The damaging ice storm that destroyed an abundance of trees, damaged homes and businesses and left hundreds of thousands in New England without power for up to two weeks was a valuable test of Assumption’s Emergency Response Plan. Under the leadership of President Francesco Cesareo, the College implemented its plan when the ice storm created a power outage and required the cancellation of two days of final exams.

The ice storm left the campus without power for more than 48 hours, beginning at 4 a.m. on Friday, Dec. 11. “Over the last few years we had purchased generators for many of our buildings and we were fortunate that most student residence halls had heat and emergency lighting,” said Chris McCarthy, executive VP for Finance and Administration. Taylor Dining Hall also had generator power to provide a warm location and three hot meals a day to all Assumption students.

Numerous communication channels were used to keep students and parents informed throughout the situation, including text messaging, voice mail, e-mail, the homepage of the College’s Web site, and door-to-door updates by resident assistants in the residence halls. While not needed in this situation, the College has an alternative Web site that can be quickly updated to provide emergency information.

“The Residential Life staff went into action without missing a beat,” said Catherine WoodBrooks, vice president for student affairs. “Our residential life staff and all the student affairs staff have been carefully trained about their roles in an emergency situation. They were a visible and calming presence, finding warm rooms for students who chose to remain on campus, and making sure students were checking their cell phones for the most recent updates.”

continued on page 2
Emergency Response Plan holds up to December ice storm’s test

continued from front page

The Emergency Response Plan

In 2005, the Safety Committee, staffed by a dozen key employees from across campus, created a comprehensive Emergency Response and Recovery Plan. The plan included the identification and purchase of necessary equipment and training for personnel to enable the College to respond to any kind of man-made or natural disaster, and a communication plan to quickly inform students, parents and employees of an emergency situation and the appropriate action to be taken.

The Emergency Response Team (ERT)—comprising President Cesareo, the president’s cabinet, and the directors of public safety and public affairs—closely coordinates activities during an emergency situation. Using the Incident Command System, an operations model used by national and regional emergency management agencies and most state and local police units and fire departments, the ERT can work more effectively with local emergency teams.

“Our first concern is always for the safety of our students, faculty and staff,” said Cesareo. “Our Emergency Response Plan recognizes the importance of quick and appropriate action in a variety of situations, and we understand that communication is integral to the successful implementation of the plan.”

AlertNow’s emergency notification

Several years ago Assumption contracted with AlertNow to establish an emergency rapid notification system. Using AlertNow, College personnel can send a text message to all undergraduate students. In addition, a voice message can be recorded and sent to parents, graduate students, continuing education students, and employees’ home telephones. All parents are automatically included in the AlertNow message system when their children enroll at Assumption.

The system has been used twice, first in the spring of 2007 to alert parents of a possible threat to college campuses in the Worcester area, and secondly after the recent ice storm.

Siren and public address system

Last summer, the College contracted with the Federal Signal Corporation to erect a 40-foot pole in the wooded area adjacent to Hagan Campus Center. A large speaker placed at the top of the pole can blast a loud warning siren to alert students that there is an emergency in progress and that they should turn on their cell phones in the event an emergency text message has been issued. Audible across campus and tested twice last fall, the outside loudspeaker system can broadcast either a pre-recorded or real-time voice message.

In addition, the College has also installed a ham radio in the Campus Police dispatcher’s office, in case landlines and cell phone communications fail during a major emergency, such as the crisis in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Campus Police

Assumption’s highly qualified campus police force is led by Director of Public Safety Brad Holmes, a retired detective captain of the Massachusetts State Police. “The College’s budget for campus police exceeds the budget for police services in some Massachusetts towns,” said McCarthy. This commitment of resources has been allocated to the purchase of equipment and specialized training, including active shooter training, during which officers respond to an incident similar to the tragic incident at Virginia Tech in 2007. In addition, Officer Greg Facteau of the campus police department, a certified instructor, has trained dozens of Assumption employees in basic first aid and CPR/AED techniques. These employees are qualified to act as first responders and could be critical in saving lives during a campus emergency.

President Cesareo and the ERT will continue to revise and update the Emergency Response Plan as needed.

Spring Parents Committee Meeting April 18

Please join us Saturday, April 18 for the spring Parents Committee meeting, which will be held in the Marriott Room in Taylor Dining Hall with social time beginning at 10 a.m. and the meeting starting at 10:30 a.m.

Our keynote speaker will be Suellen Lazarek Dean ’88, coordinator of the CALLS (Career, Academic, Lifetime, Learning Skills) program, who will provide a report about the inaugural Sophomore Professional Shadow Program, which took place during the week of January 12.

If you have any questions or would like to confirm your attendance, please contact Deb Konicki P’08, director of parent programs, at dkonicki@assumption.edu or call (508) 767-7104. For more information about the Parents Committee, visit www.assumption.edu and click on “Parents and Families.”

