

In this issue:  
Notre Dame alums  
working hard in  
the public sector

# Pontiac rising

1995 NDHS grad  
Joe Sobota is  
managing the  
comeback of the  
city of 60,000

*plus:*

Harold Rutila

Vic Battani

Steve Derico

Clare Wrobel

Todd McConaghy

Jeanne Klein Conlon

Reunion photos

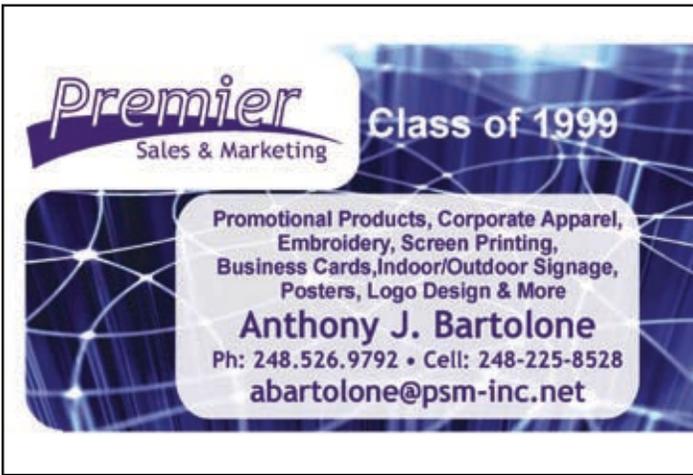
Irish news

Alumni notes

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(See page 5)

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Over the last 65 years, the Marist Fathers and Brothers have touched the lives of more than 11,000 students and their families. The ability to continue their mission is dependent on the support of parents, grandparents, alumni and friends who believe that Catholic education remains an important ministry of the Church. Studies show that 40% of Americans give to charitable causes during their lifetime, but only 9.6% include their favorite charities in their wills. A simple statement such as "I bequest X% of my estate to the Marist Fathers of Detroit, Inc., DBA Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy" can go a long way in ensuring the future of our school. Contact Andy Guest '84 (NDHS) in the advancement office at 248-373-2171, ext. 1, (or [aguest@ndpma.org](mailto:aguest@ndpma.org)) if you have any questions.

 **NOTRE DAME**

# irish

IRISH is a magazine devoted to the alumni and friends of Notre Dame Preparatory, Notre Dame, Oakland Catholic, Pontiac Catholic, St. Michael and St. Frederick schools. It is distributed free of charge. For more information, please see the alumni section of Notre Dame Prep's web site at [www.ndpma.org/alumni](http://www.ndpma.org/alumni).

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ON THE COVER: Joseph Sobota '95 (NDHS) is working on bringing Pontiac back from the brink. (Photo: Mike Kelly)

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# A WORD FROM YOUR ANNUAL FUND DIRECTOR



Greetings from Notre Dame! As many of you know, I've agreed to take on a new position in Notre Dame's advancement office. Working alongside fellow alumni Andy Guest '84 (NDHS), Mike Kelly '73 (NDHS) and Joan Kopytek (alum parent) means an opportunity to reconnect with my brothers from Notre Dame High School, former students from Notre Dame Prep and Marist, and many of the parents I've gotten to know in my time here at the school. That being said, my major motivation comes from a desire to help remove the financial barriers our school often faces in delivering the best school possible to as many families as possible.

The annual fund, second only to enrollment, is essential to a vibrant, innovative and healthy Notre Dame. While we certainly understand each donor's desire to support the programs they care about most, the annual fund gives the school the flexibility to distribute resources based on the current year's needs. For example, a rise in the number of families in need of tuition assistance, an influx of new teachers with the need for IB and Marist training, or any number of unanticipated needs can be met by resources generated by a successful annual fund. Heading into a new school year, annual fund support also puts the school in a position to expand, improve and bolster programs across the school.

As a grad from NDHS and with more than 19 years at here at NDPMA, I know firsthand the care that is taken by the educators to form our students into independent, thoughtful, creative and Christ-like citizens. From Mr. Vachon to Ms. Bembas, Mr. Rice to Mrs. Tessada, Fr. DesRosier to Fr. Joe, teachers make a personal and professional commitment to improving the lives students. For the educators here at Notre Dame, the goal is far deeper than just academic success or college

acceptance. For these dedicated faculty and staff, in addition to the academic coursework, healthy development in the arts, athletics, leadership and faith, they have a real devotion to creating a better world.

We know this focus is not just wishful thinking. In countless ways, the men and women of Notre Dame are taking this generous spirit into the world. Notre Dame graduates serving in the Peace Corps and Teach for America, sacrificing as first responders, working in pediatric oncology at U of M and Johns Hopkins, volunteering at religious institutions and non-profits, teaching here at Notre Dame or their local parish or district, are making a difference for others.

For this, and for so many other reasons, I know in my heart that a gift to Notre Dame makes an impact on lives far beyond our campus. If you believe Notre Dame has made a difference for you and others, please help us continue this important work by making a gift to the Notre Dame Annual Fund\* today at [www.ndpma.org/support](http://www.ndpma.org/support).

Go Irish!

**Gregory P. Simon '89 (NDHS)**

Notre Dame Annual Fund Director

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E-mail: [gmsimon@ndpma.org](mailto:gmsimon@ndpma.org)

Web: [ndpma.org/support](http://ndpma.org/support)

\*The annual fund for 2013-14 concludes on June 30, 2014.



## A MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADVANCEMENT

Dear alumni,

The last year has been a very exciting time for your alma mater. In August, we completed the construction of a brand new lower division campus and welcomed 161 students between the ages of 3 and 10 into Notre Dame Marist Academy. A strong lower division provides a consistent flow of mission-centric families to the middle and upper divisions that will bode well for the future of the entire institution.

The new campus includes 5.5 acres of property, 18,000 square foot school, a playground, and a 100-year-old farm house that has been converted to administrative space for the advancement office. The entire \$4.0 MM campus was secured and built in less than 12 months and includes a William Kozyra Assembly Hall and a Gino D'Agostini Media Center, based on the generous benefaction of these two families.

We have been blessed with growing enrollment each of the past three years and the current school enrollment is now a healthy 1,121 students. This positions us well as a strong "Class B" school.

Our volleyball team, under the leadership of Coach Betty Wroubel, won its second state championship and the students received a day off from school on February 3 in honor of the tremendous accomplishment. On March 1, the competitive cheer team, led by Coach Beth Campbell, won its first state championship in the history of the school and there is an excellent chance that our nationally acclaimed Killer Bees will win a state championship in robotics this year as well.

I am happy to report that Greg Simon (NDHS '89) has joined the advancement department as our new annual fund director after an exemplary career as a teacher, coach, student council moderator and dean of admissions and diversity. We are confident that his wealth of knowledge and vast student, alumni, faculty and parental relationships will help drive our fundraising efforts as the school strives to continue our mission.

Rachel Miller (NDP '00) is leaving her position as alumni relations director to move to Traverse City and spend more time with her husband and two young children. We thank Rachel for the fantastic job she did and have immediately begun a search to find an outstanding replacement. All alumni will receive special consideration as it would be ideal to fill this position with one of our own.

In the past few months, I have spoken to several Notre Dame High School alumni, who have asked me to tell the Notre Dame story again. In this issue of Irish, I would direct your attention to the FAQ section (page 17) on this topic. More importantly, all Notre Dame High School alumni, as well as alumni of Notre Dame Prep, St. Frederick, St. Michael, Pontiac Catholic and Oakland Catholic are always welcome to call or visit the school anytime. Simply contact the advancement office at 248-373-2171 to arrange a visit.

Sincerely,

**Andrew J. Guest '84 (NDHS)**

**Check out the NDHS/NDP FAQs on page 17.**

# GRAND ANNIVERSARY DINNER



Please join the Notre Dame community for a fun, casual, adult evening to celebrate the anniversaries of the Marist Fathers and Brothers, Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy, Notre Dame High School, and Pontiac/Oakland Catholic High School.

**Saturday, April 12, 2014**

**The San Marino Club**  
1685 E. Big Beaver Road in Troy

**Cocktails • Dinner • Entertainment • Dancing**

This will be a night of celebrating the past and looking forward to a great future!

Ticket price: \$55 per person

For information, call Ann Stone at 248-613-1832.

## State champs X2!

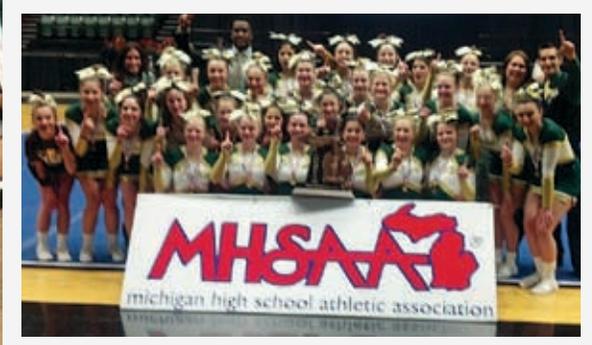
Notre Dame won two state championships during this school year, starting with volleyball in November when the Fighting Irish defeated Grand Rapids South Christian three games to one (25-15, 25-19, 19-25, 25-23) at the

MHSAA Class B final in Battle Creek.

This is the second state championship for head coach Betty Wroubel and NDP, and it comes in her 20th year at the helm. Wroubel took the Irish to their first state volleyball title in 2007. The 2013 team, which finished the season 62-2-1, also earned the

Catholic League A-B title.

On March 1, 2014, the Fighting Irish cheer team (inset) won the MHSAA Division 3 Competitive Cheer title in Grand Rapids. The team's score of 764.04 defeated Comstock Park, which scored 759.68. Congratulations to all!



## 2003 Notre Dame alum rolls out 'revolutionary' treatment for back pain



John Putnam '03 (NDP) has partnered with a company called Pure Healthy Back on the first and only comprehensive approach to the treatment of chronic back and neck pain, according to Putnam. "There are currently only two of these clinics in the U.S., one in

New Orleans, and the other in Canton, Mich., which is my home base," he said. "It's an approach backed by 75 peer-reviewed research articles and 15 patented state-of-the-art machines." Putnam said it's a huge development in health care that will leave a lot of people pain-free, stronger, and more flexible. For more info, visit: [purehealthy-back.com](http://purehealthy-back.com).

## Notre Dame board approves diversity statement

In an effort to continually improve the school's approach to diversity, Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy's Board of Trustees has approved a diversity statement to complement NDP-MA's mission of developing Christian persons, upright citizens and academic scholars:

"Notre Dame, guided by the spirit and teachings of the Catholic Church and Society of Mary, actively seeks students, families, faculty, staff and trustees of diverse backgrounds who are committed to the formation of a community of inclusion that respects the dignity of every individual.



"Notre Dame believes that teaching students to advocate for justice is essential to their development as Christian persons, upright citizens and academic scholars. We believe members of our community should work to eliminate prejudice and be a voice for those pushed to the fringes of society on the local, national and global level. Therefore, Notre Dame challenges our community members to battle discrimination against any person or group, including, but not limited to discrimination on the basis of age, creed, gender, race, national or ethnic origin, socioeconomic status or religion."

## Binelli pens Rolling Stone cover story on the pope



Notre Dame High School graduate Mark Binelli ('88) wrote a cover story for the February 13, 2014, issue of Rolling Stone magazine that profiled Pope Francis. Binelli is an author of two books and a regular contributor to Rolling Stone and Men's Journal magazines. He said for the Pope Francis article, he spent a week in Rome interviewing priests and lay people who work in and around the Vatican and "did a bunch of research back in the

states—though I have to say, I was already familiar with much of papal history thanks to Fr. Hindelang's senior-year church history class!"

## Two NDP hockey alums face off on opposite sides

Two former captains and teammates of the Notre Dame Prep varsity hockey team, D.J. Pagnucco ('12), left, and P.J. Barron ('10), played in early February against each other in the first ever hockey game between the University of Michigan and the University of Notre Dame club hockey teams.



## Alum inducted into Candy Hall of Fame



In late 2013, Michael Koch '75 (NDHS) received one of the highest honors that an individual in the confectionery industry can receive, as he was inducted into the Candy Hall of Fame. Koch is co-owner of the Morley Candy Makers and Sanders Candy based in Clinton Township. Koch's career started in 1973 with Morley Candy Makers in East Detroit. He ultimately became Morley's head candy maker and kept that position for 15 years. Over the years he also held the following positions at Morley: maintenance supervisor, quality control director, warehouse manager, director of research and development, and vice president of manufacturing. In 2008, Koch became part owner of the company.

## NDP alums swim at conference championship

The Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association (MIAA), the nation's oldest athletic conference, hosted its championship swim meet in February at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, and three Notre Dame Prep alums did their high school alma mater proud. MacKenzie Chesley (NDP '11), a junior at Albion, scored 30 points, finishing sixth in the 200 butterfly, seventh in the 400 individual medley, and 12th in the 200 IM. Kaleigh Mullen (NDP '12), a sophomore at Hope, who battled a back injury most of the season, scored nine points, finishing 12th in the 100 freestyle and 13th in the 200 free. And Payton Hoff (NDP '13), a freshman at Hope, scored 11 points, finishing 12th in the 500 free, 12th in the 200 fly, and 16th in the 100 fly.



