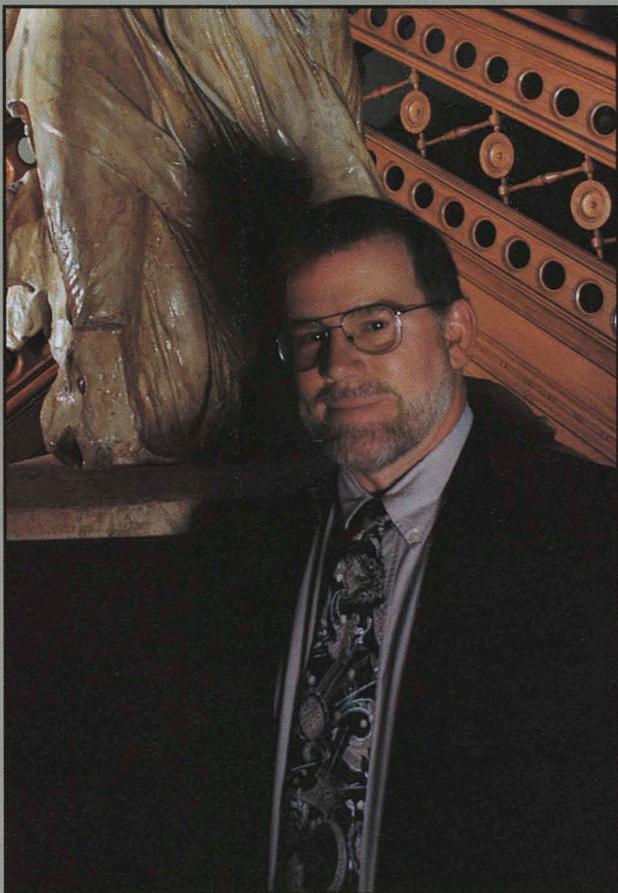


F o c u s

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In addition to teaching, College of Visual and Performing Arts professor G. Burton Harbison directs choral activities at SU.

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the choral work.”**

—G. Burton Harbison

Making Beautiful Music

G Burton Harbison always knew he wanted to be a teacher. He competed in football, baseball, and swimming, so it seemed only natural that he'd become a physical education teacher. But fate and a football injury led him in a new direction. “I injured my shoulder playing football in my senior year of high school,” Harbison says. “Suddenly I had to choose a different career path. To my surprise, I chose choral music.”

Harbison, a music professor and director of choral activities at SU, was first exposed to the choral repertoire at age 6 as a member of the boys' choir at the Philadelphia church where his grandfather, George Burton, had at one time played the organ. Harbison's friends in Little League gave him a lot of “flack” because he sang in a church choir, so he never intended to go into music professionally. “I didn't get hooked on choral music until I was in high school and I heard a performance by the Oberlin College Choir,” Harbison says. “I immediately fell in love with choral work.”

After graduating from Oberlin College in 1967 with degrees in voice performance and choral conducting, Harbison completed a master's degree in voice at Southern Illinois University the following year. He taught at Monticello College for four years, and then taught at the University of Saskatchewan, Canada, as an artist-in-residence. “Although I enjoy vocal performance, I found I was miserable without the choral work,” Harbison says. “When the choral director position opened up at the State University of New York College at Buffalo, I jumped at the chance.”

When Artpark, a performance center in nearby Lewiston, New York, was completed, Harbison joined the conducting staff, and over the next 15 years prepared choruses for more than two dozen operas and conducted almost 300 musical theater performances. The late Christopher Keene, music director of Artpark and the Syracuse Symphony Orchestra, encouraged him to apply for an opening at SU. In 1978 Harbison moved his family to Syracuse, where he joined the music faculty at the College of Visual and Performing Arts (VPA), and his wife, Susan, joined the violin section of the symphony. When Keene became music director of the New York City Opera a few years later, Harbison was asked to follow. “This was my opportunity to play in the big leagues,” Harbison says, “but I decided to focus all of my energy on my family, teaching, and choral activities. I also wanted time to indulge in my other two passions—fishing and woodworking.”

In recognition of his unswerving dedication to his students, Harbison received the 2000-01 University Scholar/Teacher of the Year Award. He teaches graduate and undergraduate music courses, oversees the seven choruses of the choral program, and conducts the University Singers, the Hendricks Chapel Choir, and the Oratorio Society, which is made up of students, faculty, staff, and

community members and regularly performs with the Syracuse Symphony Orchestra. "The Oratorio Society requires a major time commitment, but I feel it's worth the effort because under Burt's direction I've grown tremendously as a singer in terms of vocal technique and repertoire," says Oratorio member Soule Leiter. "I'm proud to be part of a group that brings the University and the Syracuse community closer together."

Carole Brzozowski, interim dean of VPA, agrees. "The work Burt does with his ensembles engenders in his students a deep sense of the human commitment, both personal and collective, that music demands," she says. "He's a loyal member of the faculty who brings his sense of the greater community to his life on campus every day."