Also, parent volunteers are needed on Sunday, April 5 at the Open House for Accepted Students, where you can mingle and answer questions from prospective students and their families. Contact Deb Konicki (info above) for more information.
WINGS program guides and supports female students of color

During the fall semester Assumption welcomed its first 15 students into the newly formed WINGS (Women In Need of Guidance and Support) program, created and facilitated by Director of Multicultural Affairs Brenda Safford and Associate Director of Athletics/Senior Women’s Administrator Joi Irby.

The program helps young women of color navigate successfully in the college environment by providing guidance and support through communication among group members and facilitators.

First-year and sophomore female students of color were invited to participate in the year-long program, working toward its goal to help young women of color navigate successfully, academically and socially, in the college environment by providing guidance and support through communication among group members and facilitators. “The hope is that information and selected topics will assist in the overall development of each individual woman, as well as provide long-lasting knowledge that will support the transition to life beyond the undergraduate career,” said Safford.

WINGS strives to provide a safe environment that offers information to inspire and empower students’ lives. The program invites guest speakers to discuss topics ranging from women’s relationship to their bodies and nutrition, spirituality to self-image and sexuality, communication, stress release and personal empowerment. The hope is that each participant will become a “big sister” to future participants of this program, providing support, guidance and wisdom to those in need.

This semester, WINGS members are participating in a new Worcester program, which began in January. WINGS students are volunteering for the Strong Girls Healthy Choices program developed by representatives of local health and human services agencies. Participants are mentoring the young girls and assisting with college visits and other introductions to college. The WINGS program is collaborating with Assumption’s Reach Out Center (student volunteer organization) for transportation services and support.

Support scholarships and athletics through FBI Golf Tournament

The annual Father Bissonnette Invitational (FBI) Golf Tournament will be held on Monday, June 15 at the prestigious Worcester Country Club, host of the first Ryder Cup in 1927.

This essential fundraiser has raised more than $1 million in support of the General Scholarship Fund and the Department of Athletics since its inception in 1973. With 91% of our 2,100 students receiving some type of institutional aid from the College, the FBI provides valuable additional funding for enhancing financial aid packages. Several opportunities to support the Tournament are available.

You can either play in the tournament, be a sponsor, purchase an ad in the program book ($100, $200 and $400 levels) and/or donate an item for the live and silent auctions. Last year, through the generous support of alumni, parents and friends, we offered weekend stays in Vermont, Martha’s Vineyard and Nantucket; Red Sox, Patriots and Celtics tickets; Broadway shows and restaurant gift certificates.

Registration and donor forms are available online at www.assumption.edu/alums/FBI. For more information contact Linda Rosenlund ’82 at 508-767-7026 or e-mail lrosenlund@assumption.edu.

Tim Martin; new Director of Annual Giving

The Office of Institutional Advancement welcomed Tim Martin as the director of Annual Giving in January. Tim comes to the College with 19 years of experience in the development field, including eight years in educational fundraising. He was most recently affiliated with Mobegnan Council, Boy Scouts of America in Worcester. Please join us in welcoming Tim to the Assumption community. Contact Tim via e-mail (timmartin@assumption.edu) or call 508-767-7464.
Parents Fund grows; 4th consecutive year

The level of support and involvement of the Assumption parent community has long been one of the College’s greatest strengths. For the fourth consecutive year, parents’ giving to the Annual Fund increased—last year to a record total of $137,000. This remarkable level of parent support is a tremendous endorsement of the educational experience Assumption provides. Support of the Parents Fund helps provide financial aid and supports student activities, athletics, campus ministry, the library and more.

The Parents Fund is supported through the volunteer efforts of the Parents Committee, a leadership group that promotes Assumption’s mission and the exceptional academic experience the College provides through philanthropic and volunteer support. Under the leadership of co-chairs Paul and Cindy Prete P’10, members encourage others to take part as active members of the Assumption community through participation in assisting the Career Development Center in providing career advice for students and developing internship opportunities, by assisting the Admissions Office in their efforts to recruit students to Assumption, by assisting the Office of Student Life by welcoming new parents to the College and the Parents Fund.

The Parents Fund fiscal year runs from June through May, and gifts are tax-deductible for the calendar year in which they are made. You can make a gift on our secure Web site by visiting www.assumption.edu/alums.

Spring 2009

Feb. 27–Mar. 1...... Siblings’ Weekend
Mar. 7–15 .... Spring Break (no classes)
Apr. 5............ Accepted Students Day
Apr. 9–13 ... Easter recess (no classes)
Apr. 18...Parents Committee meeting
Apr. 24...Course withdrawal deadline
May 4............... Last day of classes
May 7–13............... Final exams
May 15...........Baccalaureate Mass
May 16............Commencement

For the full College calendar, visit www.socialweb.net/assumption