Religionis Aet Bonis Artibus Collegium Setoniense. The Catholic University of New Jersey, otherwise known as Seton Hall, came into existence a few years after the Diocese of Newark was established in 1853. The school was named after Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton, the earliest American-born saint and aunt of Bishop James Roosevelt Bayley, the first Bishop of Newark (1853-72) and founding father of Seton Hall College.

This new school was first located in Madison, New Jersey, and commenced operations on September 1, 1856. Father Bernard J. McQuaid served as the first College President (1856-57, 1859-68) and directed a staff of four diocesan clergy including Father Alfred Young, Vice-President; Father Daniel Fisher (the second College President, 1857-59) and five lay instructors. On the first day of classes, Seton Hall hosted a total of five students — Leo G. Thebaud, Louis and Alfred Boisaubin, Peter Meehan and John Moore — and grew to five times that figure by October 1856, reaching a zenith of 54 by the end of that academic year.

Those who were included on the registration rolls could expect to endure a structured seven-year classical, liberal arts program (three year prep and four year college study) with heavy emphasis on theology, philosophy, Latin, Greek and foreign language. Students around this time were also expected to meet school tuition price of “$200 per annum” ($350 by 1886) and follow strict rules of conduct once they entered the school to advance onward to the next grade. The first commencement exercises took place in June 1857, but it was not until 1862 when the first Bachelor of Arts degree (A.B.) was awarded to Louis Edward Firth. A year later, the first honorary A.M. and doctoral degrees were bestowed on area scholars Reverend Patrick Cody and Reverend Jeremiah Cummings, respectively.

In 1860, a portion of the 125-acre Elphinstone Estate located within the Village of South Orange was purchased for $35,000 by Bishop Bayley on behalf of the Diocese of Newark. Seton Hall College not only attained a permanent site, but became an official enterprise when it was incorporated by act of the New Jersey State Legislature on March 8, 1861. The first Board of Trustees included such luminaries as Bishop Bayley, Father McQuaid and noted philosopher Orestes A. Brownson. The earliest corporate seal included the Seton Family coat of arms and image of the Blessed Mary along with the enduring motto — *Hazard Zit Forward* — “No Matter What The Hazard, Yet Forward” was subsequently designed and adopted by the institution during May 1864.
The initial 60-acre parcel of land obtained by Seton Hall was transformed into a burgeoning collegiate setting which featured the Main College Building (included space for administrative offices, classrooms and dormitory rooms), recreational facilities (baseball and football fields) and agricultural facilities (garden and dairy) for in-house food production. In 1863, the Immaculate Conception Chapel was completed, but it would not be dedicated for another seven years. The construction of Presidents Hall, which served as the primary hub for school operations and housed the College Seminary over the next several decades, arose in 1867 months after a fire destroyed the old Elphinstone Mansion. Alumni Hall (currently serving as home to the Immaculate Conception Seminary) was built in 1883, and this particular edifice exists in large part through the efforts of the Seton Hall Alumni Organization organized in 1879 with a total of 110 charter members.

Upon the departure of Father McQuaid as College President in 1868, the position was subsequently filled first by Father Michael A. Corrigan (1868-76), prior to his appointment as the third Bishop of Newark, and Father James H. Corrigan (1876-88), who led Seton Hall into its silver anniversary celebration during the fall of 1881. This educational establishment had grown in a significant and profound manner during the 1886 academic year when Seton Hall could boast a more prolific campus-wide population of 83 students, 13 faculty and 18 seminarians.

The Seton Hall community at this time found the college experience one of lofty ideals while at the same time promoting the virtues of mental and personal development. Such sentiments were set forth in print within the 1886 catalogue which read in part, “The aim of SETON HALL is to impart a good education, in the highest sense of the word — to train the moral, intellectual and physical being. The health, manners and morals of the students, all of whom are required to live in the College, are objects of constant care. The system of government combines strict discipline with kind and gentle treatment.” This particular foundation brought form and definition to the mission of Seton Hall College, which would continue onward through the remainder of the nineteenth century and beyond.

