

Today's 21st Century Student

according to
THE CLASS OF
2006

As one of the largest freshman classes in Canisius history embarks on its college journey, *Canisius College Magazine* profiles today's 21st century student.

Is a biology major

SAT score — 1097

Lives on campus

Plans to pursue a master's degree

Is Roman Catholic

Graduated from a public high school

Performed volunteer work her senior year of high school

On any given day when class is in session, the Canisius campus is bustling with activity. The Quadrangle is filled with students scurrying to and from classes. The hallways of Old Main are lined with students stealing a few extra minutes to review their notes before that next exam. And a steady stream of students, weighted down by book-bags, file in and out of the Bouwhuis Library to study. Most likely this is a scene reminiscent of when you were a student. But as today's Canisius students crisscross the campus, they are also checking voicemail via their cell phone; accessing their E-mail at one of the many computer stations; or conducting business such as class registration, meal plan purchases or tuition payments at any one of the InfoCenter kiosks scattered across campus!

Times have certainly changed since the evolution of the computer. But technological advancement aside, just how different are today's 21st century students than that of years past? To find out, the editors of *Canisius College Magazine* turned to the Class of 2006 – one of the largest freshman classes in Canisius history, with 849 enrolled students. Their comments, combined with college statistics, surveys and archival research helped us create a composite profile of "Today's Canisius Student." At face value, they may appear vastly different from the Canisius students of 10, 20 or 30 years ago. For example, today's "typical" Canisius student is a white female who lives within commuting distance of the college but chooses to reside on campus. She is a biology major with plans to pursue a graduate degree in her field. She also brings her own computer to campus, on which she spends an average six hours a week surfing the Internet.

Surprised? Don't be. As you read the following pages, you may be more amazed to discover new truth to the old adage that "the more things change, the more they stay the same."

The Female Phenomenon

Anyone familiar with the history of Canisius knows the Society of Jesus founded the college in 1870 as an institution of higher learning for men. According to *The Feminine Force: A History of Women at Canisius College*, it wasn't until 1919, just prior to Canisius passing its half-century mark, that women became academic participants at the college. For more than three-quarters of a century, female students remained among the minority at Canisius. But that all changed in 1998 when, for the first time in the history of Canisius, the freshman female population surpassed that of the male. Today, freshman women outnumber men by a ratio of 53:47 percent.

It's an astonishing phenomenon that is taking hold not just at Canisius but at public and private colleges and universities across the country.

"It's a very exciting time on college campuses right now because more and more women are going to college," says Anthony J. Bellia, dean of enrollment management. "Even more noteworthy, is that today's female students are pursuing occupations they might not have considered just five or 10 years ago. We're seeing many, many more women entering the field of law and many, many more women entering the field of medicine."

While there is plenty of speculation as to why the number of women is beginning to exceed the number of men on college campuses, no one seems to know for sure. Some researchers attribute the male gender-imbalance to the lure of high-paying technology careers that require little or no post-high school education. Other experts say global changes favor the talents of women rather than men. No matter what the reason, research and enrollment experts agree that the current war on terrorism and threat of war with Iraq could further the disparity between men and women on college campuses.

"Recruiting for the military is at an all-time high right now so I really don't see this trend reversing or even stabilizing anytime soon," says Bellia.

Calling Canisius Home

Another trend that continues to swell at Canisius is where today's students call home. Traditionally, the college was recognized as a commuter school because the preponderance – if not entire – student body came from the city of Buffalo or its surrounding suburbs. Even in 1968, when Canisius opened the doors to its first residence hall (Frisch), only 72 of 595 freshmen resided on campus.

"I can't name a person who lived in Western New York and resided on campus at that time," says **Rocco J. Maggiotto '72**, a commuter student who recalls when resident students first coined the phrases "brown-bagger" and "day hopper" to refer to commuters. "Primarily students back then didn't live on campus because of the money. I worked full-time when I was at Canisius. So did most of my friends. But you just couldn't afford to live on campus. It also would have been perceived as peculiar for a person who lived in the immediate metropolitan community to reside on campus. People would have thought there was a problem at home. No one asks any of those questions today," adds Maggiotto, whose nephew **Anthony '04** resides on campus, despite growing up less than 10 miles from campus.