*Former Notre Dame Prep swimmers, from left, Marin McNerney, MacKenzie Chesley, Payton Hoff and Kaleigh Mullen. Chesley, Hoff and Mullen participated in the recent MIAA championship swim meet held at Calvin College.*

### Three NDP alums smell the roses in Pasadena



*NDP alum Christopher George ('10) played for the MSU band at this year's Rose Bowl.*

For Whitney Lorenz '12 (NDP), Cara Stewart '12 (NDP) and Christopher George '10 (NDP), not only did they get to go to this year's Rose Bowl game on New Years Day in Pasadena to cheer on MSU, they got to perform in the halftime show with the Michigan State University marching band. Lorenz, who carries a Big Ten flag, and Stewart are on MSU's flag team and George plays trumpet in the band.

### More than 40 from Notre Dame march for life in D.C.

More than 40 students from Notre Dame's upper division were in Washington, D.C., again this year to participate in the 41st annual March for Life, which is held at the National Mall in the nation's capitol. They joined hundreds of other young people in the "Champions for Life" from many of the Catholic high schools in the Detroit area as well as a number of public schools and homeschooling groups. The march followed a route up Constitution Avenue to the Supreme Court building on Capitol Hill.

### Notre Dame teacher named one of 200 nationwide for fellowship



Notre Dame Marist Academy middle division science teacher Katherine Thomas has been selected for the 2013-2014 fellowship program in the prestigious National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) New Science Teacher Academy. She is one of only 200 in the United States chosen by NSTA, the largest professional organization in the world promoting excellence and

innovation in science teaching and learning. Selected from more than a thousand applications nationwide, Thomas and 199 other Fellows will participate in a host of science-related activities and professional learning opportunities designed to help promote quality science teaching, enhance teacher confidence and classroom excellence, and improve teacher content knowledge.

### New dean of admissions named

Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy named Kathleen Offer to the position of dean of admissions, which became effective January 15, 2014. Offer, a Shrine High School and Yale University graduate, replaced Gregory Simon, who is now serving the school as annual fund director. Notre Dame head of school, Fr.



Leon Olszawski, said the transition will be seamless: "With Kathleen's five-plus years of experience in our admissions group along with her academic credentials and a genuine rapport with students and parents, we expect the success the department has had under Greg's leadership to continue well into the future."

### New track coach and alum returns to stomping grounds



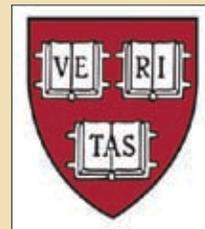
Notre Dame announced in November that Jonathan C. Barbee joined the Fighting Irish athletics staff as head coach of track and field. Barbee replaced Megan Thayer, who is now the athletic director at Bishop Foley High School. A graduate of St. Benedict grade school in Waterford and Pontiac/Oakland Catholic, both of which served as predecessor schools for NDPMA, Barbee ran track at Pontiac/Oakland

Catholic and served as assistant football coach at Notre Dame Prep in 1999, and was the school's first cross country and track coach. He is employed by Oakland County in the communications field.

### NDP To collaborate with Harvard on astrophysics program

Notre Dame Prep has been selected to participate in an astrophysics program through Harvard University that will enable students to access sophisticated telescopes and software for the study of planets and stars outside our own solar system.

In a field test for the "Laboratory for the Study of Exoplanets: Fostering Data Literacy" program, students in science teacher Sue McGinnis' astronomy class will participate in a two-week program sponsored by the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics in the spring of 2014. The program will allow NDP juniors and seniors to access telescopes remotely online and use image-processing software and interactive models to detect and describe other worlds' orbiting planets beyond the Earth's own planetary system, typically called exoplanets.



*Tom Sardelli '10 (NDP), left, and Nick Garippa '10 (NDP) play lacrosse for U-M and U-D Mercy, respectively.*

### Former Notre Dame lacrosse teammates play on opposite sides

Former NDP-ers Brandon Beauregard ('11), Joe Gifford ('11) and Nick Garippa ('10), teammates and roommates on the University of Detroit-Mercy lacrosse team, played a lacrosse game in February against another NDP alum and former teammate Tom Sardelli ('10), who plays for the University of Michigan. U-M won the game, 14-13.

### NDP alums play wiffle ball to help out veterans

Ryan Skalnek, ND Class of 2002, and a number of fellow high school alums, have started an organization called the Lake Orion Wiffle Ball Association (LOWA). They play during the warm weather months to raise money for several military veterans groups, including the Orion Veterans Memorial, Wounded Warrior Project, Operation Homefront, and Justin Verlander's charity Wins for Warriors. Skalnek

*Please see IRISH News, page 14*

# Snowmobiling for Speci

Notre Dame High School alum Vic Battani ('58) leads worthy cause as chairman of the Wertz Warriors



“Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt.” With these inspiring words, Eunice Kennedy Shriver memorably opened the first Special Olympics Games in 1968 in Chicago’s Soldier Field.

NDHS alum Vic Battani ('58) is quite familiar with Ms. Shriver’s statement. He’s been involved with the Special Olympics since 1982. Participating in football, basketball, baseball, and track while at NDHS, Battani is no stranger to athletic competition. When he learned about the Wertz Warriors—a support group for the Special Olympics—at a Kiwanis meeting back in 1982, he recognized the organization’s commitment and didn’t hesitate to get involved.

The Wertz Warriors traverse over 900 miles across Northern

Michigan on their snowmobiles each winter, raising both funds and awareness for the Special Olympics Michigan (SOMI) winter games.

“Each rider must donate or raise a minimum of \$3,500 for the privilege to participate in the ride,” Battani says.

The Wertz Warriors’ goal is to raise at least \$500,000 each year. The group was founded by former Detroit Tiger great Vic Wertz, and has raised more than \$9.3 million for SOMI since its first ride in 1982.

“Wertz Warriors combines two loves for me,” Battani says, “snowmobiling and helping others.” Battani has served on the Wertz Warriors board for nearly 25 years and as chairman since 2000. In addition, this go-getter has served on the Special Olympics state board for six years and as chairman for one.

Providing year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellec-

# al Olympics

tual disabilities, the Special Olympics has given countless individuals opportunities to develop physical fitness, experience joy, and compete with other Special Olympics athletes across the United States and internationally.

While the Special Olympics holds a special place in Battani's heart, he also finds enough time for handball, long-distance cycling, boating, skiing and, of course, snowmobiling. He helped organize the 50th reunion of the NDHS class of 1958, and reflects fondly on many Notre Dame teachers and coaches, including Fr. Verow, Fr. Ray Boulanger, Fr. Bryson, Tom Kelly, Larry Egan, and "last but certainly not least," Conrad Vachon. Battani had the opportunity to interact with many others at NDHS after he graduated because he helped coach at the school from 1963 to 1968.

After Notre Dame, Battani went to the University of Detroit on a football scholarship. He majored in marketing and minored in accounting, areas that have served him well in his long and successful career in insurance and employee benefits. In 1996 he sold his own company, ABOW Insurance, to Gallagher Benefit Services, Inc., and has stayed on in the capacity of area executive vice president and registered representative.

Battani's home life is equally rich and rewarding. He has been married to wife Linda for 49 years, and the couple has two adult children: a daughter who is a teacher in St. Clair Shores and a son who works in the design art and animation field.

All is not 100% rosy though for Battani these days, as he says one of the biggest challenges lately is finding new Wertz Warrior riders. According to Battani, the group has doubled from its original 31 riders and 15 support crew to nearly 60 riders and 30 support crew, but there's always a need for fresh involvement and more support for the Special Olympics. Readers interested in knowing more about the volunteer group and its efforts are encouraged to visit the Wertz Warrior page on [www.somi.org](http://www.somi.org) or Facebook. ■



Wertz Warrior snowmobilers are on their way in a recent run for the benefit of Special Olympics. Top, Vic Battani gives last-minute instructions to participants at an American Legion hall.

## STAYING IN TOUCH:



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### NOTRE DAME PREP SEEKS HEAD FOOTBALL COACH

Notre Dame Preparatory School currently is accepting applications for a head football coaching position. Kyle Zimmerman, who had been NDP's head coach for the past five years (43-19 record), accepted an offer to become the head football coach at Davison (Mich.) High School.

Bachelor's degree required, master's degree preferred, with a minimum of 3-5 years of successful coaching experience at the varsity level or higher (head or coordinator preferred). Candidate should be qualified for a full-time teaching or staff position at NDP. Salary is commensurate with coaching and teaching experience.

Qualified candidates are invited to e-mail or mail a cover letter, a resume—including a vision statement for a successful Catholic football program—and three professional, job-related letters of reference. Cover letter must include eligible teacher certifications and salary requirements. Please send resume and references to: Betty A. Wroubel, athletic director, 1300 Giddings Rd., Pontiac, MI 48340, or e-mail at [bwroubel@ndpma.org](mailto:bwroubel@ndpma.org).

# Ms. Wrobel goes

Notre Dame Prep grad Clare Wrobel '05 (NDP) is working in D.C. to help improve health care, reduce costs

In a March 2013 cover story for TIME Magazine called “Bitter Pill: Why Medical Bills Are Killing Us,” journalist Steven Brill contends that the American health care system dominates the nation’s economy and puts demands on taxpayers to a degree unequalled anywhere on earth. He writes: “According to one of a series of exhaustive studies done by the McKinsey & Co. consulting firm, the United States spends more on health care than the next 10 biggest spenders combined: Japan, Germany, France, China, the U.K., Italy, Canada, Brazil, Spain and Australia.”

While the effectiveness in addressing these high costs thus far by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act has been debated ad infinitum since it was signed into law in March 2010, there is a group of dedicated workers in Washington, D.C., that continues to work very hard to reduce medical spending—specifically in terms of Medicare and Medicaid—without sacrificing at all the quality of care.

One of those hard workers is Notre Dame Prep alum Clare Wrobel. This 2005 NDP graduate currently is serving as “team lead” for the State Innovation Models initiative with the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (Innovation Center) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It’s a mouthful to be sure, but according to Wrobel, it boils down to simply this: she’s working on lowering costs and improving health care at the state level.

“My time with HHS has been both a challenging and invigorating experience, and one that has left me confident that we are on the right path to ensure that all citizens have access to high-quality, affordable health care for many years to come,” she says.

The Innovation Center’s main task is to test innovative payment and service-delivery models that have the potential to lower Medicare, Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program spending while maintaining or improving the quality of beneficiaries’ care, according to Wrobel. “The purpose of our model is to test the ability of state governments to accelerate the kind of health-care change that will result in im-

proved health, improved health care and lower health-care cost for all state residents,” she says.

“To that end, I work with governors and senior health officials in our 25 participating states, including Michigan, to provide technical assistance, leverage federal resources, and identify best practices that are direct and scalable to all states.”

## PATH TO WASHINGTON

Wrobel’s own path from her home state to the nation’s capitol also was pretty direct. In 2011, she joined HHS, the federal government’s largest agency, as a Presidential Management Fellow after receiving her master’s in health services administration from the University of Michigan. She worked initially as a project



NDP alum Clare Wrobel ('05), left, with HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius

officer for the State Health Information Exchange Program in the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology. Then she became program manager for an initiative under Secretary Kathleen Sebelius to provide support to states that were making changes to their health-care systems earlier than others.

In addition to her master’s degree, Wrobel holds a bachelor’s degree in psychology from U-M with a minor in gender and health.

Granted, she’s a long way from attending high school classes in Pontiac, Mich., but it appears that Wrobel now is in the job and in the city of her destiny. She absolutely loves where she works, especially at this point in

the nation’s history, and thoroughly enjoys the people with whom she works.

“I am continually humbled by the number of bright, energetic and passionate people who have joined federal service at this historic moment,” Wrobel says. “I have had the absolute privilege to work under the leadership of some of the most well-respected minds in health care and public policy, all of whom left or turned away more lucrative opportunities in the private sector in order to devote themselves to this effort.”

## NOTRE DAME NOT FORGOTTEN

Though it’s clear that Wrobel is completely laser-focused on the work she’s doing, what is not forgotten at all, she says, is the education she received at Notre Dame and what it’s meant to her so far in her career.

“My NDP education definitely prepared me in the foundational skills necessary for success in college, graduate school and now in federal service,” she says. “The rigorous writing exercises under the instruction of Dr. Alkidas and Mrs. Bembas, the attention to detail instilled by Mr. Osiecki in AP US history and economics, and the opportunity to practice policy analysis and debate in Mr. Simon’s government class all helped to further develop my interests and abilities.”

