

Outstanding Senior Leaders 2002

Each summer, *Canisius College Magazine* features the accomplishments of outstanding senior leaders who have distinguished themselves academically, socially and through service to the community. This year, three members from the Class of 2002 were selected. Each represents one of the three schools at Canisius (the Richard J. Wehle School of Business, the School of Education and Human Services, and the College of Arts and Sciences).

The students featured on the following pages were chosen because they exemplify the Jesuit ideals of scholarship and service to others. They are but a few among our many graduates who reaffirm that Canisius is the place "Where Leaders are Made."

Kyle Allen was just three years old when he laced up his first pair of ice skates. “I had a lot of energy as a child,” he says “so my parents thought it best to channel that energy into a sport.” Nineteen years later, Kyle has yet to come off the ice. He played throughout high school for his local team, the Wheatfield Blades; coached seven-to-10 year olds in little league hockey; and rallied his Division I Ice Griffin teammates, during his junior and senior year.

He’s had great success on the ice but Kyle scored his first real ‘hat trick’ off the ice this spring when he graduated with a rare triple major in entrepreneurship, management and marketing.

“I eventually want to own a business so I started as an entrepreneurship major,” explains Kyle. “Knowing I would never have the capital to start my own business right out of college, I picked up the management and marketing majors to help me get a job and get established.”

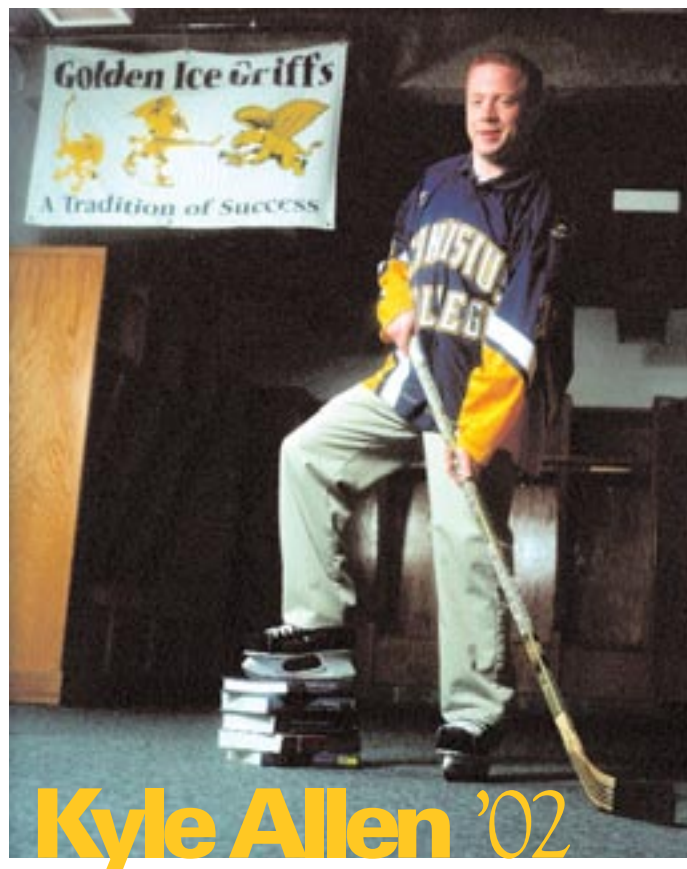
Kyle’s outstanding academics earned him a Dean’s Scholarship for four consecutive years at Canisius and a place on the Dean’s List for seven straight semesters. Management/Marketing Professor Dr. Guy H. Gessner describes Kyle as “one of the best students” in his 20 years of teaching. Kyle credits that compliment to the fact that he always came to class prepared and ready to participate in class discussions.

“Participating in class can really help you learn,” says Kyle. “You’re more attentive, you tend to retain more and if you’re unclear on something or have an opinion about something, bringing it to the attention of the professor helps you know if you’re thinking on the right track.”

Kyle graduated in May with a 3.84 GPA — an exemplary grade point average for someone balancing a full course load with

an extremely time-consuming sport. But the greatest lesson he learned from juggling his homework, class projects and long hockey practices was time management.

