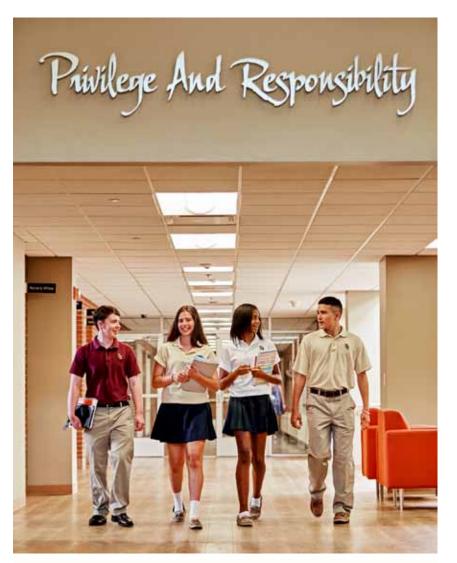


# Growing Together: Building Success Beyond High School

2018

ST JOSEPH HIGH SCHOOL + TRUMBULL, CT





#### By Dr William Fitzgerald - Head of School

St Joseph High School in Trumbull provides 820 students an exceptional Catholic college preparatory education. Our co-educational environment emphasizes a rigorous academic curriculum led by over one hundred professionally trained faculty. Our college counseling team concentrates on developing students' interests, talents, and confidence.

College preparatory education at St Joes looks beyond the classroom walls. Developing moral and ethical character is the objective of every class. Encouraging effective relational skills is the goal of every team and activity. The ability to work with and on behalf of others is a requirement for graduation. Faith builds family and the St Joe's family builds responsible students.

Our community of alumni and friends have ensured us a first-rate facility. Whether it's the playing fields, the e-classrooms, or the wetlands ecology lab, St Joes offers students a growth oriented 21st Century learning environment. Our 58-acre campus provides a real-world college experience. If you haven't visited recently, stop by for a tour. You will be surprised what an intentional faith-based learning community can accomplish.

# Know Who You Are and Where You Stand

By Dr James Keane - Principal

In his book, *Thank You for Being Late: An Optimists Guide to Thriving in the Age of Accelerations*, Tom Friedman explains that the future we think as coming at us is already here. How do we prepare students for a world of increasingly rapid technological change? How do we prepare them for jobs that do not yet exist, that will use technology that has not yet been invented, to solve problems that have not yet surfaced?

At St Joseph High School we are enhancing our college preparatory program with interdisciplinary courses in engineering, robotics, coding, entrepreneurial technology, and aeronautic engineering. We are building an engineering/robotics lab, installing three distance-learning classrooms, and a next-generation telecommunications system. In our 1:1 iPad learning environment, we are using 3-D printers and teaching about cyber security. We have built a boardwalk in our wetlands to study biodiversity and environmental sustainability. But the question that Friedman raises is not about technology, but about our posture in facing that future.

It's not a question of what will students "know", but rather, what kind of leaders will they be?

Our society will need students who are formed and shaped by and for community. At St Joes, the largest Catholic co-ed high school in Connecticut, we cultivate students and teachers who are life-long learners, who are explorers and experimenters. Forming community is at the heart of what we do. It does not just happen. It is deliberate and intentional.

Whether it be the forty-six athletic teams, fifty clubs and activities, or the Francis Xavier International Scholars Program — all of our programs encourage our students to traverse, with confidence, the distances between geography, economics, race, and class.

So, bring on the future! Our values-based learning community will yield students who know who they are and where they stand — difference-makers in today's digital world.





# Faith, Value, and Spirituality: Seeing God in All Places

The Francis Xavier International Scholars Program broadens student awareness of the global mission of the Church. Last June, eighteen students traveled to Puerto Rico to assist with reparations after the island sustained catastrophic damage from Hurricane Maria in 2017. Our students reflect on the lasting impact of their experience:

### Jake '19

**Describe your typical workday.** We teamed up with an organization called Mission Discovery to help clean homes still damaged from the Hurricane; we were assigned a home that had severe water damage in Dorado. The homeowner explained that she couldn't leave because of the memories... everything that meant something to her was in that home. We scraped paint, cleaned, replaced walls, and changed the home completely. I was more motivated than ever — I kept thinking, "this is someone's home; this work is special."