Wrobel notes that her brother Gabe is graduating this year from Notre Dame Prep and that another brother, Nick '10 (NDP), will be receiving his bachelor of science in engineering from U-M this spring, after which he’ll be relocating to Tucson, Ariz., for a position with Raytheon Corporation.

She also notes that there are a number of other former Notre Damers working in the D.C. area, including fellow 2005 alums Laura Karr, Noelle Pilchak and Dave Merchant. “And I would sometimes run into Amanda Hooper on the Metro on her way to the Hill, which is just one stop from my office at Federal Center in Washington.”

D.C. is a big town for sure and the United States certainly has many seemingly insurmountable problems. But it appears that with Wrobel and a few other former NDP students on hand, more solutions may not be too far off. ■

# to Washington



# Man in the middle

**N**ineteen ninety-five NDHS graduate Joe Sobota is a life-long Hamtramck resident and loves living there. But he makes a 23-or-so-mile drive to one of the largest municipalities in the state at least five days a week because he's on a mission to bring that city back to financial solvency. And if he does his job well, ultimately he will lose it.

Appointed city administrator for the City of Pontiac in August, Sobota is part of the transition plan to return the city to full local control. He reports to and serves at the pleasure of the Transition Advisory Board that was appointed by Governor Rick Snyder to monitor the city until the governor believes that Pontiac is no longer in a state of receivership.

He is working with local leaders to adopt a permanent solution to the city's many financial problems, especially a \$10 million annual retiree health insurance obligation.

"I am charged with helping the local leadership adopt and implement that solution while at the same time maintaining Pontiac's financial stability by managing its day-to-day operations," he says.

Sobota was given the job by outgoing emergency manager Lou Schimmel, who served as Pontiac's EM since 2011. He was the third emergency manager for this once-thriving Oakland County city located at the north end of Woodward Avenue.

In a December Detroit Free Press article, Schimmel was quoted as saying that without Sobota handling the transition, Pontiac would soon backslide.

"I've seen that happen in too many cities, and the state shares my determination that this doesn't continue to occur," he said.

Parallels certainly can be drawn with Detroit's current situation as Detroit now is being run by emergency manager Kevin Orr. But Pontiac is in a kind of special form of purgatory between emergency oversight and its duly elected leadership: the mayor and city council. And Sobota is the man in that middle, working hard to make sure the city emerges from "purgatory" as carefully and quickly as possible.

So if and when that happens, then what for Sobota?

"My reward for doing my job well is to lose my job," he says. And he's okay with that. He wants to see Pontiac back on its feet and running like a top once again under its own power.

Sobota has been working for Pontiac for a number of years, most recently before his current position serving as community development director and deputy finance director.

"I also served as city clerk for three weeks in 2011 to administer a special election," he says. "I've been with the city since February of 2011, serving as the assistant to the emergency financial manager in addition to my other responsibilities."

His responsibilities also have included supervision of the city's building department and assisting with the preparation of its annual budget. Before Pontiac, Sobota worked for the City of Algonac as the its treasurer, city clerk and acting city manager. Prior to Algonac, he was the operations manager for his hometown of Hamtramck.

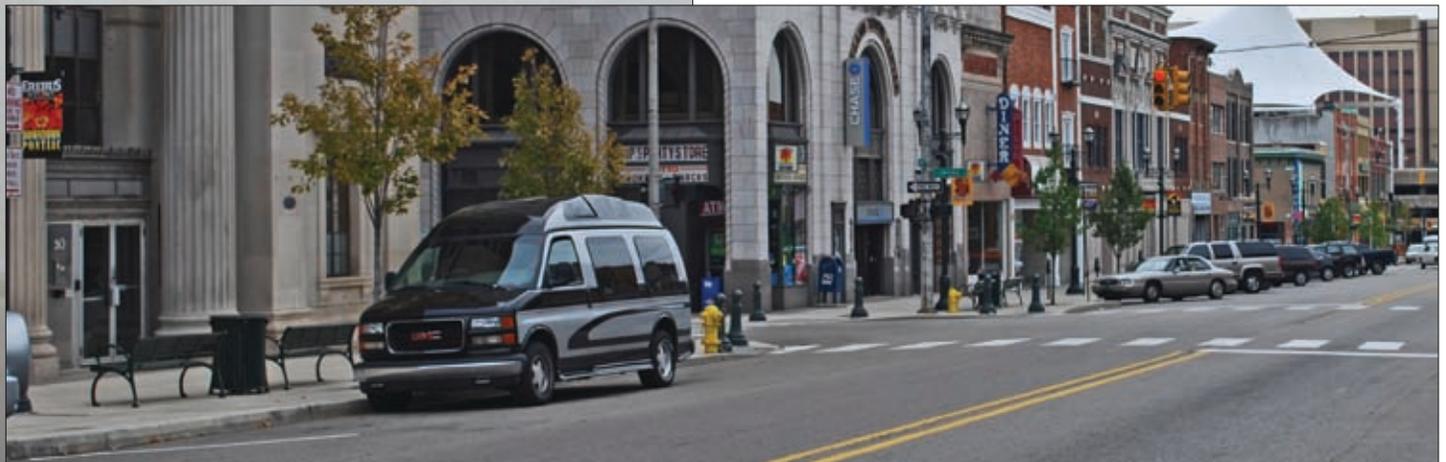
So it's pretty obvious that Sobota has a passion for government work. "I really have had a desire for a career in government since fifth grade," he says. "However, my goal was always to attain elected office. As a matter of fact, I did run for state representative in 2000 but was not successful. So I decided to pursue instead a career in public administration."



## Notre Dame High School graduate Joe Sobota is managing the City of Pontiac's comeback



Joe Sobota '95 (NDHS), left, stands in city hall in front of one of his favorite photos, Pope John Paul II conducting Mass at the Pontiac Silverdome in 1987. Below: The City of Pontiac's commercial and historic district from a September 2010 photo.



With a bachelor's degree in political science and communications from U-D Mercy and a master's in public administration from Oakland University, it's clear that Sobota has the academic chops to do his job well. But he looks at his high school education at Notre Dame as another big reason he has been so successful.

"Undoubtedly, Notre Dame High School prepared me well for college and my career," he says. "Because of the Advanced Placement program and the high level of education in the honors classes, I was not required to take a single math, English or history class in college. As a result, I was able to structure my class schedule in a way that allowed me to obtain two majors in only six semesters of study and to graduate college in three years."

His early graduation from college led him directly to his first job, which was working for then-mayor of Hamtramck, Gary Zych, who graduated from NDHS in 1972.

"If I had not been able to accept the position in Hamtramck in 1998 and begin my professional career, I know that I would not be in the position in Pontiac that I am in today," he says.

"I also appreciate all the teachers I had at Notre Dame because each of them imparted some piece of knowledge I use every day in my career," Sobota adds. "And because I was seeking a career in government, I concentrated my high school studies in the social studies department with Mr. Schram, Mr. Rice and Mr. Havrilscak."

He also says his public speaking abilities were greatly improved through his participation in forensics and debate with Norm Kotarski and Ruth Edberg.

"However," he adds, "I cannot stress enough how well all of my math and English teachers prepared me for the AP exams. And on a more personal level, the religion classes at Notre Dame helped to solidify my Catholic faith. I hope that I have achieved the level of being moral, upright and scholarly that Notre Dame stresses for each of its students."

Quite clearly, Sobota appreciates his Notre Dame and Catholic experience. He says being a product of Catholic education from preschool through undergraduate and living directly across the street from a public school, he knows how fortunate he was that his parents sacrificed to send him to parochial schools.

"After I graduated Notre Dame, I was a faithful contributor to its annual fund," he says. "My motivation for donating at that time was a way of expressing my gratitude to the teachers who provided me that education. Today, with Notre Dame High School closed and nearly all my former high school teachers retired, my motivation now for contributing to Notre Dame Prep is to ensure that an exceptional Catholic and Marist education will still be possible for others well into the future." ■

usually is joined by Rick Vanden Boom '02 (NDP) and Jim Vanden Boom '05 (NDP) and many other "whiffle ballers" for annual tournaments, which began in 2007.

In 2013, LOWA was licensed as a non-profit corporation, and Skalneck says they are looking to continue to organize and grow its fundraising efforts. This year's LOWA Draft Night Charity Dinner will be held on Friday July 11, with the tournament held the following day. Most of the guys who play in the tournament are NDP alums, and several come into town just for the weekend from as far as Alaska, Florida, Massachusetts and Colorado. Anyone interested in sponsoring or donating, contact LOWA at lakeorion-wiffleball@gmail.com, or go to www.lakeorionwiffleball.com.



### NDP debater places among top three in state

Sarah Huttenlocher, a senior at Notre Dame Preparatory School, on Dec. 4 earned a place as one of the state's top three Lincoln-Douglas debaters at the Detroit Catholic Forensic League Lincoln-Douglas qualifier at Birmingham's Roeper School.

The Lincoln-Douglas debate format is a style of debate used in many high school competitions and occasionally the political arena. Most debates center on moral or ethical issues. The debate style is named for the famous American senatorial race debates between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas.

### NDP senior named to dream team

Notre Dame Prep senior Jermaih Johnson was named in November to the 2013 Metro Detroit football Dream Team by MLive.com. The 2013 Dream Team included players from all classes and divisions throughout the region. Johnson, who will be playing football for Saginaw Valley State University, accumulated 1,123 yards rushing this season, averaging more than 100 yards per game while accumulating 23 touchdowns. He finished his high school career with more than 3,000 yards rushing and 50 touchdowns.



### Notre Dame announces three new board members

NDPMA's Board of Trustees recently elected three new members: Norman T. Berlinger M.D., Ph.D. '62 (NDHS), Jack F. Moores, Jr., and Will Wittig. Berlinger is a retired physician, author and adolescent psychologist. He will be relocating from Minneapolis to Detroit. Moores is president of Plymouth, Mich.-based Great Lakes Medical Billing & Consulting, an outsourcing medical billing and reimbursement services company. Wittig is dean of the University of Detroit Mercy's School of Architecture in Detroit.

### Weddings

**Christopher Robert Havrilla '97 (NDHS)** and Elisabeth Caterina Carlesimo were married on October 4, 2013, at Planterra Conservatory in West Bloomfield. Elisabeth is the daughter of Frank and Barbara Carlesimo. She is a graduate of Walsh College and works with Comerica Bank as a real estate analyst. Christopher is a graduate of Central Michigan University and is employed by the United States Coast Guard, stationed in Port Huron.

**Michael Niemczycki '00 (NDP)** and Jennifer Wildey were married on April 27, 2013, at Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Detroit.

**Christine Poulin '01 (NDP)** and Michael Carter are planning to be married in March 2014.

**Patrick Kelly '00 (NDHS)** and Adrian Babich are planning a May 10, 2014, wedding in Atlanta.

**Erin O'Brien '03 (NDP)** and Max Garcia were married July 13, 2013, at Holy Name Church in Birmingham, Mich. Members of the bridal party included Katie (O'Brien) Spezia '97 (NDP), Mac O'Brien '99 (NDP), Lauren O'Brien '01 (NDP), and Brittany O'Brien '06 (NDP).

**Monica Denis '04 (NDP)** and Christopher Roca were married on September 28, 2013, at St. Daniel's Catholic Church in Clarkston, with the reception at Oakhurst Golf and Country Club. Fr. Joe Hindelang '68 (NDHS) was the celebrant. Members of the bridal party included Nick Denis '01 (NDP) and Chris Denis '07 (NDP).

**Leanne Marie Smith '04 (NDP)** and Matthew Wayne Price were married on October 12, 2013, at St. Daniel's Catholic Church in Clarkston. Wedding party members and ushers included Laren Lebioda '04 (NDP), Amarinder (Singh) Anand '04 (NDP), Raymon Smith '02 (NDP), and Brian Connolly '04 (NDP). Fr. Joe Hindelang '68 (NDHS) was the celebrant.

**Ashley Hall '06 (NDP)** and Bobby Pierce were married on October 5, 2013, in Denton, Texas. Molly Hall '09 (NDP) was in the wedding party, and Sean Grogan '09 (NDP) and Scott Spicuzzi '73 (NDHS) were in attendance. The happy couple lives in Mansfield, Texas, and Ashley is an engineer with Alcon Research Ltd.

**Shawn Matthew Cencer '07 (NDP)** and Janet Ruth Yost were married on December 14, 2013, on Galveston Island, Tex. Mark McCausland '07 (NDP) was a groomsman.

### Births

**Stephen Michael Cichy III**, son born October 29, 2013, to proud parents Jennifer (Cole) Cichy '97 (NDP) and Stephen Cichy. Joins big sisters Ella, Sophie and Grace who are very excited to have a baby brother. Proud aunt is Kelly (Cole) Patterson '99 (NDP). Proud uncle is Michael Cole '05 (NDP). Proud grandmother is Carol (Drake) Cole '73 (PC).

**Owen Timothy Knight**, son born August 5, 2013, to proud parents Megan (Thiry) Knight '99 (NDP) and Greg Knight. Big brother Max is 2 years old. The family lives in Edmond, Okla. Proud uncle is Trent Thiry '00 (NDP).