“School comes first. It always has,” states Kyle. “But I love hockey, so I learned early that if I did well in school and finished my homework after school, I could play hockey with a little more peace of mind.”



Kyle Allen '02

Kyle’s dedication to both academics and athletics earned him two consecutive designations to the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference All-Academic Team. To qualify, a student must maintain a minimum 3.2 GPA, be a team starter or significant reserve and play in at least one game a season, which coincidentally, is all the ice time Kyle received this year.

“It wasn’t the best hockey year for me,” he says.

But Kyle’s nomination to the All-Academic Team was more a result of his leadership abilities off the ice, rather than his athletic contributions on the ice.

“He may not get a lot of game time,” says Steven J. Rudnicki, assistant director of athletic communications, “but Kyle is one of those players who helps the team as a whole by pushing players in practice, in the locker room and on the game bus.”

“Competition makes everyone better so I just tried to contribute in anyway I could,” adds Kyle, whose academic and athletic excellence was most recently rewarded with an induction into Chi Sigma Alpha, a national college athletic honor society. “I worked hard in practice so the guy in front of me would work a little harder and push the guy in front of him to work harder. I cheered my teammates on between periods and tried to boost their confidence if they thought they made a mistake.”

For Kyle, leading by example is a quality that extends well beyond the classroom and the ice rink. He is committed to serving the community and in the past has volunteered as a Canisius ambassador at the college’s open house, helped coordinate the college’s Shoes for Shelter 5k Run, which benefits the St. Vincent de Paul Shelter, and participated in the “Just Say No” children’s program at his local YMCA.

“I’ve been helped by many, many people throughout my life and want to do the same for others, especially kids,” says Kyle. “They are so easily influenced nowadays so it’s important they have older people to look up to.”

A leader among his classmates, teammates and community, Kyle is certain to find the same success at the University of Buffalo, where he will pursue a master’s degree in business administration. But his biggest goal is yet to come, as Kyle shoots for his dream of becoming his own boss.

We at Canisius are sure he will score! ■

— Audrey R. Browka

You could say

Chandana Boblak has been teaching most of her life. As a little girl eager to follow in her mother’s footsteps, she spent countless hours “playing teacher” in her basement with a huge chalkboard and plenty of visual aids.

“I would line up all my stuffed animals and hold class,” recalls Chandana. “I had the ABC’s hanging up and would take the old scholastics and ditto paper out of the garbage in my mom’s classroom to use in mine.”

Her mother, a retired teacher who spent 35 years in the Buffalo School District, serves as Chandana’s role model. “She was a wonderful teacher who was completely devoted to her students. She always said it was the kids that kept her going.”

Like her mother, Chandana also aspires to teach in the Buffalo School District. She is a “true idealist” according to Dr. George Wenner, associate professor of teacher education, “who is committed to using her talent to teach in an urban setting.”

Chandana’s commitment was reinforced following a recent trip to the South Bronx, where she helped establish an after-school program for women and children.

“I was a student leader for one of the college’s week-long projects and saw the deficit that exists in those schools,” she explains. “I witnessed first hand just how bad some classroom situations are.”

Upon returning home, Chandana received an E-mail from a five-year old boy she met on her trip. He wrote: “My teacher hit me today and I don’t think that she can do that. Please come back and be my teacher.” That E-mail brought Chandana to tears and convinced her of the significant impact a teacher can have on students.

“It is so important to have good teachers, especially in kindergarten and the younger grades,” she says. “Your kindergarten teacher should be your favorite and the teacher you will always remember.”



Chandana Boblak '02

Chandana strived to be that memorable teacher she refers to during her student teaching opportunities at Thomas Edison and School #59, a science magnet school attached to the Buffalo Museum of Science. She developed an instant rapport with her students and learned just as much from them as they did from her.

“At Thomas Edison Elementary, I had a kindergarten class of 27. One child was autistic and two were emotionally disturbed. It was challenging but the experience was very rewarding,” she says. “School 59 had a very different teaching environment. All the fourth grade classes and their teachers were in one room so you had to be very creative in order to keep the class focused on the lesson.”

