Katherine R. Santone  `59
2nd Term: 2013-2016

Katherine R. Santone remembers her days on campus when the College was run by the RSCJs. “To a person, these nuns were the smartest, best educated women I had met up to that point. Their message took a while to penetrate my addled brain but it did eventually: “You can take your place alongside any person and make a contribution. Our education will start you off, and then the rest is up to you. They were splendid mentors, and ultimately much of what I’ve accomplished over the years owes to what the RSCJs—and in fact all the Manhattanville professors, plus the College’s philosophy and character—instilled in me.” An English major, she was besotted with the world of books and can still recall hours of pleasure at the library’s carrels, reading and researching. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree in English literature and went on to spend the lion’s share of her working life in book publishing.

After publishing, Katherine spent 10 years as the National Audubon Society’s marketing director. There followed several years as a freelance copywriter, and then a new career blossomed as a proofreader/copy editor at an interactive ad agency, R/GA. Along the way she married and divorced and volunteered when possible, serving some of NYC’s homeless in a breakfast program at Central Synagogue, tutoring underprivileged boys at a Jesuit middle school on the Lower East Side, doing pro bono work for the Boys & Girls Club of Lawrence, Mass., and now leading tours at the Metropolitan Museum of Art as a docent in the American Wing.

She recalls her 50th College reunion as a life-altering experience. Reconnecting with classmates made her ever more grateful to be an alumna eager to give back to the College. She counts as her blessings extraordinary friends, a curious mind, a passion for books, and a sense of humor—and now, the enormous blessing of being married in the fall of 2013 to the most wonderful man she has ever known. “My parents valued education despite not being college graduates themselves. When I came to realize that it wasn’t always easy for them to pay tuition bills for my sister and me, I had even more reason to feel grateful for my education. As a member of Manhattanville’s Alumni Association Board, I try to manifest that gratitude by giving back to the college that gave so much to me.”