What was the most memorable aspect of your trip? Each night we would have a reflection and devotional — read the bible, pray, and discuss our "God Sighting." Mine was a man named Carmello, a handyman who worked alongside us. Although he did not speak English, any time we got tired, he changed our energy by putting on Spanish music and dancing with us to keep everyone motivated. He is my "God Sighting," because just like God, he will stand by you through any challenge and teach you the value along the way.

What might you tell a student interested in an immersion trip? Pastor Wanda led our devotional one night and said something I will never forget: "Comfort blinds us from adventure." The experience you get from helping another person humbles you like nothing else. I left Puerto Rico with a surreal understanding of what really matters. I stepped out of my comfort zone and gained peace, gratitude, and happiness from this experience.





### Sophie '20

What was the most memorable aspect of your trip? The conversations. Through our service group, we met two pastors and their daughters – one of them was my age and we enjoyed talking about our different lives and common ground. There was also a man who worked with us named Carmelo that everyone loved, and whenever he'd meet someone, he'd pull out his phone to translate "I am a servant of God." We talked about how excited we were to be there and to work together. He would laugh all of the time and his laughter was contagious.

What would you say was your takeaway from the trip? I now have a new perspective on life; I see everything differently. I tried to go on the trip without any expectations, but immediately upon flying down to the island, I saw all of the homes without roofs and that's when it actually hit me. But then I met all of the residents and it was almost as if the hurricane had never happened, they were simply fixing their lives little by little, more positive than you could ever imagine and just happy to be alive. My takeaway from this trip is that it's the positive people, not the negative experiences that can impact your life.

**Would you say your faith was strengthened on this trip?** Yes! One cool aspect of the trip was that we had reflections each night and we would pray with a group of Episcopalians. We would pray together and teach each other different ways of praying. It was amazing how we could pray differently and still join together as one.

St Joseph High School



# Success Outside of the Classroom: The Fine Arts Take Center Stage at St Joes

By Katie Cardillo - Fine Arts Department Chair

The sounds of thrust and parry from a stage combat fencing lesson rings through the halls, accompanied by the Caribbean melodies of steel pans, the whirring of pottery wheels, and the smell of potter's mud. Welcome to SJ Fine Arts. A foundation in the arts develops cognitive and analytical skills, the ability to self-direct, communicate effectively, and sharpen critical and creative skills. While students may not all go on to study the arts, every student is enriched and stronger for having engaged in these programs.

Theater comes to life at St Joes with our fall play and spring musical. One out of eight students is now involved in the spring production. From backstage to onstage, concessions and tickets, to the pit orchestra, SJ Drama is one of the largest programs on campus.

### **Student Spotlight!**

Meet the Lead Actors in SJ's Spring Musical: Thoroughly Modern Millie!

#### Michael '19

What prompted you to get involved with the Drama Club? An accident! When I entered St Joes, I joined the football team but broke my leg in the 10th grade. I was taking Theatre as an elective and my teacher suggested that I join Drama Club. I tried out for *Pippin* that spring and performed on stage for the first time.

**How have the arts impacted your experience at St Joes?** I never thought I would be performing. I grew into my talent here. The students in the Drama Club welcomed me with open arms and encouraged me to audition for roles. Without so much support, I am not sure I would have made such growth. The Drama Club is my family, there is no other way to say it.





### Abby '20

**How did you learn about the Theatre Program at St Joes?** I come from a family of performers and I participated in my 7th and 8th grade musical productions. A strong theater program was essential to my high school search. I attended St Joe's spring musicals for years and this program was my best choice.

When did you join the Drama Club? Although I had a background in theatre, as a freshman I was a little intimidated to join Drama Club and audition right away. I played field hockey at first, but when the season ended I knew I wanted to add another extracurricular activity. Joining the Drama Club required me to step out of my comfort zone and I am so glad I did. We always say that St Joes is a family; to me the Drama Club is the heart of our family. Made up of every grade and talent level, everyone is welcome and everyone grows together. When you're running lines for four hours, building sets and working on the weekends you quickly become a team, a family.



