

George Vourlojianis '70, '76G has taught history at John Carroll since 2001.

## Called to Teach

Alumnus and adjunct professor establishes endowed book fund

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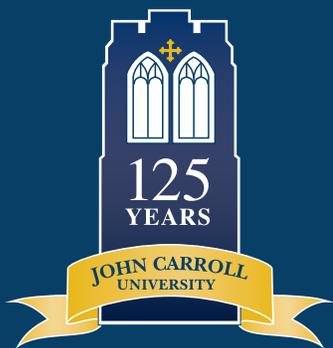
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Magis (pronounced "màh-jis") is a Jesuit phrase that means "the more." It is taken from Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam, a Latin phrase meaning "for the greater glory of God." Magis refers to the philosophy of doing more, for Christ, and therefore for others.

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**S**ome dreams really do come true – just ask George Vourlojianis '70, '76G.

As a young boy, Vourlojianis frequented museums and historical films with his father and grandfather and “got hooked” on history. He dreamed of becoming a history teacher one day.

“I was put on earth to teach. I don’t think of teaching as a job – it’s just another part of me. Some of us have the ability to impart knowledge to others,” says the John Carroll alumnus and adjunct professor in the Department of History.

For more than 20 years, the Beachwood native has taught U.S. history at Lorain County Community College, where he is history department chair. In addition, Vourlojianis was on the faculty at Kent State University from 1992 to 2002. In 1999, he received the Distinguished Teacher Award for the College of Arts and Sciences.

Vourlojianis became an adjunct professor at John Carroll in 2001, when the University added U.S. military history to its curriculum. He had recently received his certification to teach military history from the history department, United States Military Academy during a fellowship at West Point. In addition to U.S. history and military history, he teaches classes on World War II and the Vietnam War.

Vourlojianis earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in history, along with his ROTC commission from John Carroll, and his doctorate in history from Kent State.

In his desire to give back to Carroll’s history department and to further assist students, Vourlojianis recently established the George N. Vourlojianis History Award

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—George Vourlojianis '70, '76G

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# Magis Legacy Society welcomes newest members

Over 60 John Carroll alumni, family, friends, and guests attended the Magis Liturgy and Awards Brunch October 16. The University holds the annual event to welcome new Magis members and to thank all members for their generosity in making provisions for John Carroll University in their estates.

John Carroll University President Robert L. Niehoff, S.J., served as celebrant and homilist at the Magis Mass preceding brunch, and presented Magis Legacy Society medallions to six (of 18) new members who attended the brunch, including Joseph Cszaszar '67, Richard '86 and Christine '86 Kramer, Jeff Malicki '86, Gus McPhie '64, Raymond Smiley '51, and George Vourlojianis '70.

Other new members are Nancy Cunningham Benacci '77, Frank Brady '70, Donald Brichford '75, William

Donnelly '83, Daniel Frate '83, Robert Heltzel '70, Daniel Hilson '82, Bud Koch, Jack Kodweis '63, Tom Kromer '79, John Magnotto '60, and Thomas Moore '69.

This year's keynote speaker was Paul V. Murphy, Ph.D., history professor, director of the Institute of Catholic Studies, and assistant to the president for University Mission and Identity. Summarizing his remarks at the brunch, Murphy said: "Following in the tradition of St. Ignatius and his insights in *The Spiritual Exercises*, our role here at John Carroll University is to provide our students with the intellectual, spiritual, and ethical tools to choose to live in their full human dignity as with God and their neighbor."



PHOTOS (top): Ray Smiley '51 and family. (bottom) The 2011 Magis Awards Brunch attracted 60 guests to campus.

## Called to teach

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Fund for history majors. The annual book award goes to one sophomore selected by a random drawing.

Vourlojianis also has made provisions for the University in his will and, as such, was recently inducted into John Carroll's Magis Legacy Society.

During his days as a graduate student and ROTC cadet, his studies were interrupted when he was called to duty during the Vietnam War.

"My draft number was 39. It was the only lottery I ever won," he jokes. The first lieutenant served two years of active duty at Fort Hood, Texas, and then four years in the Army Reserve.

When he returned from active duty, he resumed his graduate studies at John Carroll at night. During the

day, he drove the delivery truck for his family's furniture business, Janis Interiors.

Recalling student life at Carroll, Vourlojianis says, "In some ways it was a difficult time to be a student as the war escalated with no end in sight. The campus became more polarized; my generation became more polarized. There was a tension in the air," he says.

"There were very good instructors here," he adds. "In the history department there were several scholars: Dr. (Michael S.) Pap, Dr. (George J.) Prpic, Father (Donald) Smythe, and Dr. (Wallace J.) Kosinski."

When he was a graduate student, Vourlojianis received an honorary membership to Cleveland's

Grays Armory, a military history organization—originally a volunteer militia—which dates back to 1837. "I met all sorts of war veterans and interesting people. I talked to guys who chased Pancho Villa through Mexico on horseback!"