**Ryan Peter Thom**, son born October 10, 2013, to proud parents Rosina (D'Agostini) Thom '99 (NDP) and Jeff Thom. Big brother Jackson is 2 years old. The family lives in Rochester Hills. Proud uncles are Gino D'Agostini '98 (NDP) and Michael D'Agostini '03 (NDP). Proud aunt is Gina (D'Agostini) Lange '01 (NDP). Grandson of the late Gino D'Agostini '64 (NDHS).

**Hannah Patricia Ford**, daughter born December 16, 2013, to proud parents Melissa (Gerst) Ford '00 (NDP) and Jason Ford. The family lives in Lake Orion. Proud aunt is Dr. Katie Gerst '02 (NDP).

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# ‘For the kids’

U-M psychology major Abby Lyng '11 (NDP) dances to support pediatric rehabilitation programs

**A**bigail “Abby” Lyng graduated from Notre Dame in 2011. She matriculated to the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, unsure of a major or future career. But the fact that she was able to skip intro psychology during her freshman year at Michigan and instead take developmental psychology convinced her that the subject could provide a career path.

Lyng was able to jump ahead at U-M due in large part to the AP psychology course taught by John Smith that she took as a senior at NDP. “My first psychology course in college was developmental psychology and I immediately fell in love with the subject,” she says. “And of course my prior knowledge really helped. Since I believe that college is about finding something that you love to study and the fact that I continue to enjoy the subject, I have been taking psychology courses as my major ever since.”

Lyng’s minor studies are in linguistics, which she says she chose due to a genuine love for the spoken and written word. “I had always enjoyed language, either in English or in French, but I signed up for introductory linguistics at Michigan only because it was a requirement. However, I found that it was quite unlike anything I had encountered before and have continued taking classes in this field.”

In fact, she was just one class away from completing her minor at the time of this interview.

After graduating from U-M, Lyng says she is definitely planning for post-grad studies. “At this point, I am still torn between getting a doctorate in psychology or utilizing my linguistics minor to get a master’s degree in speech and language pathology in order to become a speech therapist,” she says. “In either case, I will be heading to graduate school.”

## DANCE MARATHON

Ever since Lyng has been at U-M, she has been involved with the university’s Dance Marathon, the largest student-run non-profit organization in the State of Michigan. Dance Marathon raises both monetary support and awareness for the needs of pediatric rehabilitation programs at C.S. Mott Children’s Hospital in Ann Arbor and Beaumont Children’s Hospital in Royal Oak. At the end of each school year, hundreds of students stand on their feet and dance for 30 hours to raise money for C.S. Mott.

“The Dance Marathon organization is filled with people who are extremely dedicated to the cause of making the lives of children who have disabilities just a little bit better,” Lyng says. “Each one of us must raise at least \$300 by the time the marathon starts to be allowed to take part in one of the most difficult and rewarding experiences you can imagine: a 30-hour dance marathon.”

She says everyone who participates in

the marathon must go without sleep and stay on their feet for the entire 30-hour event. “The mantra ingrained in every dance marathoner is ‘FTK,’ or ‘for the kids,’” she says. “We do it all for the families whose children benefit from our fundraising.” According to Lyng, last year the event raised nearly \$517,000.

When she’s not studying or dancing, Lyng keeps busy at a local Ann Arbor pre-school as a volunteer teacher’s aid for children with autism spectrum disorders. “The kids I work with are generally in their last year of special education before they are placed into the general education system,” she says. “Therefore, the teacher is very much focused on preparing them for integration into different schools by emphasizing the learning of generalized skills.”

If all of this isn’t enough to keep her busy, Lyng recently was chosen to be an admissions tour guide at Michigan. She applied mostly because of her experience as a student guide at NDPMA open houses.

“I knew I enjoyed the experience of talking to others about Notre Dame Prep, so I couldn’t wait to show off the University of Michigan,” Lyng says. “I like to believe that my genuine interest in helping prospective students was why I was chosen for the job.”

Notre Dame also figured in Lyng’s ability to write well. “Mrs. Bembas’ AP Lit class was super influential in shaping me into the writer that I am today,” she says. “With a major in the social science field, writing papers is a part of almost every one of my courses. Without Mrs. Bembas having such high expectations for students, I would not be doing as well as I am now.”

## NOTRE DAME MEMORIES

Lyng has many great memories of her high school. “My teachers and classes were wonderful, and I still try to visit at least once a year,” she says. “Also, I think that supporting my high school alma mater is important. No matter what station you are at in life, giving back in some shape or form is always necessary. Entering college, I felt prepared to handle all of its rigors and it’s all thanks to my time at Notre Dame Prep.” ■

PHOTO PROVIDED BY ABBY LYNG



NDP alum Abby Lyng ('11) volunteers at an Ann Arbor school for children with autism spectrum disorders.

# Bridging gaps in D.C. and beyond

Seasoned lobbyist looks ahead after more than 30 years in Washington

A long-time Washington, D.C., “fixture on the K Street scene,” Gary Lytle (NDHS ’61) has always enjoyed the political process and advocating for issues of the day. A co-founder of the Washington lobbying firm Clark Lytle Geduldig & Cranford (CLGC), Lytle is now stepping back from the firm and entering the next stage of his life to mentor a new generation of lobbyists, advocate American enterprise as a fellow of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and raise funds for the Prevent Cancer Foundation, for which he is vice chair.

His former lobbying firm, CLGC, includes partners Sam Geduldig, a one-time House GOP leadership aide; Jay Cranford, a former policy aide to Speaker John A. Boehner of Ohio; and Mike Nielsen, an ex-aide to Republicans on the Senate Banking Committee. Former Rep. Deborah Pryce, R-Ohio, also is affiliated with the firm.

Looking back, the native East Detroiter (now Eastpointe) is quick to credit his Notre Dame education for laying a strong foundation for his career, particularly for developing his writing skills and disciplined work ethic. Lytle says he recalls teachers Conrad Vachon, Fr. Chase and Coach Kelly as his favorite members of the NDHS faculty. “They really were positive influences on me during my high school years.”

He apparently did quite well under Coach Kelly’s tutelage. As a young athlete with a competitive spirit and an appreciation for teamwork, Lytle was awarded scholarships in basketball and baseball at Michigan State University. While he was there he met his future wife on a blind date. The two married in 1966 and had four children.

Early in his career, Lytle held jobs in marketing and college recruiting. It was a telecommunications position with Ameritech—then Michigan Bell—that brought him to Washington in the early ’80s. He eventually went on to become vice president of government affairs for Ameritech Michigan Bell before founding his lobbying firm.

“I started in Yellow Page sales at Michigan Bell and held a variety of jobs in marketing and college recruiting before I got into the public affairs arena,” he says.



**Former Congressman David Bonior ’63 (NDHS) attended St. Veronica grade school and Notre Dame High School with Lytle.**

Their friendship has deepened over the years, and the mutual respect is evident. With Lytle reducing his role in the firm and moving on to other interests, Bonior believes he will be as effective as ever. “He’s really well-liked by people of all political persuasions, and he’s able to use that likability to bridge gaps and get things done,” Bonior says.

It was another NDHS alum, former U.S. Representative David Bonior (’63), who showed Lytle around when he first arrived in the nation’s capital and helped him meet members of Congress. The two have known each other since the sixth grade at St. Veronica, and even worked together as lawmaker and lobbyist on several issues, including the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

“Bonior was and is one of the most thoughtful and respected members of Congress,” Lytle says. “We played on the same teams at ND, and our parents knew each other. We see each other socially now. I was very grateful and lucky to have Dave as a mentor and friend.”



**Notre Dame High School graduate Gary Lytle (’61) spent more than 30 years in Washington, D.C., primarily as a lobbyist.**

## NEW PHASE OF LIFE STILL BUSY

This new phase of Lytle’s life is no less busy. He will continue his work as a fellow for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce helping to identify emerging issues that will affect the business community in the future. He’ll travel more—between Washington and his Lake St. Clair, Mich., home and another home in Florida and he’ll continue to counsel clients and represent their interests on Capitol Hill.

He’ll also raise money for cancer research. The Prevent Cancer Foundation in Washington is something particularly close to Lytle’s heart. His wife died of ovarian cancer seven years ago, and through the foundation, Lytle hopes to bring increased awareness and ultimately a cure to this less common though often deadly cancer. Lytle eventually remarried and he and his wife have a blended family of six children and ten grandchildren.

## WASHINGTON MEMORIES

Washington insiders typically seem to have memorable moments from their time among the country’s political movers and shakers. Lytle is no exception.

One of his memorable moments dates back to the Clinton administration. Lytle was representing a big corporation at the time, and through that relationship he found himself as a guest for a taping of “In Performance at the White House,” the popular PBS series created to showcase the range of American culture against the backdrop of the country’s most famous address. Lytle and his wife sat with President and Mrs. Clinton during the performance and then were invited to the first family’s private quarters for additional conversation. Upon entering one of the state rooms with the president and first lady, a Marine Corps band played “Hail to the Chief.”

For Lytle, that moment crystallized the metaphoric—and meteoric—distance he had traveled from East Detroit. In the world of public affairs, it just doesn’t get much better than that. ■

## JUST THE FAQS – NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL / NOTRE DAME PREPARATORY SCHOOL

### Why did Notre Dame High School close?

Notre Dame closed due to declining enrollment and financial problems due to the shifting demographics of the east side Catholic population. At its peak in the late 70s, ND boasted a student population of nearly 1,500 students. In 2005, the student population was less than 300 students.

### What's the story behind Notre Dame Prep?

The Archdiocese of Detroit had been asking the Marists to consider taking over up to three troubled diocesan schools. With limited men and financial resources, this was not feasible for the Marists. Growing concern over the future of Notre Dame, however, convinced the Marists that looking into at least one of the troubled diocesan schools would be prudent. After a couple of years of deliberation, the Marists agreed to take control of Oakland Catholic, which was previously Pontiac Catholic. The hope was that if the move proved successful, it could be a long-term solution to the enrollment and financial troubles at Notre Dame.

### Why was Pontiac chosen versus other locations?

The campus in Pontiac was considered the best location due to the size of the campus (87 acres) and its proximity to northern Macomb and Oakland County suburbs, where many of our alumni had moved.

### Why didn't Notre Dame close in 1994 when Notre Dame Prep was opened?

Given that the location had struggled in recent years as Pontiac and then Oakland Catholic, it was never a sure thing that the school would succeed. The Marists wanted to give it a few years to see if it would work.

### When did it become clear that Notre Dame Prep would succeed?

The addition of the Marists and the incredible name recognition from Notre Dame led to a complete and immediate turnaround of the school which grew from 183 students in 1994 to its current population of 1,126 students; including the addition of Notre Dame Marist Academy, middle division, and Notre Dame Marist Academy, lower division.

### What happened next?

In 1997, the Marists decided it was time to close Notre Dame and begin a transition of students and faculty. It was recognized that the distance between the two locations would make the transition difficult, if not impossible, for several of the current students. It was determined, however, that given the enrollment declines and subsequent financial difficulties, it would be the best solution for the long term future of the school.

As the Marists prepared to announce the closure and begin the transition plan, the AOD decided that they wanted to keep both schools open. Notre Dame Prep was an amazing turnaround story and Notre Dame was still hanging on. The Marists did not have the resources to operate both schools and could not afford the burgeoning debt that was accumulating at Notre Dame. The AOD then struck a deal to purchase Notre Dame from the Marists in order to keep the school open.

### Why did the alumni not know about this deal?

When the deal was struck, the AOD requested that the Marists continue to staff Notre Dame and to not tell anyone as to protect the school from further accelerating an already tenuous enrollment situation.

### What happened between 1997 and 2005?

Notre Dame continued to operate and successfully educate hundreds of young men. It remained a quality institution until its closure. Notre Dame Prep continued to establish itself as one of the strongest Catholic

institutions in the nation, fueled in large part by the history and legacy of Notre Dame.

### What's the relationship between Notre Dame Prep and Notre Dame High School today?

Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy was founded on the same principles of Notre Dame High School and carries many of the same characteristics; including a shared name, fight song, and Marist teaching philosophy. All the Marist Fathers and Brothers associated at NDPMA were alumni, administrators, staff and teachers at Notre Dame including Fr. Leon Olszamowski ('65), Fr. Joe Hindelang ('68), Fr. Jim Strasz ('70) and Br. Louis Plourde (34 years).

In addition, many of the faculty and staff from Notre Dame taught or still teach at Notre Dame Prep, including the late Hal Rice (50 years), the late Bill Raymond (45 years), Ken Parent (45 years), Duane Holmes (38 years), Norm Kotarski (30 years) and Sylvia Mulrenin (20 years).

In total, there are about 25 former faculty and alumni associated with NDPMA today, and more than 100 alumni whom have chosen to send their kids to NDPMA. All NDHS alumni receive a \$1,000 tuition discount at ND Prep.