1886-1916

During the nineteenth century, Seton Hall College experienced steady growth as a Catholic institution of secondary and higher education, attracting students from nearby South Orange and as far away as Santo Domingo and Spain. The price of a college education included an annual tuition, board and washing and mending fee of $330 for resident students and $60 for day scholars. Extra fees also were charged for specific courses and special necessities, such as attending a stenography class for $50, or having the luxury of a private room at $75. Various school catalogues from the 1880s also noted that textbooks and stationary were offered for “the lowest possible rates … available.” Many day scholars, who constituted a majority of the student body during the 1880s and 90s, often commuted to campus via the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western railroads. The increased accessibility to Seton Hall attracted students from throughout northern New Jersey and New York City who attended during the school year, which consisted of two five-month terms, featuring class lectures on each day except Thursday and Sunday.

A fire destroyed the Main College Building on March 9, 1886, in the beginning of Seton Hall’s fourth decade. The administration rallied quickly, just as it had in response to a similar fire 20 years prior, by shifting all essential operations to Alumni Hall and making provisions for alternative classroom space during the 1887 school year. Despite this, the campus as a whole remained a scenic landscape that lent distinction to the Seton Hall experience as outlined in the school history of 1895: “Picturesque paths were formed through the woods, gas-light was introduced into the playgrounds, the ball alleys were solidly refloored and the antique pump of many memories … set under a graceful pavilion.”
Seton Hall launched a military science department (a forerunner to the modern day ROTC) during the summer of 1893, but this program was ultimately disbanded during the Spanish-American War. A more profound initiative, and perhaps the most pivotal event in the history of Seton Hall came in 1897 when the preparatory (high school) and college (undergraduate) divisions were permanently separated from one another. Despite this separation, the traditional Ratio Studiorum-based liberal arts curriculum of history, mathematics, classical studies, philosophy, theology and English which served as the hallmark of Seton Hall from its foundation remained in vogue at this key juncture in college history. Further improvements came in 1898, as Seton Hall built its first library facility (Marshall Hall) at a cost of $35,000, which originally housed 18,000 volumes. That same year, early accreditation agencies representing the New York and Rhode Island state departments of education recognized the validity of a Seton Hall diploma, based not only on the aforementioned Catholic curricular model, but also in line with guidelines recommended by the New Jersey Department of Education. Future proof of the academic successes achieved by Seton Hall alumni were shown by such distinguished graduates as James Augustus McFaul, second Bishop of Trenton, John Joseph O’Connor, the Bishop of Newark from 1901 to 1928, and Thomas McCran, Attorney-General of New Jersey during the early twentieth century, among many others.

As the 1900s arrived and progressed, Seton Hall experienced a number of firsts, fielding its earliest basketball squad in 1903, and a permanent baseball diamond (located on the present-day Owen Carroll Field) was christened two years later. The physical plant on campus underwent more change as another structural fire in 1909 destroyed the College Building (Stafford Hall) which housed a classroom and various dorm buildings. Mooney Hall was opened in 1910 and originally housed the high school division after serving for a short time as the main College administrative center. An infirmary was built and renovations to the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception were undertaken around this time along with the opening of Bayley Hall, which housed the short-lived Seton Hall Grammar School, three years later. Between 1876 and 1888, the Reverend James H. Corrigan served as the President of Seton Hall and was assisted by the Reverend William F. Marshall, who simultaneously served as vice-president, treasurer and chief executive during the late 1880s. Father Marshall also led the institution from 1888 to 1897 prior to the tenure of Reverend Joseph J. Synnott who passed away in 1899. The Golden Anniversary of Seton Hall College was celebrated in 1906, and president Monsignor John A. Stafford presided over Commencement Exercises that featured over 1,200 attendants at the first indoor ceremony in school history, which took place at the Newark Theater. The leadership role at Seton Hall changed two years later, as former Seminary Rector Monsignor James F. Mooney ascended to the presidency in 1907 and retired in 1922, having enjoyed the longest tenure of any president in Seton Hall history during its first 125 years.

On the eve of American participation in World War I, the Seton Hall community remained a small liberal arts school, but the mission of the College held true to form in the writings of diocesan clergy as noted in the 1916 catalogue which read in part: “The training of the heart and the formation of character under the guiding influence of Christian principles, the development of the intellectual faculties, the encouragement and guidance of laudable ambition, the acquisition of habits of logical thought, correct methods of study, self-discipline and refinement, the realization, in a word, of the highest ideals of excellence in the cultured Christian gentleman — these are the ends that Seton Hall keeps steadily in view in the arduous and sacred office of educating youth.”