## Alumni Spotlight!

#### Taking Their Love of the Arts to the Next Level!

#### Evan DeBenedetto '16

"St Joseph High School is recognized for its top notch academics and outstanding sports programs. For me, the theater was just as important. It offered me an opportunity for individual growth and gave me a sense of belonging. It taught me the meaning of hard work, sacrifice, and working together. I remain in touch with many of my classmates and their words of encouragement came from being part of the theater. Belonging is not taught in the classroom. It is found on the field, in the halls, and for me the stage. We all have a voice and I found mine at St Joes."

Evan DeBenedetto is known for his extraordinary tap style as well as his versatility in all genres of dance, He recently reached success as a top 10 finalist on *So You Think You Can Dance* (Season 15). A Connecticut native, Evan moved to Los Angeles at the age of nineteen and quickly began making a professional name for himself. Evan's credits include Good Morning America, The Tonight Show, Saturday Night Live, MTV TRL, Disney's Saks Fifth Avenue Holiday Light Show, Lucille Lortel Awards, Every Single Step (Season 2), Google, and VidCon.





#### Dan Foster '14

"There were so many great programs that I was able to do at St Joes that helped me make all the wonderful friends that I can still call my friends today. The arts program helped me to explore something that I was really passionate about, which was acting, which I now have a degree in. I love coming back and being able to tell my old teachers how well prepared I was for college."

Dan is a New York City based actor who earned his BFA in Drama from the New York University Tisch School of the Arts. While there, Dan divided his time between the Lee Strasberg Theater & Film Institute and Stonestreet Studios. He auditions through Abrams Artist's Agency for commercial and voiceover and is highly involved with Off-Broadway Theater as well as independent short films. He originated roles in Lucy Thurber's play "East Coast Curriculum" and Dennis Bush's play "... Where You Eat". In the summer of 2018, he was the star of Intel's national ad campaign alongside Jim Parsons.

Be sure to catch Dan in a Dunkin Donuts campaign as well as an off-off-Broadway run of the new play "The Torso" which will be at Theater for the New City in early September!







# Why We Talk Academics When We Talk Sports

By Dr William Fitzgerald - Head of School

The odds of winning an athletic scholarship to a D-1 school are slim. NCAA reports that only 2% of all high school athletes will ever wear a D-1 Jersey, and that the average athletic scholarship is worth \$10,400. Compare that to the specialized costs spent on club fees, equipment, summer camps, private lessons, travel teams, and regional tournaments.

Last year's 178 graduating seniors reported a record \$25.5 million in college scholarships and aid. At St Joes, grades come first. Student-athletes learn accountability, personal responsibility, leadership, respect, and how to overcome adversity. Our coaches are accountable not just for the banners but for the values and virtues that undergird our faith-based community. You get noticed. D-1 football and basketball coaches recently stated that they are committed to recruiting students who play multiple sports in high school. The scouts visiting high schools want to see both talent and character. Both matter at St Joes.





# **Creating Fitness for Life**

By Alisha Thresher – Director of Health & Wellness

In January 2018, St Joe's new 4,500 square foot Health & Wellness Center officially opened for student usage. In addition to offering students a great place to exercise, the Health & Wellness Center is soon to become a place where students can simply be themselves — feeling comfortable and safe as they aim toward a lifetime goal of fitness and well-being.

The Health & Wellness Center is a place where students strive to incorporate the spirit, mind, and body into one entity, allowing students to learn the important life skill of developing healthy habits to take care of their bodies. Our goal is for students to learn how to properly navigate a fitness center, create basic fitness routines for themselves, and learn how proper nutrition can drastically change their lives. We strive to ensure that all students understand the incredible feats their bodies are capable of accomplishing.

The Health & Wellness Center is here for all students — regardless if they are an athlete or not. It is a place of strength and happiness for every one.



# **Preparing College Athletes**

By Kevin Butler - Assistant Principal for Athletics



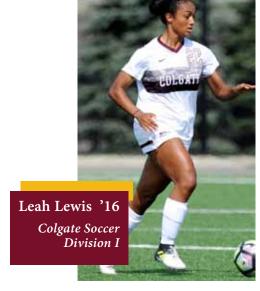
St Joe's student-athletes are highly prepared on and off the field so that they may compete and succeed at the finest colleges and universities in the country. Our student-athletes are not tasked to approach this important decision alone. Our guidance and college counseling professionals in partnership with parents, coaches and administration, work to ensure each student finds his/her best fit. Our coaches know each student athlete and are committed to understanding his/her playing aspirations at the next level. SJ coaches are experienced in preparing player evaluations for college coaches.