### What is NDPMA's ultimate goal with ND alumni?

The goal of NDPMA is to provide a "home" and "living Catholic Marist mission" for all ND alumni. While we don't expect to replace ND, we care deeply about the history of NDHS and the important role that it played in the success of NDPMA.

### What services does NDPMA offer to NDHS alumni?

Some of the services we provide to all alumni, include:

- Full-time director of alumni relations
- Open invitation to Homecoming events
- Reunion planning and support
- Two issues of Irish magazine annually
- Monthly e-blast newsletter
- Open invitation to participate in Big Band Dinner Dance
- A calendar of special events, including:
  - Annual Tigers outing
  - Alumni art show
  - Traveling Irish dinners
- Special alumni recognition in annual report
- Leadership positions on the alumni board
- \$1,000 alumni tuition discount to Notre Dame
- Database management services
- Yearbook archive

### What are NDPMA's expectations with respect to NDHS alumni?

All NDHS alumni are welcome to embrace and accept NDPMA as your alumni home. We are the continuation of the Catholic Marist mission that was started at NDHS. Our mission is to, "with God...form Christian persons, upright citizens and academic scholars." Our hope is that NDHS alums will talk positively about NDPMA, take pride in our accomplishments, keep your contact information up-to-date and support our mission, through your wealth, wisdom and work, to the best of your individual ability.

# Same class, same city council

Notre Dame High School alums Todd McConaghy and Kevin Ketels both graduated in the same year. But as council members, they take two different approaches to city hall.



**Todd McConaghy '89 (NDHS) was first elected to the Grosse Pointe Woods city council in 2009.**

*It isn't very often that two people from the same high school class wind up on their city's governing council at the same time, but Kevin Ketels and Todd McConaghy managed to do just that. The two NDHS alums (both '89) sit on the Grosse Pointe Woods city council. McConaghy has been a council member for five years, Ketels for three.*

## Todd McConaghy blends the analytical and the inspirational

**T**odd McConaghy reflects on meeting many Grosse Pointe Woods residents during his 2013 re-election campaign for city council. Walking door to door one rainy evening and handing out campaign literature (his campaign slogan was "Pride in our past, faith in our future"), he found himself on the porch of yet another stranger. The man looked at McConaghy, who was by then very tired and soaking wet, and asked him, "Is it really worth it?" Although running on empty, McConaghy found the question and subsequent conversation with the man

reaffirming. "Sometimes inspiration comes where and when you least expect it," he says.

McConaghy found inspiration aplenty when he was at NDHS. He credits the school and its dedicated faculty for preparing him "for college, law school, and life" through strong values and heavy emphasis on academics. His favorite teachers, Fr. John Kiselica and Conrad Vachon, instilled in him a passion for history and literature that continues today. And it's worth noting that Todd's nephew, Ryan McConaghy, is currently attending Notre Dame Prep, following in his uncle's footsteps.

After graduating from Notre Dame, McConaghy attended the University of Detroit, where he received his BS and JD before joining the business law and litigation firm of Sullivan, Ward, Bone, Tyler & Asher, P.C. (now Sullivan, Ward, Asher & Patton, P.C.). It was as an undergrad that he met his future wife, Alexa. McConaghy is quick to point out that Alexa could have become a lawyer herself "just from hanging around

all those law books" when McConaghy was in law school. The couple has two boys, Jack and Dan, and have lived in Grosse Pointe Woods for the last 12 years.

In 2008, McConaghy became associate counsel to the Michigan Attorney Grievance Commission and senior associate counsel in 2013. In this role, he investigates and prosecutes attorney misconduct on behalf of the Michigan Supreme Court.

McConaghy was made a district committee member to the State Bar of Michigan Character and Fitness Committee in 2009, and became a district chairperson in 2012. According to *The Detroit Legal News*, "If Todd McConaghy does a good job in his volunteer work for the State Bar, he will have less work in his day job with the Attorney Grievance Commission." As chair, he assigns three-member panels to interview applicants to the State Bar of Michigan, which gauges their character and fitness.

"We're a self-regulating industry," McConaghy says. "So we have to be very watchful." In 2013, McConaghy also became a fellow of the Michigan State Bar Foundation, where he has been recognized for outstanding legal ability, devotion to the public, and support of the public service ideals of the foundation.

McConaghy says his legal background has made him very analytical, a skill that has served him well on the Grosse Pointe Woods city council.

"I tend to analyze an issue from the perspective of identifying the crux of the issue, the applicable rules, how the rules interact with the issue, and what the ultimate outcome will be," he says. "I also approach issues from the perspective of an attorney seeking the best possible outcome for a client." This type of analysis has been put to use repeatedly in light of the many trials the city has faced, a "hopefully temporary" decline in property values, decreased revenues and increasing expenses. He says strategic cuts in expenditures and careful use of rainy-day funds have allowed the city to maintain services consistent with pre-recession property values and revenues.

McConaghy's council work with the city's elected officials during these difficult economic times often is challenging, though he admits he welcomes the chance to serve and is confident

# il, two different approaches

the current city council has the knowledge, ability and experience to persevere on behalf of its citizens.

“Being a city council member has been its own reward,” McConaghy says. “It has provided me a unique opportunity to give back to the community that has given me so much.”

## For NDHS alum Kevin Ketels, it's all about communication

**W**hen Kevin Ketels was a senior at NDHS, he co-directed (with Eugene Cyranski) “The Good Doctor,” a comedy by Neil Simon. The cast and crew collaborated with the young women from Star of the Sea. Ketels recalled hiccups and delays, but after much rehearsing, the end result was a well-received, polished production. He also remembered asking director and teacher Norm Kotarski if the students who participated could receive credit. Kotarski initially turned down the request, explaining the process to give school credit was detailed and took time, and it was unfortunately too late to start.

“I guess I really wasn't clear about what I was asking for,” Ketels recalls. “I just wanted the students to be recognized for their participation.” When it was time for graduation, Ketels was deeply touched to find his name and others in the program guide next to an award for excellence in drama. He carries the acknowledgement and the lesson in communication to this day.

Perhaps that's why the Grosse Pointe Woods resident followed a career path in marketing. As the CEO and owner of KMED Marketing in St. Clair Shores, Ketels brings marketing and communication services to health care and clinical research organizations. He says KMED helps organizations interact with patients, members, employees, study subjects, and customers to build strong and lasting relationships. Ketels is a regular speaker at conferences and workshops on topics including clinical

research subject recruitment, business development and social media strategies.

A doer as well as a teacher, Ketels also is an adjunct professor of marketing at Detroit's Wayne State University. He has taught a wide range of classes in the School of Business Administration including strategic marketing (in the MBA program), global supply chain management, marketing management, advertising, media buying and public relations.

Married to Renee—who serves as communications manager at KMED—and father

A first-termer on the Grosse Pointe Woods city council, Ketels says representing the values and needs of Grosse Pointe Woods residents is something he takes seriously. “I spend a lot of time communicating with residents and understanding their concerns,” he says.

“Renee and I are invested here—in our home, in our children's education,” he says. “I want this to remain a great community.” Ketels admits he learns something new every day as council member, and finds it all “infinitely interesting,” whether it's an aspect of municipal finance, labor relations, or even sewer engineering.

Considering the leap from leading a school play to leading a major marketing company, Ketels says it was at NDHS that he first had the opportunity to explore and develop the leadership skills he now uses regularly. One particularly influential teacher at NDHS for him was Fr. Kiselica. Ketels had many classes with Kiselica, and current events still stands out in his memory for the lively discussions about politics and world affairs. Kiselica also chaperoned Ketels' student trip to Germany. “Tough, fair and encouraging, he was a formative figure in my development as a young man,” Ketels says.

Upon graduating NDHS, Ketels attended Michigan State University (BA '93), Boston University (MS '97), and began to accumulate a wealth of experience working at companies like Dell Financial Services and State Street Corporation. His career has spanned multiple disciplines, including marketing, product management, business development, communications and sales. Ketels tries to distill all he's learned and experienced as he daily oversees his staff of 25 and makes tough decisions.

Good communication, at KMED, on the Grosse Pointe Woods council, and in his many other interests and activities, is what makes it all work. ■



**Kevin Ketels '89 (NDHS) has been a Grosse Pointe Woods council member for three years.**

to Sofia and Roman, this family man keeps up with professional memberships in the American Marketing Association, the Adcraft Club of Detroit, the Public Relations Society of America, and the Association of Clinical Research Professionals.

# Faith and laughter

Valedictorian from St. Michael's Class of 1940 says a strong faith in God and the ability to laugh are keys to a long, happy life.

**J**eanne Klein Conlon, who recently celebrated her 90th birthday, graduated from St. Michael in 1940. Since then, her life has taken a few different turns. But what has been a constant in those 73-1/2 years is the ability to laugh, her faith in God, and always counting life's many blessings, no matter what they are or how big or small.

Recalling her years at St. Michael, she says, even though there weren't any athletics offered for girls at the time, she had a lot to do when she wasn't in class or doing homework.

"I was involved with choir and drama in school, and outside of school we went to movies, occasional parties, and dances after football games," she says.

She said her dad worked in a factory and mom stayed at home, which, according to Conlon, was a beehive of activity. "We did a lot of reading, crafts and outdoor sports like ice skating and softball as well as board games, and many, many school and church functions."

Conlon, who currently lives in Rochester, New York, had five siblings, but other than herself, only one attended St. Michael: Tom, who graduated in 1945. Conlon recalls that she walked about a mile from her home to the school's Pontiac campus and that there were no uniforms required back then. "But I loved English and math and one of my favorite teachers was Sr. Celeste."

Conlon's love of school and the fact she did so well—she was her class valedictorian—led her to a career in nursing after graduating from college. Along with working as a nurse, she also taught in nursing college. Then her third (of five) children came along and she gave up her career. "But I was happy I was able to be a stay-at-home mom."

Conlon is very proud of her kids, all of whom also attended Catholic schools. "My five children were all unique, productive citizens who provided me with nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren, and I had the support of a wonderful, loving husband, Jack. He was called to be with the Lord four years ago. But we had 63 years together and I really feel like I have been truly blessed." ■



PHOTO PROVIDED BY CONLON FAMILY

Jeanne Klein Conlon '40 (SM), center, with granddaughter Meaghan, left, and daughter Maggie. All are nurses.

*IRISH News, from page 14*

**Annemarie Claire Miller**, daughter born December 31, 2013, to proud parents Rachel (Alexander) Miller '00 (NDP) and Tommy Miller. Big brother James is 1 year old. The family lives in Clarkston. Proud uncle is Brian Alexander '02 (NDP).

**Brady Joseph Wezner**, son born March 25, 2013, to proud parents Paul Wezner '02 (NDP) and Amanda (Schmitz) Wezner '02 (NDP). Proud uncle is Mark Wezner '04 (NDP).

**Zachary Ferrara**, son to proud parents Brad Ferrara '01 (NDP) and Kelly Ferrara.

Kim (Murphy) Munro '02 (NDP) and Jeff Munro are proud parents of a baby girl.

Paul Vago '66 (NDHS) and his wife, Rosemary, welcomed their first granddaughter, **Braelynn Paisley**, on February 3, 2014.

## Alumni/staff/faculty rest in peace

**Michael Foley '58 (NDHS)**. 2-24-14

**Daniel Prunte '55 (SM)**, brother of Ernie Prunte '51 (SM), Thomas Prunte '54 (SM), Sister Mary Catherine Prunte '58 (SM), Paul Prunte '60 (SM) and the late Frank Prunte '48 (SM). 2-3-14

**Matthew Strickler '83 (PC)**. 2-3-14

**Lindsay Kachel, '78 (NDHS)**, brother of Allan Kachel '72 (NDHS)

and David Kachel '75 (NDHS). 12-23-13

**Robert Orrico '74 (NDHS)**, brother of Frank Orrico '76 (NDHS) and Michael Orrico '81 (NDHS). 12-16-13

**Dr. Charles Marinelli '68 (NDHS)**. 12-12-13

**Michael Zalewski '92 (NDHS)**, brother of David Zalewski '87 (NDHS). 11-22-13

**Tim McEvoy '64 (NDHS)**, brother of Thomas McEvoy '59 (NDHS) and Charles McEvoy '62 (NDHS). 11-10-13

**Norbert E. Nowicki '59 (NDHS)**, brother of Robert Nowicki '67 (NDHS). Brother-in-law of Ronald Steffens '60 (NDHS). Uncle of Ronald Stephens '95 (NDHS). 10-14-13

**Mark Place '65 (NDHS)**. 10-4-13

**Patrick Nagel '88 (NDHS)**. 9-2-13

**David Lehrman '59 (NDHS)**. 7-6-13

**Valerie (LaBarge) Clark '54 (SM)**. 4-28-12

NOTE: For a complete list, see [ndpma.org/prayers](http://ndpma.org/prayers).