1916-1946
The era between the world wars resulted in dramatic growth for Seton Hall in terms of broadening its mission and enhancing academic reputation. Enrollment increased after the Great War, and Setonia’s aesthetic look changed as well after all college-owned acreage on the northern side of South Orange Avenue was sold in 1922. In artistic terms, student publications, including the Setonian and White & Blue (later Galleon), appeared for the first time, two years later. Another segment of the school changed as Immaculate Conception Seminary moved its operations to Darlington, New Jersey, in 1927, but the two schools retained close ties as part of the Diocese of Newark family (becoming an Archdiocese in 1937) with the maintenance of the Aquinas House of Studies, a residential facility for student priests. Secular freshman and upperclassman of the mid-1920s were subject to a very disciplined regime as monthly assemblies took place, grades were read aloud, the college treasurer issued spending money and Thursday hiking excursions were mandatory. Still in vogue were rules such as these taken from the 1927 catalog: “Matches must be presented to all upper classmen upon request … No knickers … bow ties are to be worn … Corncob pipes only are to be used for smoking … Seton Hall is now your Alma Mater and letters from other schools are forbidden to be worn.”

Once in a classroom, students learned that the Seton Hall academic experience was key to promoting intellectual development. Bayley Hall hosted the grammar (elementary) school division until 1926. By 1935, degree offerings at the South Orange campus included a B.S. in Pre-Medical, Pre-Dental, Physical Education, Business Administration and Education (with a State Teacher’s Certificate), along with the traditional B.A. in Science and Philosophy. Admissions standards during the 1930s included the following criteria: “must show evidence of good character, intelligence, ambition and acceptable personality. In addition … they must meet certain academic standards.” Requirements for a diploma included four years of English, in tandem with the standard fare of philosophy and theology, along with various core curriculum standards and electives.

In 1931, Seton Hall celebrated its Diamond Jubilee. The Great Depression and economic factors hurt the nation and campus financially, but Seton Hall endured. Patrick Cardinal Hayes, Archbishop of New York, was one of the honored guests for the Commemoration Mass on June 4. That same year, Setonia adopted “Pirates” as the nickname for her athletic teams. The school attained Middle States Accreditation in 1932 and, a year later, attained affiliation with the Association of American Colleges and American Council on Higher Education. In 1937, the Newark and Jersey City Extension Schools (Urban Division) opened for the express purpose of educating both men and women who were unable to attend the day school in South Orange. Mary Grace Dougherty enrolled at the Newark campus as the college’s first female student, and Mary Powers was the first female faculty member in Jersey City. The Bayley Seton League, founded in 1938, gave financial support and helped with campus beautification projects and related endeavors for several years thereafter.

By 1940, Walsh Gymnasium opened, and the first nursing courses were offered at Seton Hall. Student activities, including the Bayley Society (Catholic Action), Le Circle Français, Knights of Setonia (religious organization), Order of Cross and Crescent (student honor society) and the Students’ Crusade for Americanism were especially popular during the pre-World War II era. During the mid-1940s, Seton Hall had low enrollment numbers, which were made up mainly of those who were nearing enlistment in the armed services or enrolled in the minor seminary. Curtail requirements were made for students in 1944 and such prices as the registration fee, $10, tuition per credit, $7, along with board and private room, $600, held true to form. After World War II, Setonia’s 94-95 percent enrollment rate became the highest level of student enrollment increase in the entire nation. To provide perspective, Seton Hall graduated seven students in 1922, 62 in 1933, and boasted an enrollment of 142 at one point in 1945 before reaching more than 3,000 by 1946. That decade also saw the second M.A. program in school history offered in administrative supervision and guidance studies.
Presidents during this period included Monsignor James F. Mooney, Monsignor Thomas H. McLaughlin (1922-33) and Reverend Francis J. Monaghan (1933-36). Monsignor James F. Kelley (1936-49), at the time of his inaugural, became the youngest college president in the nation, having turned 33 years old. As an administrator, Monsignor Kelley brought Seton Hall into the forefront of academics and athletics on both a regional and national level. He also hired Seton Hall’s first African-American faculty member, Francis Hammond, in 1946. Each of these chief executives worked closely with Seton Hall alumni and Bishop of Newark Joseph O’Connor (1901-27) or Archbishop Thomas J. Walsh (1928-52), who served as president of the Board of Trustees and helped the school move forward into mid-century.