JOHN RUDY '06

quick stats

on the class of '06

849 enrolled freshmen
53% female : 47% male
High School Average: 89.5%
Average SAT score: 1097

TOP FIVE ENROLLED FRESHMEN MAJORS (%)

Biology.....	14.0
Accounting	6.0
Psychology	5.8
Management	5.0
Political Science	5.0

(Excludes Undecided)

DATA INCLUDED ON THE CLASS OF 2006 REFLECTS AVERAGE FIGURES AVAILABLE AS OF OCTOBER 11, 2002



SAMIRAH AL-SAIDI '06

reasons noted as very important to go to college:

- To get training in a specific career77.8%
- To learn more about things that interest me.....73.7%
- To be able to get a better job72.9%
- To be able to make more money69.5%
- To gain a general education and appreciation of ideas67.0%
- To prepare myself for graduate or professional school65.4%

influencing student's decision to attend Canisius College:

- Canisius has a very good academic reputation74.6%
- Canisius graduates get good jobs.....71.1%
- Offered financial assistance68.1%
- Offered a merit-based scholarship63.8%

objectives considered essential or very important:

- Being very well off financially76.0%
- Raising a family71.4%
- Helping others who are in difficulty ..63.8%
- Becoming an authority in my field60.9%
- Obtaining recognition from colleagues for contributions to my field.....58.4%
- Becoming a community leader41.4%

P E R C E N T A G E S R E F L E C T 2 0 0 1 C I R P S U R V E Y

Today, residence housing is a hot commodity at Canisius. With 518 (or 61 percent) freshmen living on campus, this year's class is the largest to ever reside at Canisius! And while the Class of 2006 represents more than 11 different states (including California, Connecticut, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Washington), nearly half (or 240) of the freshman resident population come from within commuting distance of Canisius but choose to reside on campus.

"For me, a big part of deciding to dorm was so that I could learn to live and do things on my own, and not be so dependent," explains **John P. Rudy '06**, a resident student who hails from South Buffalo. He adds that his "parents were all for that!"

Rudy's quest for independence mirrors that of most Canisius freshmen, according to Matthew H. Mulville '88, MS '94, associate dean of students and director of residence life, who ascribes much of the residence boom on campus to students in search of the complete college experience.

"They want independence. They want to learn life skills. And they want to live with people who are different."

They also want the comforts of home on campus, adds Mulville, who notes "a college's residence facilities rank right up there at the top when today's students and their parents start scouting colleges."

Shawna Starowitz '06 agrees. The Batavia native chose to hang her hat at Canisius, after touring the living quarters. "The residence facilities at Canisius were just way beyond what I saw at other colleges," she says. "Most just offer very small rooms, not suites like

I'm in here and certainly nothing like the townhouses that are available to upperclassmen!"

To keep up with the demands of today's students, Canisius invested more than \$42 million, over the past five years, in the renovation of Bosch and Frisch Halls, Martin Hall, Desmond Hall, the construction of the Village and Delavan Townhouses and the refurbishment of Campion Hall, now underway. Today, the college's residence facilities rank in the top 10 out of 229 colleges and universities (according to a national residence survey), and are attracting a growing number of Canisius students from outside city, state and even international lines.

Diversity = Vitality

Those students are helping to introduce a new sense of diversity to the predominantly Caucasian student body at Canisius. Compared to just 10 years ago, the percentage of African American students on campus has climbed from 5.3 to 8.6 percent. The college has seen slower growth among students of American Indian,


Asian American and Latino ethnicity but strives to enhance that through such programs as the McGowan Learning Community, which provides 20, full-tuition scholarships to minority students from the city of Buffalo. "It's nice to see the college start programs like McGowan at Canisius, which has traditionally had a white student body," says **Tiffany Benning**, a freshman McGowan scholar. "These type of programs introduce new cultures to campus and give students more opportunities to get different perspectives on different issues."

The diversity of the student body is further enhanced by the ascent of international students, which has increased ten-fold since 1989, when the Office of International Student Programs first opened. The freshman class currently represents five different countries including Canada, Japan, Jordan, Poland and Trinidad. Overall, there are nearly 400 international students, who travel from more than 38 different countries, including Canada, to attend Canisius. Esther A. Northman, director of International Student Programs, says the heightened diversity on campus benefits both

international and American students.

"American students help the international students understand our way of life, which they are so eager to learn. Additionally, international students provide a great opportunity for Americans to learn about the cultures and traditions of other countries."

The significance of this exchange of cultures rang true



freshmen who call Canisius home
 Residents61%
 Commuters39%

geographic breakdown of freshman students
 Local (primarily Erie and Niagara counties)65.5%
(almost 73% come from within 50 miles of Canisius)
 Rest of New York State27%
 Outside New York State 6%
 International 1.5%

DATA INCLUDED ON THE CLASS OF 2006 REFLECTS AVERAGE FIGURES AVAILABLE AS OF OCTOBER 11, 2002



following the events of September 11, says **Hassan Al-Farsi**, a graduate student from Oman, who played an important role in the college's memorial events.

