside of the classroom. Meet a few students your donations assist:



As you read on the back cover, Methodist College recently opened Ollie's Pantry, a food pantry serving students. According to Dean of Students Andre Allen, the response to the pantry has been overwhelming. Within the first nine months, Ollie's Pantry has had more than 500 visits from students in need of this service. The pantry goes beyond food items. Some of the most needed products have been baby diapers, formula, and general hygiene products. Pictured left is John, a student who has used Ollie's Pantry. John is a full-time student, which doesn't allow for as much time to have outside employment. If his hours get cut back at work or he misses a meal, John knows the pantry is here as a resource. Through donations we are able to keep this valuable service open to students.

Meet Kamera, she is a scholarship recipient of the HRSA Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students (SDS) program. Students in the program are considered disadvantaged and it provides resources for students who may not be in school without the scholarship. The scholarships can provide assistance for tuition, books, housing in our student housing complex, and other items required in school such as nursing scrubs. For Kamera the scholarship pays half of her tuition, helping to alleviate some of the financial burden. Danielle McCoy is the SDS Program Coordinator, she is a go-to resource for these students. Kamera says that Danielle's assistance has been invaluable, providing her with techniques to be successful. It is her dream, benefiting herself and her children, to finish the program successfully. With assistance from Methodist Alumni, we hope to continue this program and offer more scholarships to students. This spring we will award \$99,500 in scholarships. With your help one day, we could award more than \$100,000 for the first time in Methodist history!



As an alum, know that your dollars go far at Methodist College. These are stories from just two of almost 700 students. Whether a student is a first generation college student or second generation Methodist College student; a single parent or has raised a family and is returning to school; a transfer student or going to college right after high school, each student has a unique story. As alumni of Methodist you can help provide a future for each student and a new generation of healthcare professionals. Please consider using the prepaid envelope enclosed in this newsletter to contribute to the Alumni Appeal. If you prefer to make a donation using an electronic payment, please visit www.UnityPoint.org/Peoria/Donate-Now and select "Methodist College General" from the designation drop-down menu. We thank you for your commitment and dedication to Methodist College.

Memorial Bench Dedication

Methodist College has a new bench on campus, dedicated in memory of an alumna. Jan Yalowitz donated the bench in memory of her mother, Edith Unsicker Albright. Edith was a graduate of the Class of 1945. She truly cherished her time at Methodist.



The memorial bench is placed in a grassy area near the sidewalk between the main campus building and student housing. Once the bench was in place, Jan and other family members were able to visit campus to see the finished bench. Jan was joined by her sister Jill Wittert; Edith's sister Marilyn Toepfer '54; and Edith's niece Diane Pflederer, '67. Each family member agreed that Edith would have loved the bench. The saying on the plaque reads "Walk to be Healthy – Walk to be Happy" and to Edith walking meant more than exercise, she said it was for the mind, body and spirit.

Alumni Highlights



Alaina Hamilton

Alaina Hamilton '10, a Methodist College nursing instructor is being honored among Illinois' "40 under 40 Emerging Nurse Leaders" by the Illinois Nurses Foundation. Award recipients are selected by a panel of their peers based on achievement in their profession, leadership, and community and association involvement.

Alaina Hamilton, MSN, earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Methodist College. She then earned a master's degree from Walden University in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and is now pursuing a PhD. in Education at Allen College in Waterloo, Iowa.

Hamilton began her career as an oncology nurse at UnityPoint Health-Methodist. After five years in oncology she began her teaching career at Methodist College. Hamilton always knew she wanted to have a career that would make an impact, in nursing and teaching that is possible. Hamilton says she loves being able to help students and see their impact in the real world.

In the award nomination, Hamilton was recognized for her energetic and innovative ideas.

Edith was known as a woman of influence to many in the community. As her grandson stated, "She was ahead of her time – a working mom and fiercely independent." Edith was a high school valedictorian and graduated from Methodist School of Nursing as president of her class. Her career as a nurse with the Visiting Nurse Association was incredibly important to her. In her retirement, she was recognized for her decades of volunteer service with the Heart of Illinois Harvest.

Edith Unsicker Albright left a lasting impression on everyone she met. Her legacy will continue, as students for many years will be inspired by the bench bearing her name. The Methodist College community thanks Jan Yalowitz for her donation to our campus.

Pictured above is Diane, Marilyn, Jan, and Jill. Below is Genevieve Smith, Edith, and Marilyn.