The General Catalogue expressed the following educational policy to its readers in 1937, and still carries with it symbolism relevant to the Setonian student of today. “In spite of the diversity of courses … Seton Hall has consistently sought to preserve a general cultural education … For this she has rounded out a complete system of developing the entire individual, intellectually, physically and morally. Her education is not a storing of memory with facts, but a training of mind in habits and principles of right thinking; it supplies not only information, but character, developing the will as well as the intellect.”

1946-1976

After World War II, Seton Hall College experienced a pronounced lift in terms of exposure, presence and defining its personality as more than a regional institution during the Cold War-era. Seton Hall had the highest national attendance rate in the immediate aftermath of World War II as not only traditional high school graduates, but many veterans took advantage of the living and learning facilities at the school. Heralding this development, radio station W.S.O-U (the first college-operated FM station in New Jersey) went on the air in 1948, and that same year the number of faculty grew to 150 under the direction of Monsignor James Kelley who served as chief executive at this time.

Monsignor John L. McNulty (1949-59) succeeded Monsignor Kelley, and helped lead the school in the reaffirming of Middle States Association accreditation early on within his administration. Another pivotal moment in school history came on June 2, 1950, when Seton Hall College became Seton Hall University by act of the New Jersey State Legislature. Around this time, the university also established four separate academic divisions within its curricular framework, including a College of Arts and Sciences, School of Education, School of Business and School of Nursing. Throughout the 1950s, Seton Hall expanded its reach into promoting scholarship in tandem with social awareness. Within this decade the school opened institutes devoted to Irish, Italian and Polish history and culture. In line with this broadened world view, the Institute of Far Eastern Studies was founded in 1951. Seton Hall would later become the first religious-affiliated, post-secondary institution in America to establish an academic exchange program with China. Inter-faith activities at Seton Hall also began to flourish with the formation of the Institute of Judaeo-Christian Studies in 1955. Another key addition to the campus landscape came to the fore when the Puerto Rican Institute was founded eleven years later.

Seton Hall had traditionally been a commuter school with a select number of boarders through the years, but this changed as enrollment and the overall tally of full-time students emerged and expanded. The 1950s also heralded a major construction boom as Bishop’s Hall (later known as
Boland Hall) was opened and served as a student dormitory after the 13 temporary barracks erected on campus prior to the Korean War were torn down as attendance levels gradually stabilized. A greater commitment to academic endeavor also came about in 1951 when the Seton Hall School of Law was established in Newark. Miriam Rooney, Ph.D., served as dean and, in the process, became the first woman to hold such a position in the United States.

By 1953, a community college was established, and extension courses were offered in such municipalities as Camden, Trenton, Lyons, Red Bank, Hackensack, Matawan, New Brunswick and Long Branch, among others. A satellite campus was also formed in Paterson by mid-decade, and remained until its closure in 1979. Seton Hall also stood atop the college basketball world in 1953 when the Pirates won the National Invitational Tournament, the premier event in the sport at that time. The formation of a College of Dentistry and the opening of McNulty Hall in 1954 as a host classroom to majors in the fields of biology, chemistry and physics brought added prestige to the school. McLaughlin Library was opened in 1955, and a year later, the College of Medicine and Dentistry was started at the Jersey City Medical Center. Shortly thereafter, Seton Hall held its centennial celebration in 1956.

The 1960s were a time of transition. After Monsignor McNulty passed away, his successors included Monsignor John Dougherty (1959-69) and acting President Monsignor Edward Fleming (1969-70). Accomplishments abounded as the Bishop Dougherty Center (student union) was built in 1962 and the Humanities Center (Fahy Hall) made its appearance six years later. Among the educational initiatives which had their origins in this decade were the first Ph.D. awarded in chemistry in 1964 (although doctorates were awarded in medicine and dentistry as early as 1961), the Upward Bound program which started two years afterward, the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) started later that decade and the Center for African-American Studies that was established in 1970. A breakthrough for the ages came when full coeducation of the South Orange campus was enacted in 1968, and continues to this day.