"I was really impressed with the college and how they invited Muslim students to be involved in the September 11 programs and prayer services, both this year and last year."

A Sense of Community

Although the faces of Canisius students have changed throughout the years, their expectations of Canisius have remained the same.

"Every student comes here wanting and expecting a good college experience – both

Garcia, a freshman softball recruit from Pacific Grove, CA, in her decision to attend Canisius.

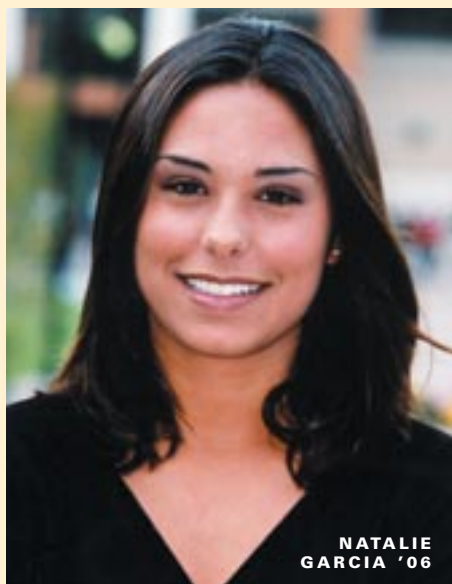
"I really liked that the campus wasn't too big. Compared to some of the other colleges I looked at, Canisius just felt more welcoming and I didn't feel as far away from home," says Garcia. "The small classes really help you get to know your professors and they you," adds **Thanh Tran '06**. "I really feel as though the professors are watching my back, looking out for me, motivating me and encouraging me because they're genuinely concerned about me, not just as a student but as an individual."

Complementing the college's campus and class sizes are limitless opportunities for

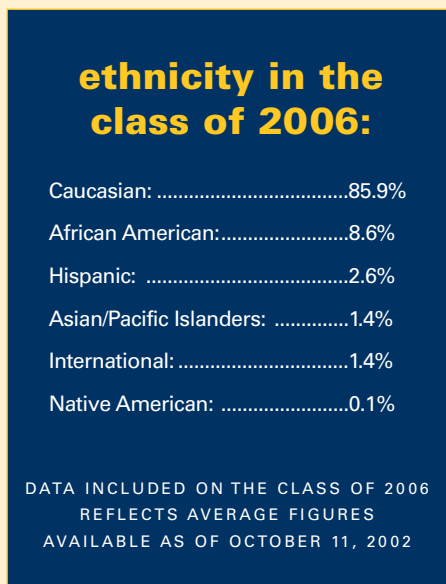
"So many of today's students arrive on campus wanting to get involved in the college community because so many were involved in community and volunteer service work in high school."

Men and Women for Others

In fact, according to the 2001 Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP), which surveys Canisius freshmen, an overwhelming 92.4 percent said they performed some form of volunteer work during their senior year in high school. Of course, the Jesuit tradition of service is not new to Canisius students. In 1989, when CIRP first began surveying Canisius freshmen



NATALIE GARCIA '06



THANH TRAN '06

academically and socially," states Mulville. "That isn't something new. That expectation has been the same for all Canisius students – past and present."

More than 30 years of freshman surveys confirm that students who choose Canisius, first and foremost, expect to receive a well-rounded liberal arts degree. They also expect opportunities to become part of the Canisius community.

"One of the first things students do when they arrive is look for a place or a group to get involved in," explains Brian P. Smith, director of student activities. "They want to make a connection with someone else or find somewhere to feel comfortable. They are looking to build a sense of community around them."

In many ways, creating a community atmosphere comes naturally at Canisius where, despite a growing student body, the class sizes remain relatively small. That encouraged **Natalie**

students to get involved. In just the past decade, the number of student clubs and organizations has grown to more than 90 strong and attendance at various student-run programs has steadily increased.

Certainly, the growing residential student body can be attributed to the increase in student involvement. But Brian Smith also credits the rise in undergraduate participation to enhanced student leadership, improved communication between the college and student body via E-mail, and the opportunity for students to feel they have a voice in what happens on campus. He notes that the president of student government serves as an *ex-officio* member on the Board of Trustees and the Board of Regents because "the college believes student input in decision making is important." Additionally, Smith cites an even greater reason for the college's increase in student participation.

about their service involvement, 69.3 percent indicated they performed volunteer work during their senior year in high school. And even before the Office of Campus Ministry was formally established in 1985, Rev. Thomas A. O'Connor, S.J., associate campus minister, recalls students being actively engaged in service work.

