

Alumnus of Point Loma Awards

By Kimberley Berry Jones

ANN GERHART

It seems that wherever Ann Gerhart (83) goes she is teaching. Whether in a hospital emergency room helping a frightened family through a child's illness, in a village in South Africa helping local nurses improve their skills, or in her own fight against cancer, Gerhart teaches from the heart.

An emergency room nurse for 21 years, Gerhart is passionate about her work. She recently completed a master of science in nursing degree and certification as a family nurse practitioner.

Her interest in trauma and pediatric nursing keeps her at Children's Hospital in San Diego. She also continues to work at other local hospitals, as well as serve as adjunct faculty at University of San Diego and as a nurse for the San Diego Padres. She also is a frequent lecturer to healthcare professionals and a mentor to nursing students.

Excellence is something Gerhart learned at PLNU. "The nursing program was tough, but a very good program," says Gerhart. It "required excellence, and I carry that with me."

Gerhart has traveled extensively around the world evaluating relief and development projects. "I love the third world environment," she says. "To give back to your profession and to an environment that doesn't have the same resources we do...is a piece of my desire to do missions throughout the world."

But Gerhart had a mission field in her own backyard this past year. Throughout grueling months of chemotherapy for a serious form of cancer she turned the tables on the situation. As friends and colleagues rallied to support her, they found she was the one passing out hope. "Ann remained optimistic, cited her faith in a loving God and generally displayed tremendous courage throughout her very public battle with cancer," said Dottie Crummy, friend and dean of the PLNU School of Nursing.

"As an emergency room nurse, I have the privilege of touching people's lives at their most vulnerable points. It is a privilege to say we, the medical team, have the means to make you better," says Gerhart.

RUSS MARTIN

Russ Martin (72) uniquely reflects the PLNU mission statement, *Teach, Shape, and Send*. Martin has faithfully served local congregations as senior pastor as well as pouring time into district, general church and university activities for the Church of the Nazarene.

He is a man who passionately lives out his commitment to Christ. "Russ is one of those rare people who always sees the Kingdom of God as primary and really denies and ignores any self-agenda," said Rick Bravo (79), a member of Martin's church in Palo Alto. "Russ Martin is simply quite remarkable in his passion, intellect and effectiveness in empowering others," said Bravo.

Martin's days at Pasadena College were busy. He participated in track, basketball and choir while a resident assistant and member of a travel group. He also served as class president for three of his four years. Reflecting on how the university shaped his ministry, Martin says, "Professors like Drs. Welch, Carver, Prince and McCumber demonstrated to me their own ongoing ministry and the importance of 'the call of God' in our lives."

Martin earned his master of divinity degree from Nazarene Theological Seminary and his doctor of ministry from Fuller Theological Seminary. He has pastored churches throughout the southwest region since 1975.

Martin has also been involved in youth ministry, serving as district Nazarene Youth International president for 10 years and regional NYI representative for four years. His work leading camps, bringing students to Preview Days and organizing mission trips to Central and South America has



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Gerhart reflects on the experience. "I felt a peace the whole time," she says. "A peace that says this is what I am to walk through so it's okay, and who am I going to touch along the way? I went from the 'why me?' to the 'why not me?'"

As the keynote speaker for the Nursing Alumni Homecoming Breakfast in 2003, Gerhart summed up the high calling of nursing and her own personal testimony. She told her nursing colleagues three things: you must have passion for your journey, you must pursue excellence, and finally, it's all about the people.

impacted countless youth. His doctoral dissertation explored the impact on teenagers who participate in mission trips.

Martin leads with humility, mentoring young pastors and reaching out to struggling churches. He serves on the board of directors of his community's homeless shelter and food bank.

His present church, Valley View Church of the Nazarene in Lancaster, Calif., received the General Superintendent Church Growth Award for this year. Martin and his wife, Sherri (74), have three children: Jennifer, Todd and Gabriel, all graduates of PLNU.