1976-2006

During the 1970s, Seton Hall became more boarder-oriented when they opened Aquinas Hall, the first residence hall for women in 1971. In academic circles, the Stillman Business School and Schwartz Nursing College Complex opened in 1973. Governance of Seton Hall originally balanced between a 25-member Board of Regents and 13 trustees as operational leadership on a daily basis emanated from chief executives Monsignor Thomas G. Fahy (1970-76) and John A. Cole, M.B.A., LL.D. (1976-77), the first lay president in school history, who served in an interim capacity.

A profound series of university goals were set down by the Board of Trustees first in 1972, and were part of the theme of operations as Seton Hall went through an age of transition and growth by the national bicentennial. “Opportunities for a fine collegiate education are, and will continue to be, offered to all qualified students without restriction as to race, creed, sex, age or national origin; Seton Hall also will actively seek students from minority groups and maintain its programs for educationally deprived students with college potential … A major effort is made to foster student self-confidence, wherein Setonians will be better able to identify and achieve their goals in an environment for learning in which there is freedom of inquiry, freedom of thought and freedom of expression.”

From the celebration of our national bicentennial through the new millennium, Seton Hall has emerged as an educational institution that has grown from a regional entity to a worldwide presence, especially through the advent of computer technology and a diverse domestic and international student body. Tradition also remained strong as Elizabeth Ann Seton, patroness of the University was canonized in Rome by Pope Paul VI in 1975, making her the first American-born saint in the process. A year later, in
response to a great swell in religious-based research, the New Jersey Catholic Historical Records Commission was founded at Seton Hall, where it remains active to this day.

In addition, to the existing female residence hall completed in 1971, four others namely Cabrini, Serra, Neumann and Xavier were constructed to house both men and women between 1986-88. Off-campus housing also became a reality when the University bought Ora Manor, a South Orange apartment complex, in 1990. Keeping the flow of commuter traffic alive resulted in the opening of the Farinella and the Ward Place gates in 1988. A brand new parking garage arose on the South Orange campus three years later, as attendance at Seton Hall has increased over the past three decades.

The Seton Hall Law School Center was dedicated at its downtown Newark locale in 1976 prior to the official dedication of its current edifice 15 years later. During the 125th anniversary of Seton Hall in 1981, an educational affiliation with the People’s Republic of China was reached and has manifested itself through the creation of the China House in 1993. The George M. Ring Building became home to University Affairs (now University Advancement) in 1982. That same year, Saint Andrew’s Hall was purchased, and Lewis Hall was built around the existing Alumni Hall site to house the Immaculate Conception Seminary, which moved from Darlington, New Jersey, back to Seton Hall in 1984. A new recreation center was also attached to the venerable Walsh Gymnasium by 1987, and in 2004 would be named in honor of legendary basketball player and administrator Richie Regan. The Humanities Building, built in 1968, was named after former president Monsignor Thomas Fahy, in 1988, and a year later, the Gerety Hall residence for priests was christened, named in honor of Most Reverend Peter L. Gerety, Archbishop Emeritus of Newark.

From an academic vantage point, the intellectual growth of Seton Hall has centered around an assemblage of specialized colleges and schools that currently include the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Education and Human Services, College of Nursing, the Whitehead School of Diplomacy and International Relations (founded in 1997 and named in 2002), School of Graduate Medical Education (founded in 1987), Stillman School of Business, Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology, University College and the University Libraries. SetonWorldWide is another recent creation within the last few decades.

Throughout the late 1970s and the subsequent decade, various milestones added to the evolving history of Seton Hall. In 1979, Seton Hall joined the BIG EAST Conference and became a competitive force in the intercollegiate sports world. This upgrade in athletic fortune led to a memorable appearance for the men’s basketball team in the NCAA Championship game in 1989. National headlines also emerged in 1983, when Ronald Regan became the first American president to visit campus and receive an honorary degree from the school. In 1987, Seton Hall Preparatory School and the University also ended its mutual ties when “The Prep” moved its campus to West Orange and was separately incorporated.

