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Salve Regina College

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NEWS RELEASE

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Exclusive To The Waterbury Republican

Connecticut will have "one of its own" at pre-college conferences this year, when Miss Marlene Johnston, daughter of George W. and Esther Johnston of 699 Walnut Hill Road, Thomaston, takes to the road as a college recruiter. A graduate of Salve Regina College, Newport, R. I., class of 1972, Marlene will be representing the College as an admissions counselor, assigned to her home state.

From the recruiting point of view, Marlene feels she is lucky. "Not all of the recruiters are able to represent their own alma mater," she said, in speaking of her new duties. "And few of them are representing as unique an educational institution as Salve Regina."

The four year liberal arts college for women, conducted by the Religious Sisters of Mercy is unique, for many reasons.

Foremost in the minds of the possible future students to whom Marlene will be talking are the educational opportunities offered on a given campus. At Salve Regina College, these educational opportunities are like no other in the nation.

Instead of the traditional departmental structure, the College by the sea, has divided its curriculum into three major areas:-

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Empiric - all courses investigating man, his environment and his behavior - - - physical, natural, social and behavioral sciences, nursing, medical technology and education;

Symbolic - all courses involving concepts tied to symbols and the knowledge derived from the manipulation of those symbols - - - English, foreign languages, mathematics and logic;

Reflective - those courses in which knowledge is derived from man's reflections about his universe - - - fine arts, music, drama, philosophy and religious studies.

Starting in 1973, students will take four of their eight freshman and sophomore courses in a multi-discipline area, working under an advisor. Freshman courses will have a central theme and bring into play the varied liberal arts subjects in a panorama of learning.

Courses for sophomores will be problem centered, so that students can apply the investigative methods learned as freshmen. There will be no "right" or "wrong" answers. Students will be evaluated on how well they apply liberal arts in today's society.

"Salve Regina will continue to offer in-depth courses, such as in the physical sciences," Marlene explained. "Students will still graduate with a major and a minor, prepared to compete for positions in our job oriented society. The curriculum, however, will be student centered, with the students themselves initiating projects within multi-disciplinary, problem centered courses. It's a whole brand new approach."

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Conceived by Dr. Beverly Miller, Salve Regina's academic dean, this panoramic approach to education meant that the 25-year-old college had to abolish its traditional departmental structure and start from scratch.

"I think the open-mindedness of the faculty, when the time came to abolish the 17 existing departments and re-group under the new method, has been remarkable," the 22-year-old college recruiter continued.

"The faculty was practically unanimous in its decision and have already started work on the new curriculum. Besides being a new experience for students, a different method of teaching is going to have to be applied."

Faculty will be working with a team approach to the chosen theme for each college year, according to Miss Johnston.

"If the subject chosen is 'Man in the Space Age,' for example, both students and faculty will study the beginnings of space exploration, going back to mythology and Icarus' attempt to fly into the sun, with wings attached with wax - - - Leonardo Da Vinci's experiments with flight - - - even including the comic strip character, Buck Rogers in the 25th century."

"All aspects of each era studied, the political, historical, literary, fine arts and natural sciences, will be umbrellaed into the over-all course."

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Besides the challenge of this new approach to education, Salve Regina gives its students the opportunity to live and grow in one of the world's internationally known cities.

"Newport is the yachting capital of the world," Marlene, who studied sailing while at Salve Regina, pointed out. "The Newport to Bermuda Race takes place each year and the America's Cup Races have traditionally taken place in Newport waters."

One of Marlene's other sports enthusiasms, tennis, is featured in Newport, where the national tennis Hall of Fame is a part of the famous Casino, where top-seeded tennis players compete for honors each summer.

Touro Synagogue, first Jewish House of Worship in the New World, is located in Newport; so is Redwood Library, the country's oldest library in continuous use, since 1748. Newport, in addition to its other graces, is also one of the nation's most authentic Colonial cities. The seaport has over 300 structures of Colonial date, a number of which have been preserved and are open to the public.

"As a matter of fact," the well-informed recruiter pointed out, "Rhode Island instituted its own Declaration of Independence from Great Britain, in May of 1766, two full months before the 13 colonies did the same in Philadelphia. Our college town is truly the cradle of liberty in America, although this is not generally acknowledged."

As playground of the world's wealthiest, Newport is justly renowned. And seven of the major multi-million dollar estates have been incorporated into the Salve Regina campus.

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Chief among these is Ochre Court, the former Goelet estate, which today houses the college administrative offices. Built in 1890, at a cost of 4-1/2 million dollars, the magnificent French Gothic estate is said to be a replica of Edward VII's castle in Paris.

"I can honestly say that one of the great experiences of my life has been living and working in the atmosphere of these historic estates." Marlene's own office is located on the second floor of Ochre Court, where she is immersed in art and history daily.

"Except, of course, when I'm 'on the road.' It's then that I look back to the combination of learning, beauty, peace and tranquility that I've left behind and hope that I can influence today's high school students toward Salve Regina and its unique combination of learning experiences."

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