"Campus Ministry used to be a very small but relatively active operation. There were service opportunities at worship services, soup kitchens and every Thanksgiving a food drive," says Father O'Connor. "But as our student population has grown, so too has Campus Ministry and its service opportunities."

Today, students can – and do - volunteer at any one of the 11 after-school tutorial programs. They also perform service work at Benedict House, a residence for people with AIDS; Vive LaCasa, a temporary house for world refugees; and Habitat for Humanity. More and more

men & women for others

PERCENTAGE OF FRESHMAN
STUDENTS WHO PERFORMED
VOLUNTEER WORK DURING
THEIR SENIOR YEAR
IN HIGH SCHOOL

92.4

PERCENTAGES REFLECT 2001 CIRP SURVEY

students are also opting to get involved in social justice programs. The Alternate Spring Break trip in Appalachia has grown so extensively that, in recent years, Campus Ministry added two additional service trips for students. Project Mexico, in May, puts students to work at a camp for children in Mexico City. And during winter break, students travel to New York to volunteer with children in after school programs, and visit with people in hospitals, nursing homes and shelters.

"The spirit of today's students is strong because they see the needs of society are strong," says Coordinator of Volunteer Services Sister Patricia Brady, SSMN, who is encouraged to see more students involved in service work at a younger age. "Many more high schools – public as well as religious affiliated, are requiring students to perform a certain number of hours of community service. The idea is to educate the student about the concept of being a citizen leader – or as we like to say at Canisius, men and women for others."

Kevin Durrell '06, a Canisius service scholar, devoted 100-plus hours to community service work throughout high school. But Durrell says it was time he would have spent volunteering anyway.

"My parents introduced me to service work when I was very young. They were always very involved through our church. So for me, volunteering is a way of putting something back into the community."

That desire and sense of responsibility to give back is what many students, like service scholar **Regina Linge '06**, often find most fulfilling about service work.

"Everyone nowadays is so used to their lives as they are but the world is so much bigger," says Linge. "Many of us have had very blessed lives but everyone deserves that same opportunity. Therefore, as a Catholic, I see it as my job to help others. That's what Jesus did and we

are supposed to live as a reflection of him."

Linge is not unlike many other Canisius students who, according to Sister Pat, view service work as an expression and extension of their faith.

"We see a lot of students today who have a religious denomination they affiliate with but are not as concerned with knowing everything about that religion as they are with expressing themselves spiritually. Simply, they believe in God and believe it is their responsibility to help others in need."

Finding Their Faith

It's not uncommon to hear the term "spiritual" when asking 21st century students to describe their faith. Rev. John P. Bucki, S.J., director of Campus Ministry, hears it quite often among students who have "questions, doubts, disputes or uncertainties about their religion."

"Today's students hold themselves to a very high standard. They want to be able to buy into the whole package – so to speak – before calling themselves religious. But like the former Indian Jesuit Tony DeMello once said, 'doubt is faith's friend' and something many Canisius students experience as they become faith-filled holy adults."

While some students hesitate at calling themselves religious, there is evidence they actively practice the values of their faith. According to the 2001 CIRP survey, nearly 87 percent of freshmen attended religious services; and 77 percent indicated they pray or meditate for one or two hours a week. Further proof is Sunday evening Mass at Christ the King Chapel, which remains the most widely attended service on campus.

"Many of today's students believe it is important to practice holy values," says Father Bucki. "That might involve going to church, it might involve prayer and it might involve the value of the how they treat other people. All of those things are included when students say they are spiritual."

And while the 2001 CIRP freshman survey indicates Canisius remains a predominantly Catholic college, (66.3 percent of freshmen indicated they are of Roman Catholic denomination, although college officials believe the number is much higher), there are signs of increasing religious diversity on campus. Other faiths represented on campus include Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Eastern Orthodox, Quaker and Seventh Day Adventist.

Adam Kaiser '06 appreciates the religious diversity on campus. The Canisius freshman is not affiliated with a religious denomination but

describes himself as a person of faith.

"Religion is so complex and I really want to learn more about it," he explains. "I can do that here because there are people from all different religious backgrounds who I can talk with and religious studies classes I can take."

Father Bucki adds that Kaiser is much like other Canisius students his age.

"Today's students are open. They're alive. They have great spirit. And they are trying to discover who they are. So to give them an education in the best sense of the Jesuit tradition, we challenge them to ask questions about their faith and see it in different ways so they can put it into practice."

