

# College takes on new name

Villa Julie College faced an identity crisis.

The school left behind its Catholic roots in 1967, but potential students felt the school's name inferred a religious bond.

The former women's college, founded by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur in 1947, changed its name to Stevenson College in June to address the confusion.

The school has doubled its enrollment to 2,600 undergraduate students in the last decade, and added a 70-acre campus in Owings Mills in 2004. A new 60,000-square-foot building for the business school is opening this month. It includes high-tech computer classrooms, a fully functioning library and an operational mock courtroom.

"We've been growing at a pretty fast rate," said Bob Herr, the school's assistant vice president for enrollment management.

Catholics are trying to find their place. Agnus Dei, an on-campus club, is currently listed as inactive, since its leaders recently graduated. New leadership is being sought.

According to its Web site, Agnus Dei "is an independent student organization looking to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ on this campus through the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church."

The Owings Mills campus features 10 residential halls, housing it was unable to provide at its original Stevenson campus.

Mr. Herr said 90 percent of students come from Maryland and 96 percent of graduates find jobs in their major.

"They are very career-oriented," Mr. Herr said. "Our school motto is, 'Imagine your future, design your career.'"

Mr. Herr said the most popular major is nursing because of a large local demand. Early elementary education and biology remain favorites as well. The school's

information technology department offers classes in video game design.

The athletic department is making waves as well. In his 15 years at the school, men's basketball coach and athletic director Brett Adams has seen his department grow to field 18 teams, several reaching NCAA Division III tournaments.

The Owings Mills campus includes the former training facility of the Baltimore Colts and Ravens, now home for the Mustangs' soccer and lacrosse teams.

"I like to say we're a 15-year overnight success," Mr. Adams said. "We're no longer Catholic and we're not an all-girls college, but the real positive values are still there."