Bruce McCormack



Stephen Rodgers

BRUCE McCORMACK

An internationally respected theologian, **Bruce McCormack (76)** credits his PLNU religion professor, Herb Prince, with awakening his love for theology. After originally planning to attend law school, McCormack's interactions with Prince led him in a new direction. "Dr. Prince confirmed a calling in me. It was a turning point in my career direction," says McCormack. He went on to earn a master's of divinity degree from Nazarene Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. from Princeton Theological Seminary.

McCormack is the recipient of the prestigious Karl Barth Prize by the Evangelical Church of the Union in Berlin, Germany, for his book *Karl Barth's Critically Realistic Dialectical Theology*. In addition, in May 2004 he received an honorary doctorate of theology from the University of Jena, Germany, for his research on Karl Barth and for furthering cooperation between American and German theologians.

A prolific author, lecturer and conference presenter, McCormack taught for four years at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland before moving to associate professor of systematic theology at Princeton Theological Seminary in 1991. He became a full professor in 1998.

Systematic theology, the study of how various Christian doctrines are internally related, is McCormack's focus and passion, and his work in the field has established him as one of the sharpest minds in the mainline church in America.

"Professor McCormack is respected on our campus as both a scholar of the first rank, as well as a devout and practicing Christian," says fellow Princeton colleague and PLNU graduate, James Kay.

His ministry outside of the classroom is focused primarily on helping keep seminary students grounded. "Because so many (students) are evangelicals and so few of my colleagues are oriented in that direction, I feel a special responsibility for them," says McCormack. McCormack is known to lead prayer groups and Bible studies with students. "Leading prayer groups with them helps them to keep their feet firmly planted," he continues.

PLNU Professor Emeritus David Whitelaw says, "Bruce has maintained a humble and sincere witness as a Christian believer. His teaching and influence continue to make a major contribution in the formation of his students, who respect him deeply both for his...mastery of his field, but also for his integrity and Christian witness."

When discussing today's seminary students, McCormack reflects that "they need a reason to be faithful. They need to

know it matters to God that they live lives of purity." McCormack effectively provides such an example.

McCormack and his wife, Mary, have two children: Catriona and John.

STEPHEN RODGERS

For a man who grew up and became a "rocket guy," the thrill of being in the place known as Rocket City, USA, isn't lost on **Stephen Rodgers (77)**. Rodgers manages NASA's premier research center in Huntsville, Ala., where they turn today's science fiction into tomorrow's reality.

"All the first rocket work was done here," says Rodgers. "Working here is really the highlight of working in propulsion...coming up with new ideas and doing things that have never been done before."

Rodgers, who earned a B.A. in chemistry at PLNU, credits the university with shaping the work ethic that has brought him so far. "At Point Loma I learned that if you do what's right and maintain your integrity, it always works in the long run."

Rodgers received his doctorate in chemistry from the University of Nevada at Reno in 1982 and began his propulsion career in 1983 at the Rocket Propulsion Laboratory at Edwards Air Force Base in California. He moved to the Pentagon in 1999, where he served as Deputy of Space Technologies in the Office of Science, Technology and Engineering. There, he developed and managed the Air Force's early space-based research and technology programs. In 2000, he joined the NASA team to plan and open the new Propulsion Research Laboratory in Huntsville.

"Stephen has ascended to the peak of a scientific research career," said his former chemistry professor, Vic Heasley. "He has reached the pinnacle."

But beyond leading the groundbreaking research for the future of space travel, Rodgers is also an example of excellence to those outside the world of science. Whether it is leading Bible studies, serving on his church board, or serving as president of the school board, Rodgers leads with integrity and humility.

Childhood friend and college roommate, Steve Hobbs (77) said, "Steve really contributed to rounding me out as a person. I found [him] to be a person who sees and understands the loving aspects of God. I thought he was, by his example, a real leader among Christians."

Rodgers and his wife, Jeanette (77), have four children: Steve, Christy, Kathryn and Michael.

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The Alumnus of Point Loma Awards will be presented during Homecoming Chapel on Friday, Nov. 19, at 9:45 a.m. in Brown Chapel.

Kimberley Berry Jones (90) is a freelance writer in San Diego.