Vourlojianis remains an active member and past president of Grays Armory. He also strongly supports the JCU chapter of Pershing Rifles, a national military fraternity for college students.

He and his wife, Sally, live in Elyria with plans to move soon into his Beachwood boyhood home. Vourlojianis says he looks forward to going home – to the place where his dreams of teaching began.

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## Grasselli Library hits the big 5-0!



This fall, we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the opening of Grasselli Library. In many ways, this is not your grandmother's library. Librarians no longer walk around hushing users. We like, rather, to think of ourselves as social academic space. You can even eat in the library!

What has not changed is our commitment to person-to-person

services at the Reference and Circulation Desks, which serve thousands of users every year. We also continue to reach users through our instructional program, liaison librarians, and through behind-the-scenes offices like Interlibrary Loan and Acquisitions, where faculty and staff work hard to support users' needs.

Today's users know that the utilitarian look of the 1960s has given way to more flexible, technology-rich spaces. We have even added amenities like soft seating and a coffee bar. In this regard, Grasselli, like many libraries, took a cue from commercial bookstores.

Grasselli Library has been moving from print to electronic journal content since the 1980s. Through the 1990s,

we began to add large collections of research databases. In the past five years, we have added more than 75,000 e-books. Though impressive, these numbers fall far short of describing our transformation. The library has evolved from book warehouse to information commons—a learning space beyond the classroom, where students can access information resources and academic support services. Our partner in this evolution has been Information Technology Services, which provides the unseen technology infrastructure that makes access to e-content possible.

—Jeanne Somers, Ph.D.  
Library Director

# Faculty Spotlight

Nick Baumgartner, Ph.D.

## There was something special here

When Nick “Nicky Ray” (yes, that is his given name) Baumgartner first interviewed at John Carroll, he and his wife, Phyllis, had been married less than a year. That evening, he called Phyllis at their home in Wyoming. “She could hear it in my voice and said, ‘you’re going to take the job if they offer it, aren’t you?’ Baumgartner recalls. “I had one other offer for a little more money, but there was something special here. It looked like a great place to start and spend a couple of years.”

Forty-two years later, Baumgartner sits in his corner office of the Dolan Center for Science and Technology—where he played an integral role in its development—and reflects on life and a rewarding career. He plans to retire at the end of the academic year.

Baumgartner was born and raised in Elgin, Iowa, population 620, in the northeast corner of the state near the Minnesota border. The son of a mechanic and homemaker, he lived in town during the school year, but says he’s a farm boy at heart and spent summers on his great-uncle’s farm. They raised a variety of livestock and crops, and when he was old enough, Baumgartner worked a team of horses in the fields.

Before long, he was commuting to college at Upper Iowa University. Soon after, he was off to the University of Wyoming for his master’s, Ph.D., and to meet Phyllis on a blind date.

Now, after more than four decades in academia—as both a faculty member and administrator, including 10 years as Arts and Sciences dean—Baumgartner says his teaching methods and students have changed over the years. “PowerPoints and current technology are tremendous aids in teaching. I used to have everything written out with sample problems. Then, one day, I got to school and realized about 10 minutes before class that I left my notes at home. I scanned the book, made a few notes, and decided I don’t have to have everything as spelled out as I once thought.

“Also, while technology is wonderful, I think sometimes it limits how we visualize things. Students today have more trouble visualizing in three-dimensions a molecule of a model, for instance, because they can get it in 3-D



technology. Sometimes you just have to visualize things in your head.”

Along the way, Baumgartner’s accomplishments have been celebrated with many awards. In 1985-86, he received a Grauel Faculty Fellowship from the University and did research in biochemistry and pharmacology at Case Western Reserve University. In 1990, he received the Distinguished Faculty Award, which he “dearly appreciated.” And, in 1995, he was recognized by peers with the Distinguished Service Award from the Cleveland Technical Society.

More than anything, he is proud to recall student success stories—like his former student and now-colleague in the chemistry department, Mark Waner, Ph.D. ’91, and his primary-care physician, Dan Breitenbach, M.D. ’79, who detected Baumgartner’s leaky aortic heart valve during a routine check-up, which resulted in successful valve replacement and triple-bypass surgery.

He and Phyllis have four children: Brian in Cleveland Heights; Scott, JCU Class of ’98 in Connecticut; and Missy and Sara who are both developmentally disabled and live at home; and three grandchildren.

When he retires, Baumgartner plans to spend more time fishing at their cottage at Pymatuning Lake. He also enjoys woodworking/remodeling projects, working with cars, and just started another three-year term on the board of trustees at church, where he also has served as an elder and deacon. “This has been a loving, caring, sharing place,” he says. “It’s been a wonderful experience.”

Magis

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