The last 10 years of growth and the modern development of Seton Hall included construction of the four-story Walsh Library. Known as the “Jewel of the Campus,” the Library was built in 1994 and today contains more than 600,000 volumes, along with numerous print and electronic resources. During the late 1990s, the 126,000 square-foot, six-floor Jubilee Hall housing the College of Education and Human Services, the Stillman School of Business, classrooms and various academic department offices, was erected. A year later, all incoming full-time freshmen were issued laptop computers, making Seton Hall one of the most-wired campuses in the nation.

Tragedy struck in January 2000, when an early morning fire in Boland Hall claimed the lives of three undergraduate men and caused injury to 60 others. A memorial was created for the victims, Aaron Karol, John Giunta and Frank Caltibilota, and their contributions and lives remain forever sacred.
Administrative governance was restructured in 1980 as the first ever Board of Regents meeting took place on campus. Direct leadership of Seton Hall remained consistent and presidential appointments during this time period included Robert T. Conley, Ph.D. (1977-79), the first full-time lay leader in school history; Reverend Laurence T. Murphy (1979-80); and Edward R. D’Alessio, Ph.D. (1980-84). Chancellors included John J. Petillo, Ph.D. (1984-89), interim leaders Monsignor Dennis J. Mahon (1989) and Monsignor Richard Liddy (1990) along with the Very Reverend Thomas R. Peterson, O.P. (1990-2000), the latest member of the clergy to hold this office was Monsignor Robert Sheeran, S.T.D., who served as the longest serving university president from 1995 until 2010.

Early in 2005, the answer “Seton Hall” was a featured question on TV’s Jeopardy, but the University far transcends triviality. As the 150th anniversary of Seton Hall is celebrated this year, its existence remains ever-strong and evolving academically for the more than 10,000 students (both undergraduate and graduate) that make the University a dedicated presence in higher education circles. The mission of the institution, found in the Board of Regents statement of 1996, echoes this theme of service: “Seton Hall is a major Catholic university. In a diverse and collaborative environment it focuses on academic and ethical development. Seton Hall students are prepared to be leaders in their professional and community lives in a global society and are challenged by outstanding faculty, an evolving technologically advanced setting and values centered curricula.”

2006-Present

Seton Hall has continued to grow in steady measure since the celebration of her Sesquicentennial in 2006. This commemoration has served as both milestone and prelude to a new core curriculum approved in 2008 and the 150th anniversary of the Immaculate Conception Seminary in 2010. Prime examples of recent physical plant growth around campus include the new Science and Technology Center in 2007 along with major renovations made to the Immaculate Conception Chapel a year later. Recently, a new 14,000 square foot addition to the Recreation Center was completed in 2013 and work on upgrading the first college building, Stafford Hall has likewise been completed. Additional improvements were made to Aquinas Hall, a co-ed residential space in the middle of campus along with an expansion to the Parking Deck for staff and commuter student convenience was also finished in 2014.

On the administrative front, Dr. A. Gabriel Esteban became the twentieth president of Seton Hall at his investiture ceremony on October 14, 2011. In looking at the recent past, the spirit of academic pursuit remains alive with an incoming freshman class of 1,265 last year and the awarding of 1,150 diplomas for the Class of 2015 shows a continued focus on academic performance from start to completion of studies. In terms of specific academic-based moves, a new School of Communication and Arts was established last year. More recently, Seton Hall and the Hackensack University Health Network (HackensackUHN) have signed a document of agreement to form a new school of medicine with campuses in Nutley and Clifton with details presently in the works to formalize this collaboration in the near future. For the present time, solid enrollment numbers are evident as the 2015-2016 academic term looms ahead and another school year starts with renewed excitement throughout the Seton Hall community.

In reflecting on school history and preparing for the semester ahead, the varied lessons taught in the classrooms of Setonia have endured as we move forward in service to the community as a place that continues to celebrate the mind, heart, and spirit.

Hazard Zit Forward!
• Additional information on any part of school history can gladly be provided as an educational service through the Archives & Special Collections Center, Walsh Library. Please contact Alan Delozier, University Archivist by e-mail: Alan.Delozier@shu.edu, or via phone at: (973) 275-2378. Thank you for your continued interest.