Over the past few years, we've had the pleasure of seeing many of our student-athletes go on to have wonderful academic and athletic careers at some of the most prestigious institutions such as Yale, Cornell, William and Mary, Middlebury, Boston College, Fordham, and Connecticut College. It is our commitment to developing the student-athlete that makes the difference at St Joes.

# Alumni Spotlight!

#### Success as a Student-Athlete









# St Joseph High School At A Glance

- 820 students enrolled from 32 Connecticut towns
- 6 transportation routes along major commuter lines
- \$1.5+ million in financial aid and scholarships
- 13:1 faculty to student ratio
- 50:50 male to female ratio
- 60+ honors, AP, and Early College Courses
- 40+ clubs and organizations
- 5 National Honor Societies
- 36,000 hours in community service by the students
- \$25.5 million earned in college scholarships by the class of 2018
- 100% college and university acceptance
- 58 acre campus, including two artificial turf fields and a wetlands boardwalk
- 46 competitive athletic teams
- 21 State Championships in four years
- 10,000 alumni



# Where You Go to High School Matters: Preparing Our Students for the College Process

By Dr William Fitzgerald - Head of School



St Joe's Guidance & College Counseling Staff

St Joes is a Catholic college prep school: everybody graduates, everybody goes to college.

That's the headline. Behind the headline are over one hundred professional and experienced educators committed to readying our students for the rigors of university study – teachers, coaches, and especially the counselors. The counselors keep our focus on the essentials of college readiness — academics, personal morals and social ethics, and relational and professional skills.

Students begin developing their personal profiles in the freshman year, such that by the time they are juniors, those college visits and complicated applications are simply part of the high school process. The counselors keep their skills sharp, building relationships with admission offices at select colleges, researching new trends in college admissions, and presenting a tailored college admission curriculum to each class.

The program works. The Class of 2018 attracted \$25.5 million in college scholarships. The list of college acceptances is equally impressive: the Ivies, the Catholic Ivies, the Little Ivies, even international universities. The real proof, however, is with each students' experience in finding the right fit for them

Students enjoy their time at St Joes. All the while, whirling around them is a great team of professionals ensuring the experience is personal and purposeful. By intention, we are a college prep school.



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# Finding Your Passion at St Joes: Career Readiness Day

By Sasha Davila Russell '01 – Assistant Director of Advancement & Alumni Affairs



St Joseph High School's Career Readiness Day brings our mission to life. Junior and Senior students use the day to network with alumni and friends who have careers in fields ranging from Bio-Tech Engineering to Financial Advising to Interior Decorating. Connecting with professionals in careers of interest helps students like Jailyn McLean '19 realize their potential. McLean said as a junior she learned how to become successful and truly "see that great futures are possible by attending St Joes."

Leading up to the day, students are prepped on how to speak, dress, and conduct themselves professionally. SJ's Board of Directors Chairman, Chris Wilson P '08, '10, '14, reflects on last year's events, "I was extremely impressed by the professional caliber of the day: from the well-organized structure to the interesting guest speakers to the professional dress of the students asking well-informed questions. As Board Chair, I was proud of our entire community."

Alumnus Ken Martin '95, P '21 said he was honored to come back and speak to our students. "My expectations were exceeded by the engaging, insightful, and respectful students I encountered. As an alumnus, it was so heartening to see young men and women who not only have the obvious intellectual tools to excel, but the moral conviction to eventually do so in the so-called 'real world' that so greatly needs leaders."

For the Class of 2019, Career Readiness Day offers a unique chance to build relationships that will lead to participation in the Futures Internship Program. The Futures Internship Program is an opportunity for students to enhance their learning by exploring their career interests outside of the traditional classroom.

For more information about Career Readiness Day, visit sjcadets.org/careerday.

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# Alumni Spotlight: Entrepreneurs of St Joes!