This sense of community was never more evident than in the difficult days following the 1988 terrorist bombing of Pan Am Flight 103, when Harbison was asked to pull together the combined University choruses to sing at the memorial service for the 35 SU students killed. "The memorial service was an unforgettable experience for me as a teacher and a choral conductor," Harbison says. "I still can't watch the videotape of the service—it's too emotional." —CHRISTINE YACKEL

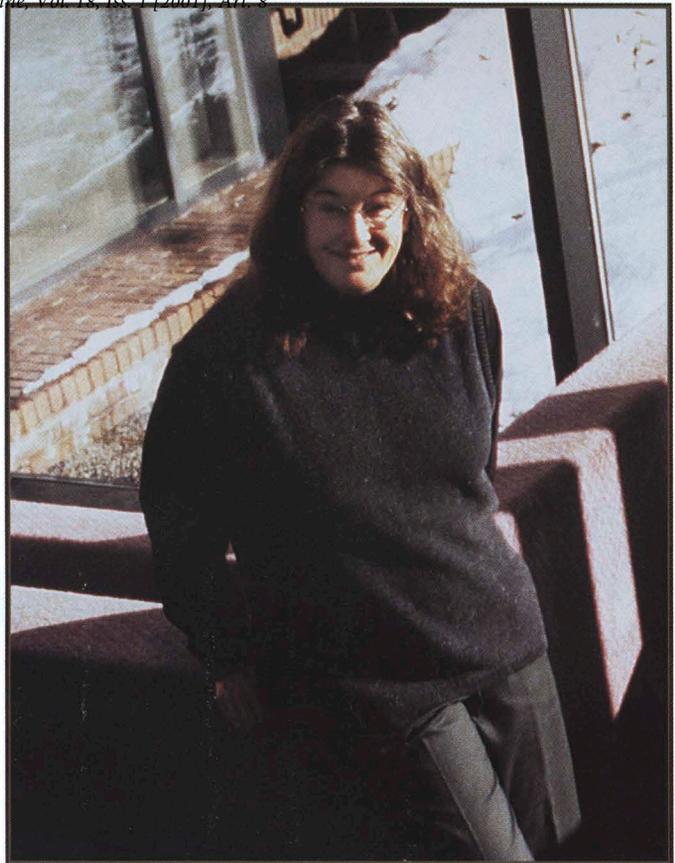
Nurturing the Learning Experience

Sandra Hurd came to Syracuse University to attend the College of Law and never left. More than 25 years later, she is professor and chair of the law and public policy department in the School of Management (SOM), faculty coordinator for learning communities at SU, director of SOM's freshman gateway course, and the recipient of a Chancellor's Citation for Outstanding Contributions to the University's Academic Programs and a Faculty Award for Exceptional Teaching for her "unceasing efforts to make the learning experience rigorous, relevant, and pleasurable."

After graduating from the College of Law in 1975, Hurd clerked for the Onondaga County Court and was an adjunct teacher and visiting professor on the Hill. "When a faculty position opened in the School of Management, I went for it," Hurd says, "although it was scary to leave the security of my county court job for the uncertainty of going through the academic tenure process."

Hurd was an English major at Wells College before heading to law school. She's an avid reader who can usually be found walking around with a book in hand, even while cooking or brushing her teeth. It's this unquenchable thirst for knowledge that permeates every facet of Hurd's academic life. In addition to her teaching and research activities, she piloted the management school's learning communities, supported by the Office of Academic Affairs and the Vision Fund. Now, as faculty coordinator for SU's learning communities, she will help mesh the residential life programs—international, multicultural, health and wellness—with academics. "Learning communities are a fascinating phenomenon," Hurd explains. "Syracuse University was the first big private research university to get involved."

According to the latest research, there are many advantages for students who participate in learning communities. More opportunities for informal interaction with faculty and peers lead to better study habits, stronger interpersonal skills, greater comfort with diversity, and a deeper sense of self-confidence. "Eliminating the intimidation factor and making faculty more approachable breaks down psychological barriers to learning," Hurd says. "Students involved in learning communities spend more time on task and become more involved in campus activities. They are the students most likely to become resident advisors, mentors, and campus leaders."



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School of Management professor Sandra Hurd G'75 is an advocate for learning communities on campus.

Hurd says there are good indications that learning communities offer advantages to the University as well. They help SU recruit and retain the best students; grade-point averages are higher among participants; and faculty satisfaction increases. She makes it clear that faculty members involved in learning communities must be committed to them. "With classes and office hours held in residence halls, faculty involved in learning communities may have to work some evenings and weekends," she says. "But faculty are happier because they know they're doing the right thing for their students."

As director of SOM's freshman gateway course, Hurd helped "beef up" the course's content to provide support for students in their transition to University life and to introduce them to such useful resources as the school's undergraduate office and the career center. Most importantly, the course is designed to help first-year students understand the current art and science of management, the various management areas, and themes that contribute to a business organization and the relationships among the themes. "The freshman gateway course helps students develop computer, library, research, and communication skills, and the ability to work in teams," Hurd says. "The team project gives them insight into how industry works and teaches them to value teamwork as an intrinsic part of business today."

Away from campus, Hurd can be found tending the vegetables, herbs, and flowers in her garden. During the winter months, she grows her own plants from seed and spends hours poring over garden and seed catalogs in anticipation of the coming growing season. "Nurturing my plants and flowers isn't that much different than nurturing my students," Hurd says. "It's so much fun to watch them blossom and grow." —CHRISTINE YACKEL