May their souls, and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

**N**otre Dame Prep alum Steve Derico ('05) founded and currently manages a mobile-applications development company in San Francisco called Bixby Apps. Bixby does work for individuals, startups and Fortune 500 companies as diverse as The Nielsen Company and BMW. Derico's come a long way since he was in school, but in a sense he's exactly where he is "because" of his high school and university.

"I was able to study computer programming as a sophomore at NDP," Derico says. "Most students aren't offered computer science classes until they are sophomores in college. Notre Dame gave me a significant head start." He recalls all the things he learned in his high-school computer science classes: "I studied Java, Visual BASIC, CAD/CAM, HTML, CSS, all the basic building blocks; it was programming 101." He credits this early knowledge with keeping him well ahead of the pack.

Of course, Notre Dame Prep isn't the only academic institution on his resume. He graduated from Grand Valley State University in 2009 with a degree in computer information systems, a field that focuses on computer science and infrastructure and how to apply them in the business world. Derico minored in business at GVSU, so he knew how he wanted to apply his major.

He also knew *where* he wanted to apply his major.

"When I was a junior at Grand Valley, I spent hours calling every tech company I could think of in Silicon Valley," he says. "I really wanted a career in California's Bay area." He had no desire to do computer work for a Midwest company. Like Meijer, he says, for example, explaining that computer engineering for the most part in this part of the country is 'primarily mechanical' in nature.

So with much persistence and some luck, Derico eventually

**Photo: NDP alum Steve Derico ('05) speaks at a recent Apple iOS development conference.**

# Alum finds home and founds company in California

Owner of Silicon Valley application-development company credits Notre Dame for big head start

landed an interview with tech giant eBay in San Jose, and quickly earned an internship there. "I was one of about 50 eBay interns at the time," he says. "Many Ivy Leaguers and graduates from other elite East Coast universities—and one from GVSU!"

Derico's main job as an intern with eBay was to build software for highly skilled engineers in the company's huge call center.

"I worked with the engineers to identify issues, build codes, manage projects, justify need and cost, and was responsible for presenting, explaining and teaching software solutions to them."

That work led to Derico being named "intern of the year," an honor he shared with one other intern, who graduated from MIT. That early success led to a full-time job at eBay. But with

Apple Computer's app store gaining momentum and exploding in popularity at the time, Derico thought perhaps eBay wasn't for him. He wanted instead to pursue application development for Apple's iOS.

"In my spare time on nights and weekends, I was developing sample apps, watching Apple videos, learning everything I could about Apple," he says. Then one day he discovered and watched a Stanford University lecture online about Objective-C, which is the primary programming language used when writing software for Apple's OSX and iOS. Which made him want to learn even more about it.

"I began 'crashing' some of Stanford's classes. I guess the proper term is 'auditing,'" Derico recalls. "I actually slept on a friend's couch in Palo Alto and went to class." He gained the knowledge he needed, launched his first app, quit eBay and began making many more apps through contract work.

With his business growing rapidly through word of mouth and Craigslist postings, Derico set his sights even higher, knowing that big brands were what he eventually wanted to work with. So he took a 10-slide PowerPoint presentation outlining his app-business idea to Menlo Park in California, where a high concentration of venture-capital companies were headquartered. His pitch worked, he received some funding, and now his company, Bixby, which currently is located in downtown San Francisco, employs seven.

His relatively quick success, Derico says, came not only from hard work, persistence and a great computer-programming mindset, it also came from effective communication, for which he also credits Notre Dame Prep. "In the tech world, you really do need to know how to talk to people. You can have an amazing computer science brain, but you also need to be able to explain and articulate what you know to clients or customers."

It appears that he's done very well in both departments! ■



# Up in the air

Notre Dame Prep alum aspires to become an air traffic controller



NDP alum Harold Rutila '11 stands in front of an aircraft he uses at the flight school for training students.

Top of next page: Rutila, far right, with the members of the choir at St. Thomas Aquinas on the campus of Purdue University.



According to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), there are approximately 7,000 aircraft in

the air over the U.S. at any given time. Harold Rutila '11 (NDP) would one day like to help guide them as an air traffic controller. Now a junior at Purdue University, Rutila will take the first formal step on a career track that has been his dream since he was in elementary school as he begins the rigorous application process with the FAA this spring.

With the intention initially of becoming an airline pilot, Rutila started flight training at the Flint-Bishop Airport in 2007 while still in high school. It was there that he had his first interaction with air traffic controllers and his career aspirations took off.

Looking back he realized that in the fifth grade he had written "ATC" as a potential career path on a "what do you want to be when you grow up" survey. In 2009 he and NDP alum Justin Edgar ('10) set up a tour of the Flint air traffic control tower. There the young men walked the facility, met the supervisor, and spoke with some of the controllers. Five years later, he still visits the facility regularly as he pursues his objective, and his relationship with the controllers is still going strong.

"The controllers have shared insights on the hiring and training process with me," Rutila says. "Something I believe will give me a competitive edge, hopefully."

"The biggest advantage I may have at attaining this goal is the knowledge I've acquired," Rutila says. "Everything from the attitude the agency expects of its trainees on the first day of training and how trainees are expected to conduct themselves at the FAA Academy in Oklahoma City to the importance of being a team player when it comes to the air traffic operation. These factors really count when it comes to being fully certified at one's first air traffic control facility."

Air traffic controllers must be able to focus on their work, absorb and relay information quickly and accurately, be able to assume command, and fully comprehend the importance of their job. Rutila understands these requirements, and he credits his years at NDP for shaping his skills—especially his leadership and presentation abilities.

"Every class I took at NDP mandated a high degree of quality as well as delivering information in a professional manner in front of large classes," he says. The concept of teamwork also has been an integral part of his time at NDP. Rutila was involved extensively in many extracurricular activities, including the student council, liturgy commission, choir, and the cross-country, ski and track teams. Also, he served at some point as president or co-captain in almost every one of those organizations.

It was also at NDP that another of Rutila's major interests took shape. Dave Fazzini, his favorite teacher, helped nurture and expand Rutila's love of, and commitment to, music when he convinced Rutila to join the men's glee club.

As Rutila explains, "I walked into Mr. Fazzini's office hoping there would be an opportunity to play the piano at school liturgies. (There was.) In the course of our conversation, Mr. Fazzini convinced me to



sign up for singing. Not only did he teach me how to sing, he really taught me how to be a professional musician. I learned how to lead choirs, better myself as a pianist, transcribe music charts for performances with a large band, and operate sound equipment properly."

The result of that one class has enabled Rutila to pursue numerous opportunities as a musician on the Purdue campus and back at home.

At college, Rutila plays piano for choirs at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church on campus, as well as another nearby Catholic church. He's part of the 80-year-old Purdue Musical Organizations, a group of 230 student singers divided into six choirs that perform concerts throughout the year. As a member of PMO's University Choir, he serves as the tenor section leader and advancement committee co-chair.

At home, Rutila has returned to play the piano the last two years at NDP's Baccalaureate Mass. He also has been invited to play for the Marist Christmas Concert and now helps Fazzini plan the Concert on the Hill annual event. If that weren't enough, Rutila was invited to be the guest alumni speaker at NDP's class of 2012 senior barbeque.

Rutila is in the third year of Purdue's aviation management program (part of Purdue's College of Technology), one of the best in the country. The program encompasses air traffic control, airport management, and airline management. He's on Purdue's flight team, which is part of the National Intercollegiate Flying Association, and holds an FAA flight instructor certificate. He also is pursuing a minor in music history and theory.

Rutila likely will be graduating Purdue early, having come in to the university with 27 AP credits he earned at NDP in American history, European history, English literature, English composition, and economics. He also tested out of Spanish I and II.

Rutila's extracurricular activities extend well beyond the university campus. "Last summer I worked for Delta Airlines at Detroit Metropolitan Airport as a ramp operator," he says. "It was my first experience working for an airline." After two weeks of classroom training at Metro and two weeks of on-the-job training, Rutila was qualified to marshal, load, unload and perform gate operations on the entire Delta domestic fleet, from regional jets to Boeing 767s.

He says working in the high-stress environment underscored the need for teamwork. "I learned to depend on my co-workers as much as they came to depend on me."

Rutila admits he misses the smaller, welcoming community atmosphere at NDP. As a freshman, he knew two students in the entire school. By the end of his senior year, he knew everyone in his class and nearly everyone in the school. "Being invited to play at the graduation Masses has been a privilege for me," he says. "I've been able to watch two classes of students with whom I went to high school attend graduation, including my sister Stephanie's class ('12)." Soon Rutila's brother Nathan ('14) will become another NDP alum.

If Rutila's ability to successfully take on multiple projects and see them through is any indication, the country's future pilots (and musical ensembles) will be in competent hands. ■

## NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI

**Don Kolke '58 (NDHS)** wrote, "My wife and I are both retired and have recently downsized our home since our five children have their own spouses and are busy raising our 12 grandchildren."

**Ronald Kolito '59 (NDHS)** wrote, "I have finally retired." I have two new grandchildren this year. I am getting involved in Michigan's Sentence Reform Movement.

**Gary Hamel '63 (NDHS)** wrote that he is enjoying retirement from Federal Civil Service (DOD), where he was a logistics analyst, and said, "Virginia is a good place to live and being close to three of our children and six of our seven grandchildren is very fulfilling." We took two great tours through our Church (St John's) to the Holy Land in '08 and Italy in '12. Wife, Donna, and I found both to be trips of a lifetime, especially Jerusalem, Galilee, Rome, Assisi, Venice and Florence. Donna and I attended and had a great time at the Class of 1963's 50-year class reunion. Dinner was delicious, fellowship was wonderful, especially after all these years, the Mass at St Mary's was inspiring both spiritually and the artistic beauty reflected in the church, and going to the Tiger's game was a special treat. It was truly a class act all the way! I know there were many anniversaries celebrated in October around Notre Dame and the Marist community. Hope and pray that all involved enjoyed and remembered to give thanks to God above for the many gifts we have received from the Marists in general and to the Notre Dame community specifically! God bless you and all of Notre Dame Prep for your fine work in promoting Catholic education. Take care, fellow alumni and current students.

**Doug McDonald '63 (NDHS)** Continues to support friends and clients as a certified Wealth Management Advisor with the Northwestern Mutual Wealth Management Company in Troy, Mich.

**Michael O'Brien '63 (NDHS)** is retired and living in Brighton, Mich., during the summer, and on Marco Island, Fla., during winter. Michael married Kathy Clark (Regina Class '64). They have one daughter, two grandchildren, and all are healthy and happy!

**Gregory Bretz '64 (NDHS)** has been married 44 years to his wife, Patricia. They have two children, ages 42 and 38, and one grandchild. They reside in Canton, Mich. Gregory retired from Ford Motor Co. in 2007 after 35 years as a senior research engineer. He worked concurrently on a part-time basis for Canton Township P.D. as a police reserve officer for 31 years and retired from the force in 2009. Gregory is an avid classic car collector.

**Joel Jarvis '64 (NDHS)** writes, "I retired from family medicine in 2010. My wife, Kathie,

# Alumni Notes & Info

Notre Dame Prep: **(NDP)**; Notre Dame High School: **(NDHS)**; Pontiac Catholic: **(PC)**; Oakland Catholic: **(OC)**; St. Frederick: **(SF)**; St. Michael: **(SM)**

and I have three children and six grandsons. I revere my education at Notre Dame High School and have fond memories from there. I wish my children and grandchildren could have had such a fine education and experience as I had."

**Ed Maloney '64 (NDHS)** retired from teaching after 38 years in 2008. He also retired from football coaching after 43 years in 2013. He was an instructor and the head men's lacrosse coach at Siena Heights University since 2008.

**Robert Wilhelm '64 (NDHS)** visited campus in November 2013 to donate the ticket he had saved from the 1963 Goodfellows Game, NDHS vs. Detroit Denby, which took place at Tiger Stadium on November 22, 1963, the night President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. He also donated a piece of wood from the goal post. Both items are being preserved in Notre Dame Prep's alumni archive.

**Donald Polsinelli '65 (NDHS)** writes, "I am retired from the Detroit Medical Center and live in Novi and am an active member of St. Kenneth's parish in Plymouth, Mich."

**Gerald Zoli '65 (NDHS)** owns JCA Recycling, lives in Macomb Township, Mich., and has two children.

**Jim Chylinski '66 (NDHS)** is still trying to get Dan Hasten's autograph at a reasonable price.

**Richard DeLalla '66 (NDHS)** retired after being in the industrial pump business for 40 years. I retired in 2012 and moved to Tellico Village in Loudon, Tenn., outside of Knoxville. My wife, Carol (Spitzer), and I have been spending our time getting our house arranged, boating on Tellico Lake and making new friends. To help pass the time I started a consulting business handling industrial pumps. I have been quite busy launching a line of diaphragm pumps into the North American market for one of my clients in Spain. We moved here to live in a great climate. We have two children, Jennifer and Ryan and four grandchildren, all of whom still live in Michigan, which gives us a reason to visit.