It’s no surprise Chandana excelled as a teacher considering her academic record at Canisius. A member of the Dean’s List for seven consecutive semesters, she graduated *summa cum laude* with a 4.0 in her major and the highest GPA in the School of Education – 3.96. She earned induction into several national and international

honor societies including DiGamma, Alpha Sigma Nu, Sigma Tau Delta and Kappa Delta Phi. She is also a recipient of the William F. Kean Award for Excellence in Education, the Donald J. Murphy Award in Elementary Education, the Leslie C. Warren Award for Academic Excellence in English and a prestigious Eisenhower Science Grant, which she used to prepare and field-test instructional activities designed to motivate elementary school children.

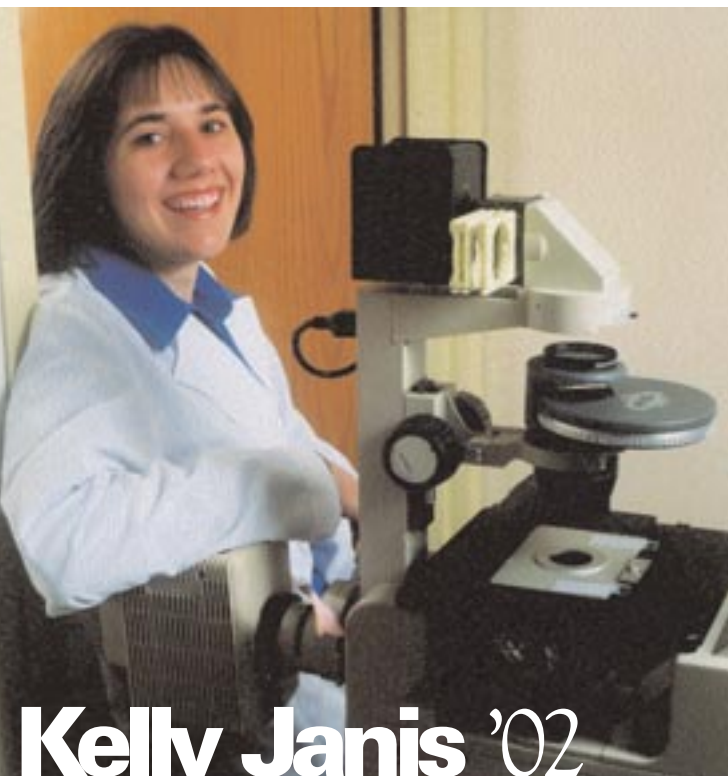
Considered a role model among her peers, Chandana served as a student leader for two of the college’s Appalachia Service Projects, traveled with members of Campus Ministry to set up a summer camp for children in Mexico City, and continues to volunteer as a religious education teacher, Cantor and guitarist at Buffalo State College’s Newman Center.

Fortunately for Canisius, Chandana will remain on campus a couple more years while she pursues her master’s degree in elementary education and reading. ■

— Eileen C. Herbert

Anyone who has

pursued a career in medicine can tell you just how demanding that quest can be. Aside from an exceptional grade point average, medical schools command disciplined students who demonstrate a healthy appetite for learning, extensive research experience and devoted community service. (A never-ending supply of stamina couldn't hurt either, considering the years of intensive schooling and residency requirements!) It is a competitive arena but Canisius College is confident **Kelly Janis** will endure as a leader in the medical field – just as she did during her four years on campus.



Kelly Janis '02

A biology major with a concentration in neuroscience, Kelly's passion for scientific problem solving is driven by her own struggles with epilepsy.

"I don't know what specific area of neuroscience I want to go into yet, but I know that I want to continue my neuroscience research as a result of my own personal experiences," says Kelly, who has

managed to control her epilepsy for more than 10 years.

According to her mentor, Dr. Susan Aronica, assistant professor of biology, Kelly's dogged determination to learn all she can about the field of neuroscience helped this once reticent young woman develop into a confident and assertive young researcher. The recipient of three research grants, including two from the prestigious Howard Hughes Medical Institute, Kelly has conducted several successful studies at Canisius on breast cancer and lupus. Her most recent project on astrocytoma – a type of brain tumor – resulted in some of the most significant

undergraduate research at Canisius and earned Kelly the opportunity to present her findings at national and international conferences.