Politically Speaking

In keeping with the Jesuit tradition, today's students are challenged about more than just their faith. They are expected to exercise critical thinking skills on issues of all varieties and encouraged to follow in the path of their predecessors, who often put those skills into practice.

finding their faith

freshman students' stated religious preference

Roman Catholic	66.3%
Baptist	5.4%
Lutheran.....	4.1%
Methodist	3.8%
Other Christian	3.2%
Presbyterian	2.5%
Eastern Orthodox.....	1.6%
Other	1.9%
None.....	9.8%

percentage of students who attended religious services regularly during senior year in high school

66.3

PERCENTAGES REFLECT 2001 CIRP SURVEY

public vs. private

percentage of freshman students who came from public and private high schools

Public	71
Private.....	29



ALYSIA CROWE '06 is among **49.8 percent** of Canisius freshmen that plan to pursue **master's degrees**.

AARON HAYES '06, a physical education major, is among **77.8 percent** of Canisius freshmen that decided to go to college to **obtain training in a specific career**.



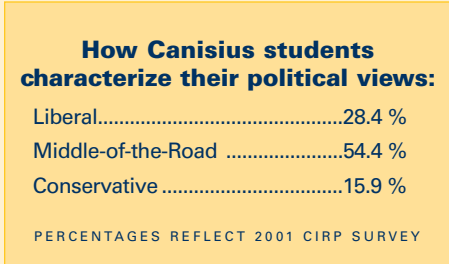
In fact, Canisius history is rich with student involvement in social justice issues. On March 20, 1965 a delegation of Canisius students converged in Selma, Alabama to join Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in the historic civil rights march that protested the south's social injustices against African Americans and their right to vote. In May 1970, the student body demonstrated, on behalf of peace, against the U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. When reductions in state financial aid jeopardized education for students in the early 1990s, the Undergraduate Student Association actively lobbied in Albany to restore funding. And in November 2000, Canisius students traveled to the gates of Fort Benning in Columbus, Georgia where they joined students from the 27 other Jesuit schools at an Ignatian Family Teach-In and solemn funeral procession in protest of the U.S. Army School of the Americas. This month, Canisius students will make that same trip to Fort Benning.

"Canisius students have always expressed strong interests in social issues and concerns," states Brian Smith. "But it's interesting to see how some of those social issues they care about have changed over the years."

To further illustrate this, consider some of the other social concerns among students questioned from past years. According to the 1973 CIRP survey, the majority (70 percent) of students wanted to see the United States do more about pollution. In 1984, the overwhelming majority (89.5 percent) of freshmen wanted to see women receive job equality. More than 90 percent of freshmen in 1992 indicated a concern over the expectation of sex on a date. The issues changed

again in 2001 when the majority (87.8 percent) of Canisius freshmen stated "the federal government needs to do more to control the sale of handguns."

Not surprisingly, the issue most important to students one year ago altered dramatically following the attacks on September 11. Much like the Vietnam War in the late 1960s, the cur-



rent war on terrorism and threat of war with Iraq are the overwhelming social issues concerning today's students.

"My biggest concern in the world right now is the potential war with Iraq," says **LaTricia Smith '06**. "I feel as though we shouldn't go to war. To me, we're not ready for it. I think we're jumping in too early and that we need to think things over before we attack."

Smith's opinion reflects that of the many other Canisius students polled on this issue. Additionally, the mood on campus today somewhat mirrors that of the concern Canisius students expressed during the early years of the Vietnam era.

"When I was at the college in the middle 60s, generally people on campus – as well as across the country – were supportive of the war

because we thought we were doing the right thing," recalls **Robert M. Greene '66**. "People were questioning but supportive. There was a small anti-war movement on campus that was not very popular because the U.S. hadn't really entered into it yet. It wasn't until the late 60s and early 70s, when we learned more about the war, that the tide turned."

But even during the riot years (1969-1972) the student body at Canisius demonstrated tolerance, notes Melvin W. Schroeder, an associate professor of English at the college since 1963.

"There were students who were angry and aggressive. There were demonstrations. But not like on other college campuses," he recalls. "It always interested me to see how the Canisius student body had a more broad and tolerant reality about Vietnam."

Today's Student, Tomorrow's Leader

No matter what the issue, ethnicity, religious practice, or field of study, today's Canisius students are demanding more of their college and themselves than ever before. But much like Canisius students of past generations, today's students continue to receive an education in the best sense of the Jesuit tradition. They thrive on being challenged, practice the most holy of values and are equally driven in the development that will ultimately lead to their self-discovery. And if previous generations of Canisius students are any indication, then the 21st century student of today is certain to become tomorrow's leader. ■