**Ronald Hier '66 (NDHS)** donated three NDHS chess trophies ('63, '65, '66) to NDPMA for its alumni archive. He lives in Madison Heights.

**Paul Vago '66 (NDHS)** asks for prayers as he is in his fourth year of stroke recovery.

**Gary Coakley '69 (NDHS)** is with Holy Cross Children Services, working with juveniles. On February 1, 2014, Gary celebrated 32 years with the company.

**Tim Bondy '70 (NDHS)** lives in Petoskey with his wife, Lizette, and son, Andrew, 10. He has two other children: Rebecca, 24, and Matthew, 32. Tim has a physical therapy practice. He welcomes friends to call if they are in the area.

**David Cerrini '70 (NDHS)** says hi to all his classmates of the 1970 graduation class and wishes them all the best.

**Matthew Lipinski '70 (NDHS)** is an executive at Accenture LLP and currently lives with his wife, Nancy, in Bailey, Colo. Their

daughter, Susan, resides in Boston, Mass.

**Jim Bieszki '71 (NDHS)** writes: getting older and enjoying life more and more. I am still married to Michele (Elya) from Regina '71 for 36 years and counting. We have four children and three grandchildren. All four children attended St. Mike's grade school and Catholic Central High School in Monroe. Michele and I talk more about health care and retirement, but no firm plans to retire just yet. Michele is an occupational therapist and works primarily with autistic kids at St V's in Toledo. I have been in sales for 35 years and have owned my own rep firm for 20 years. I call on architects and contractors and cover the entire State of Michigan. Recently, Arnie Matusz '71 (NDHS), Lenny Dangelo '71 (NDHS), Mike Nannini '71 (NDHS), and I have been getting together to play cards and golf. We all look 60, but for the most part we are still pretty healthy. Thank God! I love up-north golfing, so if any of you old guys want to plan a trip up north to play, let me know. We have a place at Crystal Mountain, lots of great courses up that way. Hit'em straight!!

**John Berra '72 (NDHS)** informs he enjoyed his 40th class reunion. Thanks to all who helped! Looking forward to NDHS Class of '72 45th reunion. Chess team, please attend, if possible!. "Go Irish Green !!"

**Michael Slubowski '72 (NDHS)** Great memories of my days at Notre Dame! Glad to hear that the spirit continues! Best wishes to my classmates of 1972!

**Jack Accardo '73 (NDHS)** writes, "married to my wife, Michelle, for 37 years. We have three children who are now all adults, ages 35, 27 and 26. We have one grandson who is five. I'm a CFO for a manufacturing company in Detroit, and my wife is in the health and fringe-benefit business. Our son works in Port Huron, our middle daughter is in the process of getting her master's degree in Theology at Sacred Heart Seminary and our youngest went to Western Michigan University and is now obtaining her license in cosmetology/management. Wishing all the best to the class of '73."

**Lawrence Potwardowski '74 (NDHS)** underwent a quadruple heart bypass surgery in October 2013.

**David Rock '74 (NDHS)** recently appointed EVP and COO at Wyckoff Heights Medical Center, New York.

**David Leone '75 (NDHS)** is married to his high school sweetheart, Cindy, from Regina. They have two daughters, who both got married in the last six months. David is executive chief engineer for Performance Luxury Cars and Cadillac, has been with GM for 34 years, and is very proud of GM's recent achievements. He also serves on the Board of Advisors for Wayne State University.

**Robert Bivins '81 (NDHS)** says, "hello to all from the class of 81. I'm living life in northeast Wisconsin and still a Detroit fan after all these years. I love to put my Lions lawn gnome facing my neighbor's house (Packer receiver Jordy

Nelson), when the two teams play each other. Now if you guys back there could just help get a win, I'd have bragging rights for a while!"

**David Rice '81 (NDHS)** sends a thank you note regarding the article about his father, Hal Rice, in IRISH Fall 2013 issue, "I just wanted to say thank you for the copies of Irish magazine you sent me with the article about my father (Hal Rice) written by Fr. Leon. It was a very touching and insightful article written by someone who knew my dad well. Losing our father has, of course, not been an easy experience to get through, but the condolences and support of the NDPMA family has been a source of great comfort. From the people who I "grew up with," like Fr. Leon, Fr. Hindelang and Fr. Straz, to the students and faculty that interacted with my father more recently, the outpouring of support has provided a measure of consolation to my sisters and me. I am very proud of what my father accomplished and how he was received by the Marist community. In many respects, that community helped define who he was personally and professionally. Thanks again to you and the entire ND family on behalf of the family of Hal Rice and God bless you!" David is a CPA Division Finance Officer with Cequent Performance Products.

**Paul Mackey '82 (NDHS)** is the director of business development for the Huntsman Corporation. He and wife, Tiziana, have two children, Michael Anthony, 11 years, and Grace Marie, 14 years, who is a freshman at Notre Dame Prep. The family lives in Washington, Mich.

**Joseph Fabiani '83 (NDHS)** is the Chief Operating Officer for GlobalRMS in Newport Beach, California.

**Mark Gaynor '83 (NDHS)** Enjoyed organizing our 30 year reunion. Thanks to Rob, Tom, Steve, and Tom. Looking forward to our 35th! Keep an eye out for a yearly golf outing!!!!

**Michael LaLonde '84 (NDHS)** I'm working once again with my brother-in-law, Mark Smith, who is also a proud graduate of Notre Dame, class of '81. In April of 2013, we started working for Homesite Mortgage in Clinton Township.

**John Hetherman '86 (NDHS)** in 2011 moved back to Michigan from New York. He resides in Novi with his wife and three children ages 7, 5, and 3.

**Joseph Cella '87 (NDHS)** and his wife, Kristen, live in Shelby Township with their five children: Francesca (8), John Paul (6), Dominic (4), Rita Rose (2) and baby #5, a girl due on December 30, 2013. Joe visited campus in the fall of 2013 and afterward wrote, "It was great to see Notre Dame Prep thriving and planning for more good things."

**Brian Jones '96 (NDHS)** recently accepted a new position as the Chief Operating Officer for Select Specialty Hospital in Grosse Pointe, Mich. Previously, he was an Associate Administrator and Director of Business Development at Florida Medical Center in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.

**Tim Bradley '97 (NDHS)** writes, "Thanks for all the efforts to keep ND alumni connected. I moved back to Rochester Hills last year after spending 11 years in Chicago, where I met my wife, Kristin. We have a 1-yr old son, Nolan, who

## We'd love to hear from you!

Send a note to let us know what you're up to: e-mail Rachel (Alexander) Miller '00 (NDP) at [rmiller@ndpma.org](mailto:rmiller@ndpma.org), or visit [ndpma.org/update](http://ndpma.org/update).

will hopefully attend NDP in the coming years. On a personal note, after NDHS, I got a finance degree from the University of Notre Dame, then returned a few years ago for their Executive MBA program. I currently work in management consulting for Accenture. Hope all my old classmates are doing well. Go Irish!"

**Patrick Fabian '01 (NDHS)** was inducted into the Knights of Malta as the youngest member in the United States. The induction ceremony took place on November 15, 2013, at St. Patrick's Cathedral in NYC. Patrick was selected based on his service to the church and community. He lives in St. Clair Shores.

**Jeffrey Wargo '01 (NDHS)** is a physician and clinical lecturer in internal medicine at the University of Michigan.

#### **NOTRE DAME PREP ALUMNI**

**Jennifer Petty-Minich '01 (NDP)** works for the State Attorney's Office in Florida.

**John Putnam '03 (NDP)** writes, "I work for Spinal and Orthopedic Rehab and my clinic is now partnered with a company called 'Pure Healthy Back.' It is essentially the first and only comprehensive approach to the treatment of chronic back and neck pain. There are currently only two of these clinics in the US, one in New Orleans, La, and the other in Canton, Mich. (my clinic). It's an approach backed by 75 peer-reviewed research articles and 15 patented state-of-the-art machines. It's a huge development in healthcare and going to leave a lot of people pain-free, stronger, and more flexible."

**Annalisa Simmer '03 (NDP)** writes, "I have been serving as a missionary in Guatemala for over three years. I work with some of the most impoverished families in Los Encuentros, Solola. We believe that the best way to escape poverty is through education. With the assistance of sponsorships, we enable children to stay in school and create a better future for their families."

**Krysten Aquilina '04 (NDP)** works for Meijer in corporate strategy and planning marketing. She currently resides in Jenison, Mich.

**Evan McCausland '04 (NDP)** is an associate web editor for Automobile Magazine. He and wife, **Victoria (Gates) '04 (NDP)** live in Howell, Mich.

**Kaitlin Dye '05 (NDP)** is a third-year PhD student in the Genetics program at University of Wisconsin - Madison, where she is researching early cellular changes leading to neurodegeneration in diseases such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and Huntington's.

**Heather (Evans) Mack '05** teaches kindergarten at Holy Family School in Rochester, Mich. Heather and her husband, Michael, live in Birmingham, Mich.

**Monica Drake '06 (NDP)** was named by the Oakland Press "Local Digital Innovator of the Year" in the Local Media Association. "This award highlights what Monica has been doing in our newsroom, reaching out to the audience and finding new ways to tell better stories," said Stephen Frye, online editor at The Oakland Press. Drake, who has been with The Oakland Press since 2010, is the Community Engagement

Editor. She leads efforts to share stories with readers on social media, including Facebook and Twitter, and she also seeks feedback, story ideas, tips and photographs from readers. She was nominated for her work to not just share stories but also interact with the community. She uses new tools, such as Olapic and Google Voice to help collect photos and commentary as the newsroom seeks to share readers' memories, whether it be recent holidays or recalling past landmarks in Oakland County. She reaches out to help people in the community who want to share their voice in the paper or on its website. She leads frequent workshops for prospective bloggers or writers and teaches them the latest tools to help tell their stories or share their insights. She also works one-on-one with potential writers. Drake also helps other reporters with using social media to track down sources when news breaks locally or nationally, such as communicating with family members of a soldier who died serving the nation or a man accused of a local slaying. "These efforts allow people to share their input when something happens to their family, and it allows us to tell their stories to a community that cares and is interested," Frye said. A graduate of Oakland University, Drake lives in Waterford Township. She writes a blog about suicide, called Meant to Live.

**Katie Berlin '08 (NDP)** writes, "I am currently teaching business and English at a charter high school in Dearborn Heights, Mich. I work primarily with low income and urban populations."

**Mary (Molly) Hall '09 (NDP)** I currently work for State Senator Mike Kowall (R-White Lake) as his constituent relations director, and have since January 2013. This involves handling most office communications like email, phone calls, and social media. Additionally, I act as executive assistant to the senator, handling his schedule and representing him at events. Lastly, I also supervise interns and part-time employees, and manage the day-to-day activities of our office.

**Sarah Yahrmatter '09 (NDP)** is currently attending Central Michigan University to continue her education and pursue her doctorate degree in audiology.

**Justin Edgar '10 (NDP)** The automotive marketing department at Northwood University announced the selection of Justin as vice chair of divisionals for the 50th annual Northwood University International Auto Show (NUIAS). Edgar is a senior at Northwood, where he is involved with Kappa Sigma frat and serves as president of TAG while pursuing a major in automotive marketing and management. After graduation in May 2014, Edgar hopes to open multiple dealerships as president and operator.

**Kendall Hendlar '10 (NDP)** is in her first year of graduate school at the University of Detroit Mercy for School Psychology.

**Andrew Lyng '10 (NDP)** was accepted to Harvard Law School.

**Alexander Kopitz '11 (NDP)** is employed as a piano teacher, accompanist and performer. Alex won the Oakland University 2013-2014 Concerto Competition and performed

a movement of Rachmaninoff's 2nd Piano Concerto with the Oakland Symphony on February 16, at Varner Hall, Oakland University.

**Marisa Mancinotti '11 (NDP)** is a third-year student at Michigan State University. In the fall of 2013, Marisa completed a student work co-op for Johnson & Johnson in Los Angeles in the Neutrogena division, working in procurement.

**Samantha Meltzer '11 (NDP)** is a third-year student at Northwestern University where she is studying journalism and political science with a certificate in integrated marketing communications.

**Geralyn Moody '11 (NDP)** made the University of Notre Dame Pom Pom Squad for 2013-14 season. She competed with over 100 dancers to earn one of only six spots on the squad.

**Julie Ramus '11 (NDP)** In November 2013, NDPMA received a letter from Helmut Puff, Chair of the Department of Germanic Languages and Literatures at the University, who wanted to let us know that Julie was one of the few first-year students who was permitted to enroll in a fourth-semester language course. She is doing well, will advance quickly and she credits her preparedness to the German AP program at NDP.

**Alexander Rink '11 (NDP)** is a third-year student at the University of Michigan, where he is studying mechanical engineering and is a member of the Mens' Glee Club.