"It has been so exciting for me to present my research to professors from all different parts of the world," exclaims Kelly. "What's even more exciting is that they can never believe I'm an undergraduate. They're not really expecting undergraduates at these conferences!"

Eager to share her enthusiasm and knowledge with her younger peers, Kelly took on the job of teaching assistant, in the endocrinology

and cell biology labs of Aronica. She quickly became a role model to students. For several hours each week, Kelly instructed various lab procedures and techniques, motivated students to confront classroom challenges and encouraged them to continually reach for higher goals.

"I know that people have limitations but there is a certain point where each of

us can go to and sometimes all we need is that extra push," says Kelly.

"I feel like it's my responsibility to help those students coming up under me. So, if someone is nervous about a presentation or thinks they can't do a lab procedure, I'll help them work through the situation the way I always do, one step at a time."

Fortunately for Canisius, Kelly never limited her willingness to help others to the classroom. A retreat scholar and member of the Campus Ministry retreat team, Kelly organized religious retreats to nourish the spiritual needs of Canisius students. As one of two co-presidents of Beta Beta Beta, the biology honor society, Kelly directed fund-raising efforts that led the Canisius chapter to one of its most profitable years. In all of her involvements, Kelly used her knowledge of epilepsy to educate the Canisius community about its challenges and medical management. She was rewarded for her efforts in 2001 when members of Beta Beta Beta donated funds from their annual benefit concert to Camp EAGR, a youth camp run by the Epilepsy Association of Greater Rochester, where Kelly volunteers as a counselor.

"Volunteering is a way for me to give back to those who have helped me," says Kelly. "It's important that we all look out for each other because we all need other people."

Kelly's contagious enthusiasm for the care of the individual is the leadership quality that set her apart as a medical school applicant. This fall, she becomes one of only two students — nationwide — selected to participate in the Michigan State Medical Science Training Program. There she will earn a doctor of osteopathic medical degree and a PhD in neuroscience. It will be a demanding seven-year program but Kelly says she will tackle the challenge just as she would a lab procedure or research presentation – "one step at a time." (Or in this case – one semester at a time!) ■

— Audrey R. Browka

Fulbright Scholars

The Fulbright Scholarship is named for Senator J. William Fulbright and is the U.S. government's premier scholarship program. Designed to foster mutual understanding among nations through educational and cultural exchanges, the Fulbright Scholarship provides tuition, fees, travel and research funds to recipients for a full year. Twenty-two Fulbright Scholarships have been awarded to Canisius College students since 1987.

Edward Snyder '02 and **Stephen Altieri '02** each received good news this spring when they were notified that they were recipients of the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship.

Snyder will travel to the University of Bielefeld in Germany this fall, where he will research the resistance of the German Evangelical Church in Westphalia to the Nazi practice of euthanasia. A dual major in German and history, Snyder examined conservatism in the Weimar Republic and the David Irving trial in Great Britain, as a research assistant to Dr. Larry E. Jones, professor of history. He became fluent in the German language, during the two semesters he spent studying abroad at Dortmund University and traveled to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington D.C., to research Jewish resistance in the Operation Reinhard death camps.

A member of the All-College Honors Program, the History Honors Program and Phi Alpha Theta, the national history honor society, Snyder plans to pursue a PhD in history following his year of research at Bielefeld. He hopes to one day teach at the college level.

Stephen Altieri is a chemistry and biology major who will spend one year at McGill University in Montreal. The Fulbright Scholarship will enable him to continue his research in immunology and cancer vaccination through a synthesis of biochemical theory and immunological practice. A recipient of a Hughes Stipend for Education in Science, and grants from the NYS Department of Health and the National Institute of Health, Altieri conducted original research on immunology under the direction of the prestigious Dr. Thomas B. Tomasi, the former president of Roswell Park Cancer Institute who now serves on the research staff for the institute's Department of Immunology.

During his four years at Canisius, Altieri was a member of the All-College Honors Program, the Earth Action Club, the American Chemical Society and a volunteer for Campus Ministry. Following his year at McGill, Altieri will attend Yale University where he has been accepted into the PhD program for biochemistry. Altieri's post-education plans include teaching at the university level and continuing his biochemistry research. ■