JOHNNY VAZZANO '80

The Original Vazzy's

Born and bred in Bridgeport, Johnny knows a thing or two about local tradition. In 1993, he opened Vazzy's Brick Oven, along with his friend and partner, Vin Noce, Jr. Six more "Vazzy" restaurants soon followed. In the last year alone, two more Vazzano eateries opened in the Stratford area—Lordship Pizza and Beach House Grill. Along with his sons, Johnny also operates Catamount Food Service, specializing in school cafeteria cuisine.

Johnny is active in various local charitable foundations such as Swim Across the Sound, the 911 Ride, the Cardinal Shehan Center, and the Marilyn Goldstone Foundation. For the last 24 years, he has hosted a food and toy drive during the holiday season which has raised approximately \$1 million for families in need. In 2018, he was also named Barnum Festival Ringmaster, and chose a theme which salutes first responders and the military. He and his wife of 30 years, Heidi, live in Trumbull where they raised their three grown sons— John, Alex, and Rick. They are a family who values tradition and cherishes their community. "St Joes taught me unity."



# ELLEN CASEY MAVULI '83

#### Gusto Italian Restaurant

Ellen Casey Mavuli and her husband Riccardo have owned Gusto Italian Restaurant in

Milford, CT for 21 years. Gusto has a family atmosphere with many long-time dedicated staff and customers. Ellen and Riccardo take pride in providing great food and attribute their success to hard work, exceptional food, loyal staff, and teamwork. Gusto is open for lunch Monday-Friday and dinner every night of the week.

Ellen attended SJHS along with four of her siblings in the late '70s and '80s. She and her husband have two children, one of which, Gabriella is a freshman this year at St Joes! "St Joes taught me to be a good person, work hard, give back to the community, and always have faith."



#### **OPEN HOUSE HIGHLIGHTING OUR PRESCHOOL PROGRAM**

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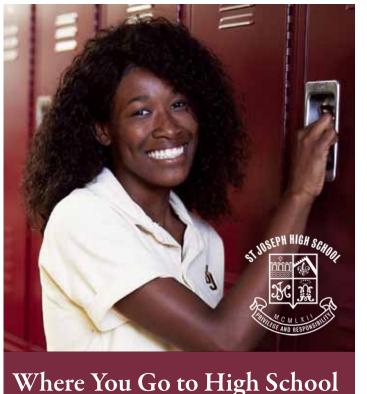
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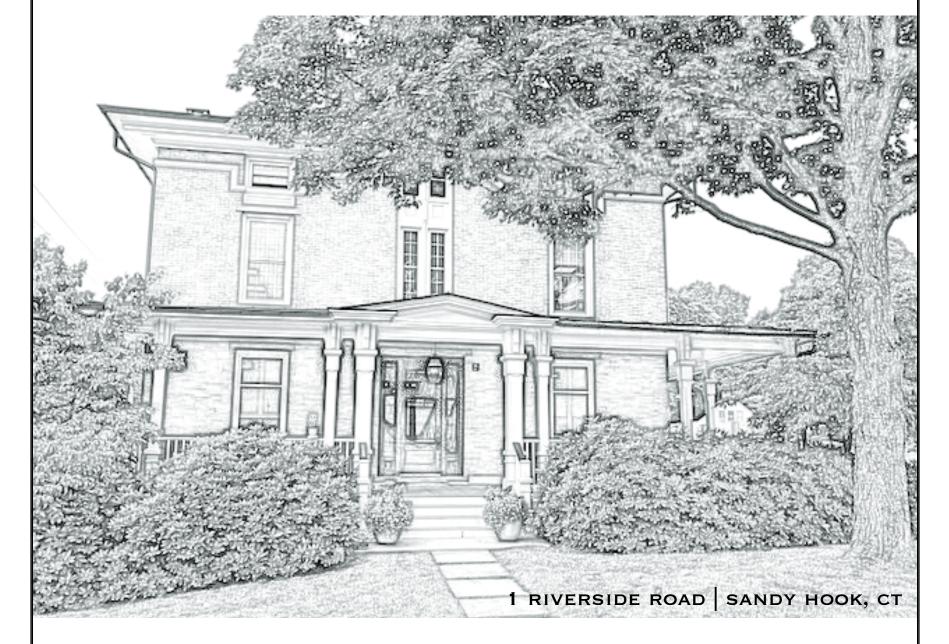


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