**Harold Rutila '11 (NDP)** is a third-year student at Purdue University, where he is studying aviation management and music. Harold writes, I recently was hired as a flight instructor at a flight school here in West Lafayette, Ind.

**Nathaniel Gaynor '12 (NDP)** via a LinkedIn post says he is at Michigan State University studying journalism and political science with a concentration on broadcast news and sports reporting and a minor in economics. He is a member of the Spartan Ski Club as well as DECA. Currently he volunteers at St. Mary School and St. Peter Parish and is a cashier at Nino Salvaggio's when he is home from college.

**Christa Guest '12 (NDP)** is a second year student at University of Michigan, where she started a job in a research lab of the Dental School studying localized healing in cranio-facial injuries through the University Research Opportunity Program.

**Emily Kaye '12 (NDP)** is at University of Notre Dame, double majoring in bio-chemistry and Spanish. She is thinking of pursuing a career in global health. Emily spent six weeks last summer studying Spanish in Toledo, Spain. In May for one week, Emily will be joining her sister, Lauren '13 (NDP) and their aunt on a medical mission in the Dominican Republic.

They will be visiting remote villages along with medical professionals and medical nursing students to assist where they can with basic medical care and in the translations of the Spanish language for the medical professionals.

**Theresa Schmid '12 (NDP)** is a freshman at NYU and spent time studying in London this year.

**Lauren Kaye '13 (NDP)** is at the University of Notre Dame on the pre-professional tract. She is considering a major in Spanish. In May for one week, Lauren will be joining her sister, Emily '12 (NDP) and their aunt on a medical mission in the Dominican Republic. They will be visiting remote villages along with medical professionals and medical nursing students to assist where they can with basic medical care and in the translations of the Spanish language for the medical professionals.

**Eric Leen '13 (NDP)** was accepted into the Australian Defense Force Academy as an Electronics Engineering Officer in the Royal Australian Air Force.

**Keith Watza '13 (NDP)** is a first-year student at Tulane University studying biomedical engineering.

#### **PONTIAC CATHOLIC ALUMNI**

**Joy (Holmes) Rosenberg '71 (PC)** and her husband, David, have three children: Jacob (1978), Joel (1981) and James (1984). The family lives in Concord, Calif.

**Judy Skemp '80 (PC)** writes, "Hey all! Taking a new life adventure: leaving my job at DTE to run Storm Riders Grill. Watch our progress at stormridersgrill.com or like us on Facebook!"

#### **ST. FREDERICK ALUMNI**

**Ano Olson '52 (SF)** and his wife own Anvil Farms in Ortonville, Mich.

**Senta (Pavlinac) Rohn '66 (SF)** attended NDPMA's Big Band Dinner Dance in May 2013, where she and her husband were able to practice their ballroom dancing.

#### **ST. MICHAEL**

**Ann (Schapman) Niebauer '52 (SM)** informs that her grandson, Lucas, is a freshman at Notre Dame Prep. Her two sons attended Pontiac Catholic.

**Joesph Schultz '57 (SM)** and his wife, Sharon, live in Cheboygan, Mich. Prior to his retirement, Joseph taught for 35 years for Birmingham Public Schools (Michigan).

**Natalie (Rofe) Van Wagoner '57 (SM)** sent a note after attending the Grand Anniversary Celebration in October 2013, "I want to thank you so much for the great Mass and pig roast. My friend and I enjoyed it very much. Please tell Mr. Martin (NDP Band Director) the music was very good."

**Bob Linsenman '61 (SM)** is retired and lives in Oscoda County, Mich. In a report received from his siblings Carol (Linsenman) Powell, '63 (SM), Carlene (Linsenman) Tischoff, '54 (SM), Geraldine (Linsenman) Tracey, '46 (SM), and Cliff Linsenman '71 (PC), Bob has had a novel published. The setting is the Vietnam War and tells about two young Michigan soldiers and their experiences with their devoted scout dogs. "Snowblood's Journal" is published by Arbutus Press and is available on Amazon.com. Bob has had several other books published on fly fishing and has written feature articles for national magazines, including Fly Fisherman, American Angler, Eastern Fly Fishing, etc. ■



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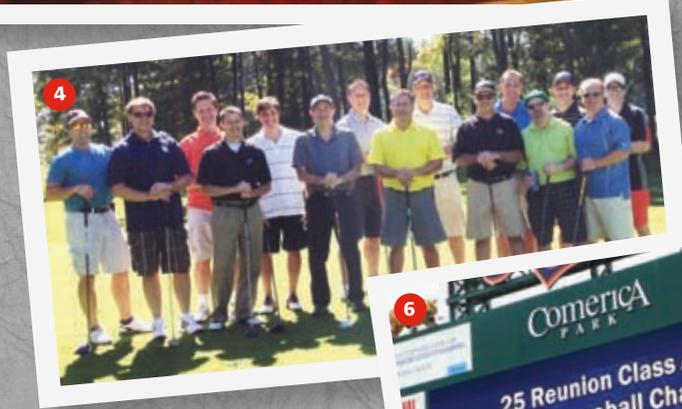
**REUNION PHOTOS:** 1. 33rd annual St. Frederick all-class reunion, Sept. 2013 (Santia Hall, Keego Harbor); 2. NDHS Class of 1963 50-year reunion, Sept. 2013 (Sterling Inn, Sterling Heights); 3. NDHS Class of 1963 50-year reunion, Sept. 2013 after Mass with Fr. Leon Olszawowski at Old St. Mary's Church (Greektown, Detroit); 4. NDHS Class of 1983 30-year reunion at Cherry Creek Golf Club (Shelby Twp.); 5. NDHS 1989 baseball state champions 25-year reunion, Sept. 2013 (Comerica Park, Detroit); 6. NDHS 1989 baseball state champions 25-year reunion, Sept. 2013 (Comerica Park, Detroit); 7. NDP Class of 2003 10-year reunion, Nov. 2013 (Imagine Theater, Royal Oak); 8. NDP Class of 2003 10-year reunion, Nov. 2013 (Imagine Theater, Royal Oak); 9. NDP Class of 2008 5-year reunion, Nov. 2103 (Rochester Mills Beer Company, Rochester)



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## CLASS REUNIONS

### NOTRE DAME PREPARATORY SCHOOL

**Class of 1999**, 15-year, Volunteers from your class are needed to help plan a 2014 reunion. Please contact the alumni office at [alumni@ndpma.org](mailto:alumni@ndpma.org) if you are interested.

**Class of 2004**, 10-year, Volunteers from your class are needed to help plan a 2014 reunion. Please contact the alumni office at [alumni@ndpma.org](mailto:alumni@ndpma.org) if you are interested.

**Class of 2009**, 5-year, reunion will be planned for 2014. Date and location will be finalized the end of April. Class Captain contacts: Alayna Lekosiotis, [lekosiot@gmail.com](mailto:lekosiot@gmail.com), Victoria Thompson, [vthomp90@gmail.com](mailto:vthomp90@gmail.com) and Sarah Yahrmatter, [yahrmatt@msu.edu](mailto:yahrmatt@msu.edu).

### NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL

**Class of 1959**, 55-year. Reunion Planning Committee in formation for a 2014 reunion event. Volunteers needed to join the committee. Please contact Ron Kolito at [kolito@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kolito@sbcglobal.net).

**Class of 1964**, 50-year. reunion planning committee in formation - volunteers needed! Please contact Paul Perse at [pperse@yahoo.com](mailto:pperse@yahoo.com) if you are interested in helping.

**Class of 1965**, 50-year. Reunion being planned for 2015. Details TBA. The committee is looking to update e-mail addresses and contact information. Reunion Committee: Dennis Berger, [dennisaberger@aol.com](mailto:dennisaberger@aol.com), (909) 223-4483; Fr. Leon Olszamowski, [lolszamowski@ndpma.org](mailto:lolszamowski@ndpma.org).

**Class of 1969**, 45-year. Volunteers from your class are needed to help plan a 2014 reunion. Please contact the alumni office at [alumni@ndpma.org](mailto:alumni@ndpma.org) if you are interested

**Class of 1974**, 40-year. Reunion Planning Committee in formation for a 2014 reunion event. Volunteers needed to join the committee. Reunion to be held possibly at Notre Dame Prep. Please contact Carlo Vitale at [carlo.vitale@comcast.net](mailto:carlo.vitale@comcast.net).

**Class of 1979**, 35-year. Volunteers from your class are needed to help plan a 2014 reunion. Please contact the alumni office at [alumni@ndpma.org](mailto:alumni@ndpma.org) if you are interested

**Class of 1984**, 30-year. Reunion to be held in 2014 is in the early planning stages. Reunion committee contacts: Todd Grzelewski, [tsg663@aol.com](mailto:tsg663@aol.com); Paul Gaynor, [prgaynor05@yahoo.com](mailto:prgaynor05@yahoo.com); and Andy Guest, [aguest@ndpma.org](mailto:aguest@ndpma.org).

**Class of 1986**, 30-year. Will be planning a 30-year reunion for 2016. Reunion Committee: John Kaminski [jkaminski1700@yahoo.com](mailto:jkaminski1700@yahoo.com), H: (612) 822-4759 C: (952) 261-5546; Dan O'Brien (248) 840-8391 [dobrien734@comcast.net](mailto:dobrien734@comcast.net); Paul Arnone [paul.c.arnone@gm.com](mailto:paul.c.arnone@gm.com); Stephen Schultz [stephen2000\\_fl@yahoo.com](mailto:stephen2000_fl@yahoo.com); Jonathan Zaidan [jkmzc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jkmzc@sbcglobal.net).

**Class of 1989**, 25-year. Reunion is planned for May 17, 2014, at Park Bar in Detroit. Please contact Gregory Simon to receive an invitation: [gsimon@ndpma.org](mailto:gsimon@ndpma.org) or 248-373-2171, ext. 5.

**Class of 1994**, 20-year. Volunteers from your class are needed to help plan a 2014 reunion. Please contact the alumni office at [alumni@ndpma.org](mailto:alumni@ndpma.org) if you are interested.

**Class of 1999**, 15-year. Volunteers from your class are needed to help plan a 2014 reunion. Please contact the alumni office at [alumni@ndpma.org](mailto:alumni@ndpma.org) if you are interested.

**Class of 2004**, 10-year. Volunteers from your class are needed to help plan a 2014 reunion. Please contact the alumni office at [alumni@ndpma.org](mailto:alumni@ndpma.org) if you are interested.

### PONTIAC CATHOLIC

No reunions scheduled currently.

### OAKLAND CATHOLIC

No reunions scheduled currently

### ST. FREDERICK

**St. Frederick All School Reunion** - New Date!

Sunday, September 14, 2014. Memorial Mass will be on Sunday at 11 am at St. Vincent dePaul Catholic Church. Luncheon will be at 1:00 pm at the Santia Banquet Center, 1985 Cass Lake Road, Keego Harbor, MI. More details will follow in the upcoming months.

### ST. MICHAEL

**St. Michael, 25th Annual All School Reunion**

Sunday, September 21, 2014. Mass and luncheon will be held at Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy. Details TBA.

## NOTRE DAME UPCOMING EVENTS

### NDPMA PARENTS CLUB 17TH ANNUAL FASHION SHOW AND SHOPPING GALA FIESTA DE FLAMENCO

**Monday, March 24, 2014** Cherry Creek Golf Club, 52000 Cherry Creek Drive, Shelby Township, MI 48316. Ticket price: \$55.00. For the invitation, go to [www.ndpma.org/drupal/node/3614](http://www.ndpma.org/drupal/node/3614) and for more information, contact Carolann Giacomantonio at 586-207-1276.

### GRAND ANNIVERSARY DINNER

**Saturday, April 12, 2014** San Marino Club, 1685 E. Big Beaver Road, Troy. Please join us for a fun, casual, adult evening to celebrate the Grand Anniversary of Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy. Cocktails, dinner, entertainment, dancing. This will be a night of celebrating the past and looking forward to a great future! Ticket price: \$55

### BIG BAND DINNER DANCE

**Friday, May 16, 2014** Lafayette Grand, 1 Lafayette, Pontiac. Featuring performances from jazz band alums. Ticket information will be available soon. Please contact Andrea Moriguchi at 248-475-1957 for more information.

### 18TH ANNUAL GOLF OUTING

**Monday, June 2, 2014** Wyndgate Country Club in Rochester Hills. For more information and to register, visit [www.ndpma.org/golfouting](http://www.ndpma.org/golfouting). Sponsored by the NDPMA Booster Club. Proceeds to benefit NDPMA athletics.

### TRAVELING IRISH DINNERS - COMING THIS SUMMER

Dates and locations to be determined. Contact Keaton Curran '10 (NDP) with questions at [keatoncurran@gmail.com](mailto:keatoncurran@gmail.com).

### DETROIT TIGERS OUTING

Date TDB. Join the alumni association for its annual Detroit Tigers outing at Comerica Park! Date to be announced. Visit [www.ndpma.org/tigersouting](http://www.ndpma.org/tigersouting) for updates.

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