

# Dr. Walter Keithly '69

AGRICULTURAL ECONOMIST



BATON ROUGE, LA

**“All of my teachers at Holy Child provided me with a good work ethic and instilled in me a desire to learn,”** said Walt Keithly '69 from his home in Louisiana. To say that Walt took this thirst for knowledge and ran with it would be an understatement. A retired Associate Professor of Agricultural Economics and Agribusiness at Louisiana State University and a current consultant, Walt has a long track record of researching, promoting, and educating about good usage of natural resources.

For 33 years, Walt taught graduate students at Louisiana State University, a role he truly enjoyed, “I loved teaching graduate classes for two reasons. I think they had a genuine desire to learn and it also forced me to learn more.” In addition to his teaching, Walt has had over 100 reports published in his field of expertise and was the recipient of grants from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and Sea Grant, to name a few. While currently retired from his teaching ventures, Walt’s passion for agricultural economics continues. Aside from consulting with a variety of constituents, he has served as an expert witness in numerous court cases, and assists the Statistical Committee of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council and the Caribbean Council as well.



Originally from Berwyn, Walt attended Holy Child School at Rosemont with his three brothers Richard '71, Robert '72, and Edward '81; sister, Lois, attended the former Holy Child girls' high school. After graduating from the University of Delaware with his bachelor's degree, he headed to the University of Florida to complete his master's and his PhD., both in food and resource economics.

Now based in Louisiana, Walt's focus has been on showing how economics can be utilized to manage natural resources (specifically fisheries) in a wise manner. He has seen a great shift over the years in using economics to offer incentives to help reduce fossil fuels.

Walt's research was focused not only on fisheries, but also on the local wetlands which are sadly being lost. While protecting the wetlands is an ongoing and large project, Walt is hopeful that landlords will be encouraged by the incentives to protect this land that has been in their family for generations.

“The role of any one individual is marginal,” said Walt, “But I think collectively we have helped to better manage our limited resources. And we have other countries now looking at the United States for advice.” He may be modest about his contribution in safeguarding some of the nation's

precious resources, but Walt's résumé says otherwise.

These days, with just a little more time on his hands, Walt enjoys fly fishing and camping out West, and even makes the occasional visit to Holy Child which he did one day this past summer. He also had the opportunity to attend his 45th reunion several years ago, to tour his old classrooms, and to speak with late former teacher Dan Algeo P'83'85'90'95. While the years have passed, the nostalgia for a place that sparked curiosity remains. Said Walt, “I had a very good learning experience, and I very much enjoyed my time at Holy Child.” ❖

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