Alumni Association Reunion

2017 Reunion Honors Class of 1967 and Outstanding Alumni

This summer the Methodist Alumni Association recognized our alumni at the annual Reunion Luncheon. Almost 100 Alumni from around the country came to the new college campus to reconnect with the college and former classmates.

The program kicked off by honoring **Mrs. Genevieve Hall Smith**, an alumna of the **Class of 1941**. Mrs. Smith was recognized at the reunion as a member of the oldest class represented at the event. She was presented with a corsage as a token of our appreciation. Mrs. Smith was joined at the reunion by her son and his wife. She leaves a legacy at Methodist because her grandson's wife, Amy Smith, is a nursing instructor. Amy and her son were also able to join Mrs. Smith at the reunion, marking four generations of the Smith family in attendance.

During the event Dr. Deborah Garrison, Interim Chancellor and President, provided an update of the college. Following her remarks, the Class of 1967 were presented with commemorative charms to honor their 50th class reunion. (See the photo below of the Class of 1967.)

The recognition was followed by the annual Alumni Awards presentation.

The **Rising Star Alumnus Award** was presented to **Bobby Lucia, Class of 2015**. Mr. Lucia is someone who loves to learn! He graduated from Methodist College with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. He also earned two bachelor's degrees and a master's from Bradley University. Throughout his career he has provided counseling to patients and their families, while developing support groups to meet the needs of specific patient populations. Bobby has presented at many workshops and has been published several times. Mr. Lucia also serves on the Methodist Alumni Association Board of Directors.

Dr. Donna Beuchler-Furey was presented with the Methodist Alumni Association **Service Award**. Dr. Donna Beuchler-Furey is a graduate of the **Class of 1967**. After graduation she enlisted in the United States Air Force. She served one tour as a Flight Nurse and spent 20 years as the Air Force Chief Flight Nurse, flying Aeromedical Evacuation Missions into and out of combat zones. After active duty she served more than

20 years with the Department of Veterans Affairs. She was part of a group of volunteers who established the Vietnam Women's Memorial. She also worked to establish the Illinois World War II State Memorial at Oak Ridge Cemetery in Springfield, Illinois. Dr. Beuchler-Furey has also dedicated her time to several animal rescue groups. She supports military dogs and lobbied intensely to have K-9 corps reclassified as GI personnel instead of excessive military supplies. Dr. Beuchler-Furey has dedicated many years of work to military veterans and services.

This year's **Distinguished Alumni Award** was presented to **Wilma Slutz Christiansen, Class of 1957**. Wilma is an active member of the Methodist Alumni Association Board of Directors. She worked with a local doctor for 20 years and spent several years in another office. She has served on the Church Council of the First United Methodist Church in Peoria, volunteered for the church's Loaves and Fish ministry, and provided vital signs medical screenings. She has also volunteered at Irving and Lincoln middle schools in Peoria. Ms. Christiansen has also served on the Board of Directors of the Lessie Bates Davis Neighborhood House in East St. Louis and the Cunningham Children's Home in Champaign, both affiliated with the United Methodist Women on the Illinois Great Rivers Conference.





Congratulations Graduates!

Methodist College celebrated graduates and welcomed its newest alumni on Saturday, December 17, 2016, and Saturday, May 20, 2017. Friends and family gathered at Bethany Baptist Church to watch as the college awarded degrees to 78 graduates in December 2016 (pictured above) and more than 80 graduates in May 2017 (pictured below). These were the first two classes of graduates who completed their degree program on the college's new campus.




Ollie's Food Pantry

Methodist College opened a food pantry that will help support our students. Named Ollie's Pantry, after the owl mascot, the pantry will provide Methodist College students in need with non-perishable food items, paper goods, cleaning supplies, and diapers for those students with young children.

According to the National Student Campaign against Hunger and Homelessness, food insecurity is defined as the lack of reliable access to sufficient quantities of affordable, nutritious food. A national survey released in 2016, showed that 1 in 5 students at four-year schools qualified as having very low food security. The national survey also revealed that 32% of those surveyed believed that hunger or housing problems had an impact on education.

Ollie's Food Pantry is managed by Dean of Students Andre Allen and staffed by student volunteers. For more information about the pantry visit www.MethodistCOL.edu/ollies-pantry. To find out how donations made to Methodist College through the Alumni Appeal help the pantry and our students, see page three.

Did You Know?



In 2008, Methodist College received accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission, a regional accreditation agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

In addition, the baccalaureate and master's degree nursing programs are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing.