

IRISH

ISSUE 28
Fall/Winter 2021

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THE FALL/WINTER ISSUE



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NOTRE DAME

IRISH

Fall/Winter 2021 | Issue 28

IRISH magazine is dedicated to alumni, parents and friends of Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy and our heritage schools, including Notre Dame High School, Pontiac Catholic High School, Oakland Catholic High School, St. Michael High School and St. Frederick High School.

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NOTRE DAME

Notre Dame Preparatory School
and Marist Academy

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Artist's Statement

"With 'Abby,' I was inspired by the paintings of Andrea Kowch, a Michigan artist who incorporates elements of magical realism into her scenes of women and the Midwestern landscape. I was introduced to Kowch's work by my teacher, Mrs. LewAllen. There's an interesting tension in a lot of her work between the domestic and the wild, the old and the timeless, and I wanted to evoke a similar tension in my own piece, and play with color and texture.

"What is being used as a shawl here is in fact a vintage Belgian tapestry I borrowed from my mom, who deals in antiques. Juxtaposed against the late winter landscape, the artifice of the high society scene it depicts is made bare. This piece was a major turning point for me in my art practice, and the inspirations behind it continue to influence my work in the Brown University/Rhode Island School of Design Dual Degree Program."

Amelia Cumming, Class of 2020

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"Abby," an oil painting by Amelia Cumming NDP'20, was inspired by Andrea Kowch, a Michigan artist who incorporates elements of magical realism into her scenes of women and the Midwestern landscape. Read Cumming's full artist's statement below left.

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Introspective on COVID-19

In June we were feeling pretty good about the state of the coronavirus in the country, in Michigan and at our school. Case counts had dropped substantially, the vaccine was available to all who wanted it and we had completed a year of mostly in-person learning to the delight and satisfaction of our parental community.

Over the summer, the school resumed normal activities, including academic, theatre, band and athletic camps, without a single positive case among faculty, staff, coaches and students, and we hoped that trend would continue into the new school year.

Unfortunately, the virus has shown to be quite resilient, and cases in our state began to rise substantially over the summer. Driven by the delta variant, case counts rose in the weeks leading up to the start of school and the virus made it clear that it had no intention of going away anytime soon.

Thus, began the debate.

While the 2020/2021 school year was about in-person versus remote learning, 2021/2022 is about the efficacy and necessity for mask and vaccine mandates. Everyone agrees to follow the science, but the science is being interpreted differently by different people.

This would be a great topic for our International

Baccalaureate (IB) Theory of Knowledge course. How can very intelligent people with access to lots of good information interpret data so differently?

On July 20, we announced our intention to return to school as scheduled for orientations beginning on Aug. 18 and that we would open with a "mask optional" policy.

Our thought process was simple. Despite the rise in cases, the total number of active cases remained relatively low. There were 39,500 active cases in Michigan. With a population of 9,987,000, that meant that 99.6 percent of the population did not have COVID-19. Masks are not ideal in an educational setting as they affect the ability for teachers to communicate and connect. Furthermore, there is evidence that masks contribute to social isolation and can affect the emotional well-being of students. Given the low number of cases we experienced over the summer (zero), the high vaccination rate of our faculty and staff (83 percent), the vaccination rate of the County (+70% for eligible individuals), we believed we could operate safely with a mask-optional protocol. Fall sports began practicing on Aug. 9, school began the following week and we were off and running.

On Aug. 24, the Oakland County Health Division issued a "mask mandate" for all schools in Oakland County. The emergency order was issued in response to rising case counts, hospitalizations and a call for standardized guidelines from local public-school districts struggling with the decision on how to open schools after the Labor Day holiday, when public schools start class in Michigan. At the time, nine Oakland County public schools had announced a mask mandate, nine had announced a mask-optional policy and 10 had yet to decide.

As a private, independent Catholic school, Notre Dame has a great deal of freedom in the areas of curriculum and religion, but we are not autonomous in all areas. We are chartered as an educational institution by the State of Michigan and required to follow certain regulations mandated by the federal or state Department of Education. A health mandate by our local county officials is not an area in which we have the freedom of choice to follow. Furthermore, the guidelines for quarantining, which require unmasked students to stay home from school for 14 days, threaten the continued operation of the school. Interestingly, at the time of this writing, Macomb County, where we

draw a significant portion of our students has not mandated masks. The irony and inconsistency in the government's handling of the pandemic is notable.

While most of our families preferred the mask optional approach to school, there are also a significant number of families, as well as faculty and staff, who support the mask mandate. In recent months, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), American Association of Pediatricians (AAP), and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) have all recommended a layered approach to opening and operating schools, which includes vaccinations, masks, social distancing, hygiene and cleaning as the best options to curtail an increase in the number of positive cases of COVID-19. Many believe that masks are a simple and effective way to protect our children, in-person learning and the surrounding community.

Recently, the U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops recognized the political divide in our nation and called for more "civility." They reminded us that the Church is neither Republican nor Democrat and that they follow the teachings of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

I expect the debate over masks will continue as is an even greater debate on the efficacy and necessity of vaccinations, particularly for young children. I may address the school's position on that topic later.

For now, it's important to know that we simply want to have our students in school, learning their lessons, playing sports, participating in extracurriculars and growing emotionally, physically and in their relationship with God. We have no hidden agenda, other than to raise good Christian persons, upright citizens and academic scholars.

Blessing and peace,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Andrew J. Guest". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Andrew J. Guest ND'84
Head of School

NDP GRADUATES CONTINUE TO IMPRESS

Notre Dame Preparatory School features another stellar graduating class that finishes with an overall GPA of 3.852 and averages more than \$48,000 each in academic, merit-based college scholarships

Students in the Class of 2021 graduated May 23 from Notre Dame Preparatory School after four years at the International Baccalaureate school in Pontiac. They also made it through one of the most unusual senior years in school history after pandemic-influenced days full of masks, social distancing and quarantines.

And not only is the school's 27th graduating class leaving behind a very proud faculty and staff and the state's No. 1 Catholic high school four of the past six years, they are leaving behind a number of impressive statistics as a group.

According to figures released recently by Notre Dame Prep's counseling department,

to date this year's class of graduating seniors earned about \$8 million — or nearly a \$48,000 average per graduate — in academic merit scholarships from colleges and universities, a number that likely went up as the seniors continued to receive scholarship offers throughout summer and fall.

In addition, the Class of 2021 averaged 27 on the ACT with 50 seniors scoring a 30 or above on the test. Also, Notre Dame's graduating seniors averaged 1252 on the SAT and finished the year with an overall grade-point-average (GPA) of 3.852.

Thirty-one graduates fill out this year's valedictory court for the class, which also features 31 candidates for the prestigious

International Baccalaureate diploma. A total of 151 of the finest colleges and universities across the country have accepted Class of 2021 graduates so far, including the University of Michigan (Ann Arbor), the University of Notre Dame, Loyola Chicago, Savannah College of Art and Design, Purdue, Oakland University and the University of Southampton (UK).

And finally, perhaps most important, each of this year's graduating seniors spent increasingly significant amounts of time on leadership-level projects as part of their service requirements — once again proving that besides turning out "academic scholars," Notre Dame continues to graduate "Christian people and upright citizens." «



Irish News

THIRTY INDUCTED INTO THE NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY



In a moving ceremony held after Mass on Sept. 12 in the Notre Dame cafeteria, 30 students from the middle school were inducted into the National Junior Honor Society. Fr. Ron Nikodem, s.m., celebrated Mass for the students and their families.

Membership in the NJHS is one of the highest honors that can be awarded to a middle-school student. Chapters in more than 5,000 middle schools across the U.S. strive to give practical meaning to the goals of scholarship, leadership, service, citizenship and character.

Congratulations to Notre Dame's newest NJHS members.

ALUM HONORED WITH A STREET RENAMING

Notre Dame alum Dave Coulier ND'77 was honored Aug. 8 when his hometown of St. Clair Shores unveiled the new honorary name of Lange Street, "Dave Coulier Way." Coulier grew up on Lange Street before heading to Los Angeles in 1979 to begin a successful career



as a comedian, actor and director. He is perhaps best known for his role as Joey Gladstone on "Full House" and "Fuller House."

"I grew up on Lange Street until I was 18 years old and then moved to California to get into show business," said Coulier in a local news account of the ceremony. "I had two partners in crime, both St. Clair Shores kids, Mark Cendrowski ND'77 and Tom Keenan ND'77, and people used to call us 'The Three Stooges.'"

"We thought we were really funny. The three of us would write sketches, and we would perform at the hockey banquets. I would do impressions ... wacky comedy bits, and then in high school, we put a show together with 10 guys at Notre Dame," he added.

Coulier recently moved back to Michigan with his wife, Melissa, and continues to tour the country in comedy shows.

MEMORY PROJECT ART MAKES IT TO INDIA

Former IB Art students who graduated from Notre Dame Prep in May found out recently that their special hand-drawn portraits created as part of the worldwide program known as the Memory Project were finally delivered to a number of disadvantaged children in the country of India.

Sandy LewAllen, Notre Dame's art chair and IB Art instructor, said it's always a bit nerve-racking for the students until they hear officially that their portraits found their way to the intended recipients. Last month, the wait was finally over as LewAllen got word that the portraits were indeed delivered.

The Memory Project is a unique initiative in which high school art students from around the world create portraits for other chil-



dren and teens who have been neglected, orphaned, or disadvantaged. Given that kids in such situations tend to have few personal keepsakes, project organizers say they aim to provide them with special memories that capture a piece of their childhood – portable pieces of their personal history. As much as possible, the Memory Project also wants to help the kids see themselves as "works of art."

Ben Schumaker, founder and director of the Memory Project, which is headquartered in Wisconsin, said that the children in India who received the portraits this week have lost their families and live in homes run by foster mothers.

"All of them have faced a lot of challenges in life already," he said. "But this year in particular has been extra hard because of COVID, and for these kids to receive these heartfelt gifts from friends around the world, to know that those friends care for them and are sending their love and friendship -- that really touches them deeply."

LewAllen said she looks forward to this project every year with her IB artists.

"It's the last project of the school year for these seniors and they really get into it, especially since they know how excited the orphaned children will be when they finally receive their portraits," she said.

This year, the IB visual art seniors who participated in the project

included Lindsey Creek, Abigail Gietzen, Lucas Husch, Olivia McGettrick, Maggie Miklas, Charlotte Milback, Leonie Salzmänn, Dani Stanko and Jason Stewart.

NOTRE DAME ANNOUNCES NEW STAFF ROLES

Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy announced in August that three individuals in the school's advancement department are taking on new roles.



From left, Megan Haverland, Beth Lockhart and Sheri Yanik.

Megan Haverland has been named assistant director of admissions. She joined the Office of Enrollment Management in 2019. A 2002 alumna, Haverland has played a key role in the school's increasing enrollment the last two years. She advises incoming families during the admissions process—from submitting applications to interviewing with principals, and submitting academic records and recommendations in a new online system called MyNotreDame.

Beth Lockhart, who has served as director of alumni relations since 2014, will begin a new role as director of advancement when she returns from maternity leave on Oct. 11. She will continue to manage the Notre Dame Alumni Association and also lead the Notre Dame Fund, the school's annual appeal. Since she arrived, the alumni association has grown attendance at homecoming, increased

the number of reunion events, introduced alumni chapters for each one of the heritage schools, and launched a career mentoring program.

Also, Sheri Yanik has been named advancement manager. In her previous position, she supported the "March on to Victory" capital campaign. She has stewarded donors to the \$7 million campaign, which successfully ended in 2019. Yanik is responsible for maintaining constituent and donor records in MyNotreDame, conducting research and analysis, and acknowledging gifts, pledges and other charitable gifts. She also serves as the staff liaison to the Board of Trustees.

"We couldn't be happier that Megan, Beth and Sheri are taking on additional responsibilities at Notre Dame," said Mark Roberts, vice president for advancement. "As a Marist school, we are called to think, judge, feel and act like Mary in all things. Megan, Beth and Sheri have answered Our Lady's call to help us better serve our prospective families, alumni, and donors."

A search is underway for an alumni relations manager. This position will oversee the day-to-day operations of the Notre Dame Alumni Association which includes 12,000 graduates from Notre Dame Preparatory School as well as Notre Dame High School in Harper Woods, Oakland Catholic High School, Pontiac Catholic High School, St. Frederick's High School and St. Michael's High School.

RENAISSANCE RHETORICIAN

Each year, fewer than 1 percent of students involved in speech and debate in this country earn the Academic All American award from the National Speech and Debate Association, an organization created in 1925 to advocate for students participating in speech and debate activities.

"This distinguished award recognizes students who have completed at least five semesters of high school; earned the degree of Superior Distinction in our Honor



Notre Dame Prep senior Katherine Schmidt

Society (a total of 750 or more merit points); achieved rigorous criteria for GPA and/or test score requirements; and demonstrated outstanding character and leadership," said J. Scott Wunn, NSDA's executive director, about the honor.

One of those distinguished awardees is Katherine Schmidt, a senior currently in her final year at Notre Dame Prep. She earned the award based primarily on her speech and debate work leading up to the end of her junior year.

She said she was surprised when she first heard the news.

"I knew what the end goal was at the beginning of this process, but I wasn't sure if I was able to accomplish it before the end of my junior year," she said. "I was just really glad all my hard work and long hours of speechwriting and debating paid off. I'm also so thankful for my public forum debate partner Michael Kenny NDP'24 who did all of last year's debates with me. Without his help I would never have been able to go to enough debates to earn this award status."

Schmidt, who also served as co-captain of the school's team last year along with Amishi Mahajan NDP'21 and will be team captain for this coming school year, is the second NSDA Academic All American at Notre Dame, following in the footsteps of Kenny's brother, John, who graduated from NDP in 2019.

PERFECT SCORES ONCE AGAIN HIGHLIGHT NOTRE DAME PREP'S IB RESULTS

During the summer, 31 Notre Dame Prep students who were in the full International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Program joined more than 170,000 students from

around the world in receiving their IB-DP and IB-CP results. They are now part of a community of more than 2 million lifelong learners in 152 countries around the world.

According to English and social studies teacher Katrina Sagert, who is the IB Diploma Program coordinator at NDPMA, despite operating once again under extraordinary circumstances, all 31 students in the Diploma Program performed amazingly well, with 28 receiving the diploma for a 90 percent overall passing rate.

Sagert said there were four from the junior cohort who tested and 64 other juniors and seniors who took individual courses.

"The students and teachers of this year's total cohort faced the extraordinary challenges of school closures, remote learning and quarantines, and they have met every obstacle with resilience, flexibility, professionalism and grace. I could not be more proud of all of them."

Olli-Pekka Heinonen, who is the director general of the International Baccalaureate, said in a news release issued by IB that the last 18 months have been incredibly challenging for schools around the world.

"COVID-19 has undermined much of what we had come to take for granted," he said. "I salute the spirit and dedication of our students, teachers and schools throughout the world to our shared mission: education for a better world."

According to Sagert, on a 1-7 grading scale, eight students from Notre Dame were awarded perfect 7s.

"This is the highest score a stu-

dent can get, and it's an exceptionally rare score," she said. "This year, five of those 7 scores were from the math department, with two from our HL math course, the most challenging math class we offer. The other 7s came from biology, history and Spanish."

WOMEN IN STEM: IB, ROBOTICS AND A HEAD START

Notre Dame Prep grad Demi Outman NDP'13 currently works at Boeing as a systems engineer on the Sikorsky-Boeing DEFIANT X Future-Long Range Assault Aircraft program, which is a new rotorcraft destined for use by the U.S. Army.



Demi Outman NDP'13

She's responsible for leading the development of the program's integrated product architectures, which involves developing requirements, architecture, safety, cyber and maintainability data using model-based systems engineering (MBSE) practices. Her high school alma mater recently profiled Outman as part of a focus on women in STEM fields.

"I spend my days modeling the product, identifying product design

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PLEASE PATRONIZE NOTRE DAME RESTAURANTS AND BUSINESSES

Early in the pandemic, the Notre Dame Alumni Association reached out to members of the Notre Dame community, including current families and alumni, who own or operate restaurants and small businesses that may have been negatively affected by the pandemic. While many if not most of them have reopened, we continue to encourage readers to patronize our NDPMA family businesses, including those listed on our website at ndpma.org/promoting-notre-dame-family-owned-restaurants-and-small-businesses.

Finding God in



Notre Dame Conversations

the weight room



Notre Dame's strength and conditioning coach brought to the school a wealth of experience that included a stint in the Milwaukee Brewers baseball organization. Now, after nearly two years on campus, it seems to be a perfect match for both coach and school. Christian Polega remains focused on maintaining a top-notch fitness program that includes a daily dose of faith.

When Notre Dame's Strength and Conditioning Coach Christian Polega was hired in the summer of 2019, athletic director Betty Wroubel commented on how fortunate the school was in getting someone with such a wide range of experience.

"We are elated to be able to add someone with the experience and qualifications that Christian possesses, having worked in high school, collegiate and professional athletics," Wroubel said in a news release. "He came highly recommended to us and stood out among a field of who we felt were very strong applicants for this position. We believe that his vision and leadership will help build upon an already very strong program."

Polega came to Notre Dame from Bloomfield Hills High School, where he was director of sports performance and had overall

responsibility for the strength and conditioning of all high-school student-athletes in the school system. Prior to BHHS, he was a strength and conditioning coach at the University of Detroit Mercy, responsible for athletes playing softball, basketball, soccer, and track and field among others. Before UDM, Polega served in coaching or strength and conditioning positions with the University of Montana; University of Wisconsin; Brookfield East High School in Brookfield, Wisc.; and Muskego High School, also located in Wisconsin.

Polega's experience included a stint working as an assistant strength and conditioning coach within the Milwaukee Brewers baseball organization.

A resident of Shelby Township, Mich., Polega holds a master's degree in health services

administration from UD Mercy, and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in kinesiology – exercise science from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, where he also earned a certificate in strength and conditioning from the school's College of Health Sciences.

He is certified as a registered strength and conditioning coach and specialist, and holds certification as a USAW level-1 sport performance coach. He also is CPR/AED-certified by the American Heart Association.

Wroubel recently added that

OPPOSITE

Christian Polega, Notre Dame's strength and conditioning coach, ends each session in the weight room with a prayer.



the school was truly blessed to have someone like Polega come in and continue to build upon the foundation that Jake Siebert built prior to him moving to California.

"This is a very important position within our athletic department and I feel that we have one of the top trainers around," she said. "Coach P. has had experience at all levels: high school, college and the pros, and brings that wealth of expertise to our kids. He holds an outstanding reputation in the strength and conditioning field and is a tremendous motivator as well as innovator. An added bonus is that his personality and approach gel nicely with our Marist mission and values."

Now, after nearly two years at Notre Dame under his belt — and as part of "NOTRE DAME CONVERSATIONS," a new communication initiative that will focus on conversations with members of the Notre Dame community — we thought it was a good time to catch up with Polega on what's been happening in his weight room and beyond.

Since coming aboard at NDPMA, how has it been for you in terms of support for strength and conditioning from the school community?

POLEGA: Support has been great! When you lose a fixture like Jake Siebert, you can't expect to come in and have the trust and respect of

your coaches and student-athletes from the get-go. Relationships take time to build and coaches have to see that you really care and have their teams' best interests in mind before they start to buy into your program. Over the course of time, I believe I've built enough trust equity so that more and more coaches also want their teams to work with me. Individual student-athletes that I also worked with started seeing results and believed in my program and they too spread the word to their peers, which increased the number of students working out in their individual off-seasons. Now that my second year is wrapping up at NDPMA, I couldn't be happier with the positive feedback I receive almost weekly from administrators, teachers, coaches or student-athletes. It really makes you feel like you're making a positive and influential impact at an amazing school. I am ecstatic to finish out the year and get rolling into my year three here.

How do you like working in the Betty A. Wroubel Athletic Performance Center? Do you foresee any upcoming facility improvements in terms of equipment or floorspace?

POLEGA: The Wroubel Center is one of the best weight rooms in the area, especially for a school our size. The foresight that went into putting it together was spot-on at the time it was planned, developed

and built. The equipment, layout and overall space is great to train about 15-25 student-athletes at the same time. A real bonus feature is all the window space

that allows natural light to shine in on the room, making it a warm and inviting atmosphere to train. Most weight rooms I have been in at the high school, college and professional level are tucked away in a basement or in a room that has no windows, which can make it intimidating and uninviting to train.

As the number of teams and individuals continues to grow and utilize the Wroubel on a year-round basis, we could be outgrowing the equipment in the space. Adding a few multi-station rack systems, heavier dumbbells and accessory pieces of equipment will help meet the increased growth and demand. Equipment upgrades will help the program improve the flow, efficiency and effectiveness of training and will be a tremendous asset to the teams and individuals in the program. Better training outcomes mean better preparedness and protection for our student-athletes in their respective sports.

Can you talk about your experience with the Brewers' baseball club?

POLEGA: Working with the Milwaukee Brewers was an unbelievable time in my life. Training major league prospects, being around big leaguers, and working alongside retired major league players turned managers, coordinators and instructors is

something I will cherish for the rest of my life. While part of the Brewers organization, I had the opportunity to work one extended spring training, one short season with the Helena Brewers (70 games), one Dominican winter camp (San Pedro de Marco), two spring trainings (Phoenix), and two full seasons with the Wisconsin Timber Rattlers (140 games each season).

What was a typical day like during that time?

POLEGA: A typical day at an affiliate would involve showing up at the ballpark around 9 a.m. for home games and a little later for away games. I would take our position players through their strength and conditioning program before they're on-field work for the day. Once batting practice would start, I would work with our starting pitchers on their daily program, which varied depending on how many days they had before their next start.

Following those workouts, the team would have about 45 minutes to eat a pre-game meal and relax before I ran our starters through the pre-game stretch. The games actually were the first time I had a chance to relax, eat seeds, and watch our players get after it. Once our starter came out of the game, I would take him into the clubhouse and run him through our post-throwing arm care program. Also, I would continue to take each relief pitcher who played in the game through the program as well. My night usually wrapped up about 20 minutes post-game when I would then write my notes, eat some food, and head to my residence to get a good night's sleep so I could do it all over again the next day.



BECAUSE GOD IS ALWAYS CENTRAL AT OUR SCHOOL, THE VERY LAST THING WE DO IS TO GATHER EVERYONE TOGETHER AND THANK HIM FOR ALLOWING US TO WORK OUT AS A TEAM OR AS INDIVIDUALS.

Sounds like a pretty intense schedule. Are you glad you had that experience?

POLEGA: Although the days were long and time off was a luxury, the bonds, friendships and memories I made were worth every second of it. The players were hilarious, the atmosphere at the ballparks was first rate, and the overall experience helped mold me into a better and more professional strength and conditioning coach.

Can you discuss how you work the Notre Dame's school mission into your job with kids?

POLEGA: People from the outside looking in on the athletic development program might think I am only training to prepare our student-athletes for the demands of their respective sports. However, it's more than that. Much more than that. I always stress that teams and individuals show up on time with a good attitude and ready to give their best effort in the day's training session. I also stress that our kids always rack their weights and clean their station when they are done with it. This ensures the safety of the room and makes for a more inviting and productive training environment that each team or individual can enjoy. Also, I try to encourage our older, more experienced student-athletes to

help a struggling newer student-athlete. This not only helps me coach larger groups, but gives the older student-athletes ownership in the program.

What about the relationship between athletic work and academics?

POLEGA: I like to focus on the whys behind all our training. Why they should do a certain exercise. How it should be conducted. And how it fits into their development as a student-athlete. I also encourage our student-athletes to ask questions and explore different areas of performance and fitness. There's a lot of poor information out there and I want them to be able to decipher good from bad training theory and advice, especially when they go out and train on their own. By creating an open environment where they can ask questions and are given sound advice, I think they can better pursue and cultivate life-long fitness habits. I think the nuanced benefits of physical training will have tremendous importance in a growing and developing teenage brain. Some of the benefits include better grades, better attendance, improved cognition, and better classroom behavior, all of which promote our student-athletes to be academic scholars.

How do you introduce faith into a school strength and conditioning environment?

POLEGA: Because God is always central at our school, the very last thing we do after our sessions is to gather everyone together and thank Him for allowing us to work out as a team or as individuals. I will always ask the group for any intentions and then ask one student-athlete to lead us in prayer. By keeping the focus on God, it allows us to train harder, smarter and with a heart full of love.

What has been the most surprising and/or satisfying part of your time so far at NDPMA?

POLEGA: The most surprising and satisfying part of my time here is how amazing our student-athletes are. They are well-mannered, have good communication skills, care for one another deeply, and always strive to give their best. It makes my time so much more enjoyable knowing I get to work with student-athletes of their caliber. And if they're always striving to give their best, I myself better be working twice as hard to ensure their experience is the best it can be.

So what's life like for you outside of school?

POLEGA: I got married on May 29 to the beautiful Amanda Marsack. We like to spend time together going hiking, fishing, traveling to the Upper Peninsula and trying out new restaurants. I also enjoy playing softball in the summer, hunting in the fall, and snowboarding in the winter. I spend a lot of time outdoors and during most summers, I coach travel baseball. Outside of that, I enjoy my profession and learning new ways to help deliver a great experience to our student-athletes.



OPPOSITE

Polega said the Betty A. Wroubel Athletic Performance Center is one of the best equipped weight rooms in the area.

LOWER LEFT

Polega also worked as a strength and conditioning coach with the Milwaukee Brewers Major League Baseball organization.

ABOVE

On May 29, 2021, Polega married Amanda Marsack.



‘Superstar’ students arrive

Notre Dame rolls out the red carpet as it welcomed students to a new school year



Notre Dame rolled out the red carpet (literally) as students, faculty and staff were welcomed to their first day of classes on the school’s Pontiac campus. On Wednesday, Aug. 18, lower school students and their parents got a chance to walk the red carpet on their way into the school building and have their photos taken by the local “paparazzi.” On Thursday, Aug. 19, Notre Dame’s middle and upper school students also walked the red carpet before their first day of classes.

Andy Guest, Notre Dame’s head of school, said it was entirely appropriate to begin the new school year with a red carpet welcome.

“These kids have gone through so much in the last couple of school years with the pandemic and the disruptions it

created for them,” he said. “We thought that treating these kids like the superstars they actually are was the right thing to do. I am so proud of how our entire school community, including students, faculty, staff and our parents, have

PHOTOS

Notre Dame’s first full day of school featured red carpet welcomes for all three divisions.



handled the various demands and protocols during our long bout with COVID.”

Guest also said he realizes that the school — and the rest of the world — are not yet out of the woods.

“We began this school year with a wary eye on COVID, especially the surging delta variant,” he said. “Fortunately, in Michigan and especially in Oakland County, we’re not seeing extremely high numbers of infections compared with certain other parts of the country. We hope that continues, but we’re ready to make any changes necessary to continue to ensure the health, safety and well-being of all in our school community.”

Kim Anderson, who began this semester as Notre Dame Prep’s new principal, echoes Guest and his careful approach to the 2021-22 school year.

“We’ve been meeting consistently throughout the summer with our administrative team to craft a return-to-school plan that will help ensure that we conduct our classes in a manner consistent with whatever environment we find ourselves in and that we’re ready to adjust and adapt should conditions change,” she said. “We learned a lot during the last two years and I’m confident we’ll be in a good position no matter what the virus throws at us.” «





Notre Dame alum nearly dies after contracting COVID-19, says an abundance of faith, prayers, family, “phenomenal” medical staffers — and Fr. Solanus Casey — were responsible for his eventual recovery.

ABOVE

Alum Mike Lesnau ND'72 looks over a press sheet at his printing company, which has been doing work for the Marists and Notre Dame for nearly 50 years.

FAMILY, FAITH AND FATHER SOLANUS

With COVID-19 cases rising again thanks to the surging delta variant, there has been a renewed push globally to go back to some of the protocols that were dropped when this past spring turned into summer. For many who were infected in the early-to-late stages of the pandemic last year, it's a grim reminder of what they went through.

Enter Notre Dame alum Mike Lesnau ND'72, who knows all too well how indiscriminately the virus chooses its victims. He was diagnosed in November of 2020 after a routine physical with his doctor.

"I really can't definitely say it happened there, but shortly after my physical, I was starting to feel lousy," he said. "I had a slight fever and felt rundown and called my daughter, Sarah NDP'01, who works at St. Joe's hospital in Pontiac. She got me in and since the testing was kind of hard to come by back then, she managed to get the hospital to test me immediately."

The next day, the hospital called to say Lesnau was positive, which led to a self-imposed seclusion at his home.

"That was no problem for me since I live alone," he said. "But I wouldn't let my kids in or anybody else check on me and I started to rapidly deteriorate physically."

Lesnau recalls that his fever, headache and lack of energy were fairly consistent and didn't seem to be getting any worse, but it was his daily phone calls with his kids that led him and his family to take what symptoms he had more seriously.

"Apparently I was not making much sense during our conversations and my breathing sounded too labored," he said.

So his son, Mike NDP'06, drove over to his house in Bruce Township to take him to the hospital. "Mikey" was met at the house by his sister, Sarah NDP'01, and and his dad's sister, Cindy.

"When they arrived, I was sitting shivering with a hoodie sweatshirt on, which was soaking wet, unbeknownst to me," he said.

OUT BY THANKSGIVING?

Mike got his father in the car right away and headed to Beaumont Hospital in Troy with Sarah and Cindy following in a separate car.

"I felt awful on the way to the hospital, but had to laugh at the time because Mikey said, 'Dad, you have to know how much I love you now because I'm the one in the car with you and the other two are in a different car.'"

When they got to the hospital, they only were able to drop him off since no visitors were allowed. He said he still had his phone with him, which, he said, was probably a mistake because he spent too much time on it when he should have been resting.

"So that was Nov. 18 when I went in, which ironically was the day six years ago when my wife, Debbie, was admitted to the hospital just before she died. But I was determined to get through this quickly and I set a goal of getting out by Thanksgiving, which was the

RIGHT

Lesnau is at his company, Lesnau Printing, after recovering from COVID-19.





IF NOT FOR THE STRENGTH I RECEIVED FROM MY PARISH, THE PRAYERS
I RECEIVED FROM COUNTLESS FRIENDS AND RELATIVES, AND, OF COURSE,
FR. SOLANUS, WHO KNOWS WHERE I WOULD BE NOW.





IT WAS A SOLID FOUR WEEKS ON THE VENTILATOR AND IN INTENSIVE CARE. I HAD CHEST TUBES COMING OUT OF ME AND A FEEDING TUBE. I WAS A MESS.

following week. It also was the first time I've ever been admitted to a hospital and I wanted out ASAP."

But the virus had other plans for Lesnau. The hospital staff immediately put him in a high-output oxygen room along with another patient with COVID.

"He wasn't a Notre Dame guy, but he knew someone who knew a Notre Dame graduate, so we had at least something in common besides the virus," he said. "But he actually got out of the hospital by Thanksgiving, which kind of ticked me off a bit."

Turns out, not being home by Thanksgiving was the least of his concerns as the virus continued to ravage his body to the point where he was worried he might not go home at all.

"I kept telling the nurses that I was feeling okay even though I wasn't," he said. "But they knew better and were giving me increasing amounts of oxygen to help keep my blood-oxygen level up. They had me on an oxygen face mask 24-7, which made my daily phone calls to family even harder, especially since I apparently was making even less sense than usual, they tell me."

By early December, because his vitals were deteriorating so much, the hospital staff put Lesnau on a ventilator, a treatment that for him lasted a month. He said he couldn't get out of bed at all, not even to go to the bathroom.

"It was a solid four weeks on the ventilator and in intensive care," he said. "I had chest tubes coming out of me and a feeding tube. I was a mess."

Despite his treatment and after weeks of intubation on the ventilator, which means a tube connected to the ventilator was inserted in Lesnau's windpipe, his condition worsened. Because of his ongoing pulmonary instability, his doctor at Beaumont, Jon Lezotte NDP'06, decided to perform a tracheotomy in a desperate attempt to get badly needed oxygen more quickly into his lungs.

DO NOT RESUSCITATE

"Sarah told me that the hospital actually called her at that point and explained options that included a recommendation for a 'do not resuscitate,'" he said. "They told her that they may not be able to hold on to her dad if he codes."

Since his daughter was a nurse, she knew more than most about COVID, and didn't accept that recommendation.

"Sarah reminded the staff at the hospital that she was a nurse and they immediately changed their tune," Lesnau

said. "They told her that maybe now they'll just monitor the situation and then decide later a course of action."

It was about that time, according to Lesnau, that he believes he received some additional help from on high.

Lesnau co-owns Lesnau Printing Company in Sterling Heights, which has for nearly 50 years provided work for the Marists at both Notre Dame High School in Harper Woods and Notre Dame Prep in Pontiac. The company also has a longstanding business relationship with the Archdiocese of Detroit and the Capuchins at the Solanus Casey Center in Detroit.

"A woman named Connie, who was a longtime supporter of the Capuchins and for whom we had done some recent printing, found out about my condition," he said. "Apparently, she was constantly on the phone with the guys at the shop asking how I was doing."

Because of her connection with the Capuchins, she decided to send Lesnau a Fr. Solanus Casey relic badge, which contained the essence of Casey, a priest of the Catholic Church and a professed member of the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin who served most of his life in Detroit. (He died in 1957 at St. John Hospital in Detroit and was beatified in 2017, getting him another step closer to sainthood.)

Lesnau's son Mike dropped the relic off at the hospital and it was placed on his dad's headboard by hospital staff. Soon, Lesnau, who just prior to that time had a lung collapse, experienced a dramatic improvement.

"The very next day I started getting better and they took me off the ventilator," he said. "I know it sounds hard to believe, but it's the honest-to-God truth. It was around the beginning of January."

Shortly thereafter Lesnau was transferred from Beaumont to Select Specialty Hospital in Mount Clemens, which is for patients with medically complex conditions, to begin what he hoped was his rehab and eventual recovery.

NOT A GREAT WAY TO LOSE WEIGHT

But while his breathing was improving, albeit in small increments, he did have some setbacks.

"It was in early January when I was diagnosed with pancreatitis, which eventually affected my gallbladder and they had to insert a drainage tube to relieve the pressure in it. I also had a feeding tube inserted because I was too weak to eat anything. I remember a sheet and a light blanket on me felt like they were made out of lead. I just

OPPOSITE

Fr. Solanus Casey (Nov. 25, 1870 – July 31, 1957) was a priest of the Catholic Church in the United States and was a professed member of the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin. He was known during his lifetime as a wonder-worker, for his great faith and his abilities as a spiritual counselor, but especially for his great attention to the sick, for whom he celebrated special Masses.

couldn't move at all."

Lesnau added that he lost about 60 pounds throughout his COVID ordeal. "But I wouldn't recommend this kind of diet to anybody," he said, with a grin.

After finally recovering from most of his major COVID side effects, it was time to begin a more intense rehabilitation process that included learning how to walk again.

"I mean, like, I was so proud that I could take six steps back then," he said. "And that was with a walker."

His rehabilitation included a three-week stay back at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Pontiac and was eventually discharged to continue therapy at his daughter's house, where he would receive home visits three days a week.

"I told Sarah that I was fighting to go back home to be on my own again and to be less of a burden on her," he said. "But she really didn't want me to go because she thought I wasn't as strong as I thought it was. I finally won that argument and eventually came home."

He did another three or four weeks of home-visit rehab and then outpatient rehab until about mid-May when he started to drive himself again.

AFTEREFFECTS AND FR. SOLANUS

Lesnau couldn't say enough about the care he received throughout his entire ordeal.

"From the doctors and nurses at St. Joe's, Beaumont and Select Hospital in Mount Clemens to all the aides and techs helping me during rehab, they were all phenomenal," he said. "I'm sure I wouldn't be here today if not for them. And my kids and the rest of my extended family, including my business partners, [cousin Paul Lesnau ND'72 and brother Jim Lesnau ND'81] were so giving and helpful; they were unbelievable."

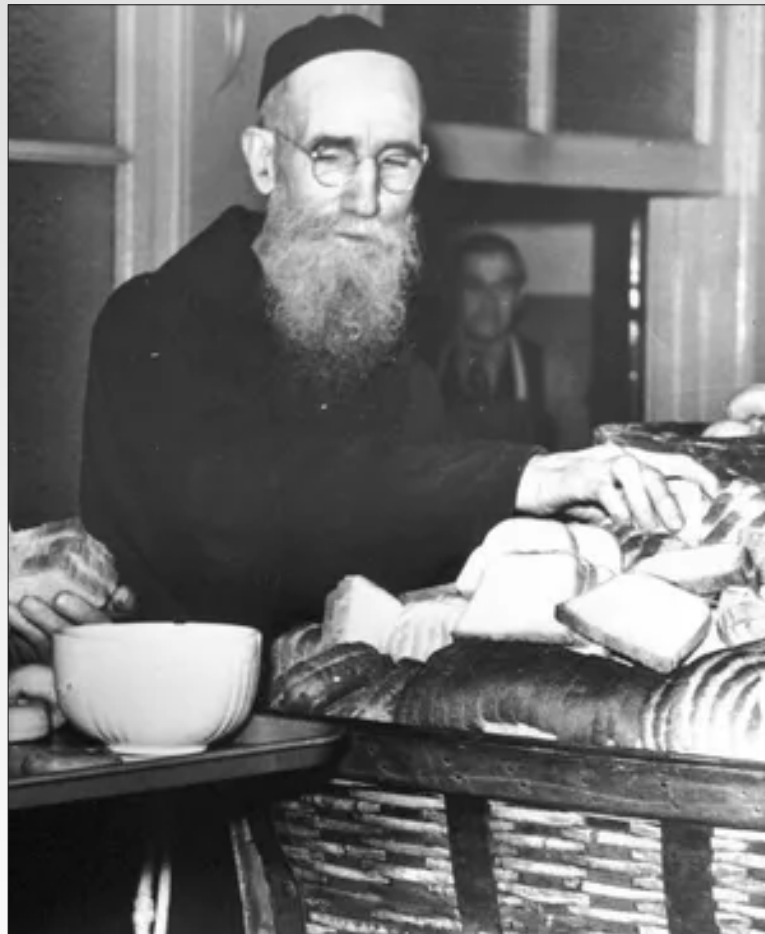
While he cannot say he's at 100 percent — he's got what he says is a drop foot that requires a special brace and he has a finger that doesn't move quite like it once did — he's very happy where he is currently. He can see his family whenever he wants and he's back to work at Lesnau Printing full time.

He also wants to strongly encourage others to take the virus seriously.

"I got my vaccine as soon as I was able to after recovering," he said. "COVID is bad news; it's not a cold; it's not the flu. It can kill you just like it almost killed me. I tend toward the conservative side politically, but I can't stress enough how important it is for everyone to get the vaccine and wear masks. I also can't imagine how guilty I would feel if I was responsible for putting someone through what I went through. Or worse."

He also stressed how important faith was to him during his nearly 90 days of illness and recovery in the various hospitals.

"If not for the strength I received from my parish and all those virtual Masses, the prayers I received from countless friends and relatives, and, of course, Fr. Solanus, who knows where I would be now. I don't really want to even think about it." «





TOPS IN TECH

NOTRE DAME EARNS TOP HONORS FROM THE MICROSOFT SHOWCASE SCHOOL PROGRAM; CONTINUALLY RECOGNIZED SINCE 2016 FOR COMMITMENT TO EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION AND SUCCESSFUL STUDENT OUTCOMES.

Notre Dame Preparatory School and Marist Academy has been recognized once again as a global leader in successful integration of technology with teaching and learning.

The school announced recently that it was selected by Microsoft as a 2021-2022 Microsoft Showcase School, the sixth straight year the school was included in the elite community from around the world celebrated for educational transformation and innovative use of technology to drive student success with 21st-century skills. —→

OPPOSITE, RIGHT

According to Microsoft, NDPMA demonstrates innovative use of technology to drive positive impact and student success with 21st-Century skills. This includes computational thinking, creativity and innovation, critical thinking, collaboration and communication.



“Congratulations to Eden and his staff. Their hard work, dedication and enthusiasm toward our mission are very much appreciated.”

According to Microsoft, members of its Showcase School Program are distinguished by “their commitment to school-wide transformation, and they have leveraged Microsoft’s Education Transformation Framework to drive a culture of learning, innovation and continuous improvement.

“Only a few institutions earn this designation and your school can take pride in knowing that Microsoft recognizes its impact on the future of education,” Microsoft said in a statement. “Their hard work is reflected in improved learning outcomes for their students and an increased focus on future-ready skills. Additionally, these schools’ dedication to education transformation has allowed them to effectively manage the transition to remote and hybrid learning scenarios during the current COVID-19 crisis.”

Eden Konja, director of information and academic technology for Notre Dame, said the recognition is a testament to the hard work of teachers, students, administrators as well as his staff.

“We continue to improve the technology integration at NDPMA and are honored to be recognized by Microsoft once again for those efforts,” he said. “Thank you also to the school’s leadership and to our community for the continued support of our tech enhancements.”

Konja added that Showcase Schools receive access to special resources and benefits from Microsoft and are regularly called upon to share their transformational educational practices with other schools. He said Notre Dame’s continuing emphasis on technology was a contributing factor in earning the distinction from Microsoft.

He noted that Notre Dame was chosen again this year due to consistently meeting or exceeding a number of specific criteria set forth by Microsoft, including:

- The school demonstrates thought-leadership in building a school-wide vision as the starting place for a holistic digital transformation using Microsoft’s Education Transformation Framework. In that the use of technology as a strategic lever where digital access is not the end goal; learning is the goal and technology is the means used in some of the initiatives.

- The school is an innovator as evidenced through the actions and attitudes of a growth mindset and commitment to the K-12 Education Transformation Framework journey.

- The school empowers educators and students to innovate and exercise a growth mindset, which emphasizes personal learning through the use of digital learning devices and learning with current technology.

- The school demonstrates innovative use of technology to drive positive impact and student success with 21st-Century skills. This includes computational thinking, creativity and innovation, critical thinking, collaboration and communication.

Andy Guest, NDPMA’s head of school, was delighted by the announcement by Microsoft.

“Congratulations to Eden and his staff,” Guest said. “Their hard work, dedication and enthusiasm toward our mission are very much appreciated.”

APPLE DISTINGUISHED SCHOOL

Additionally, Notre Dame’s lower school has been consistently recognized by Apple as a distinguished school for its iPad-powered continuous innovation in learning, teaching, and the school environment. Only about 400 schools are recognized worldwide with this designation, which is reserved for programs that meet criteria for innovation, leadership, and educational excellence, and demonstrate a clear vision of exemplary learning environments, according to Apple. «



ABOVE

Notre Dame's lower school has been consistently recognized by Apple as a distinguished school for its iPad-powered continuous innovation in learning, teaching, and the school environment. Only about 400 schools are recognized worldwide with this designation.



DISEASE D

Notre Dame Prep alum helps state stay ahead of sexually transmitted disease outbreaks

Growing up in Michigan, Christine Convery was your typical kid—curious about the world around her and eager to learn what made things tick. That natural curiosity led her down a career path rooted in scientific discovery and exploration, eventually landing her a role as an epidemiologist for the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

Convery, an alum from Notre Dame Prep Class of 2009, focuses primarily on sexually transmitted infections, namely syphilis and gonorrhea. She also works closely with HIV epidemiologists.

"Using data from labs and medical providers, we maintain statistics about trends and incidence of these very common infections," Convery said in describing her work. "We also work together with the state and local health staff that runs programs to prevent infection. Data helps us show where we can target interventions and who is at the highest risk of infection, and therefore needs the most services."

In school, Convery said she always liked science and math classes.

"For a while I just assumed that I'd be a doctor because that's what people do when they like science," she said.

It wasn't until attending college at the University of Michigan did Convery discover her true passion.

"I realized it would be a much better fit for me. In epidemiology, I get to look at the macro level: at structural causes of disease, disability, and death. The work we do (hopefully) prevents unnecessary medical visits and treatment and improves the quality of life for entire populations. It also never involves 24-hour shifts and the degree requirements are a lot quicker than medical school, so those were extra perks," she said.

Reflecting on her time at Notre Dame, Convery gives credit to her middle and prep school years, specifically her science, math, and history classes, which she said helped prepare her for the rigor of college life at U of M.

"From Mrs. Brown through Mr. McCaskey, math was engaging and

even helped me skip ahead a few semesters in college. While I knew from high school I wanted to major in biology, I also had such great history classes that I wanted to keep taking those in college and ended up deciding on a double major. This has been great for work in public health, which depends so much on structural factors rooted in historical decisions and power dynamics that are important to understand," she said.

"I also found my religion classes—especially 'The Church Today' with Mrs. Phillips—really formative in how I make decisions. Catholic social teaching has been a major guide in choosing my career and my lifestyle to serve others and work where I can for justice."

|| ||

**CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING
HAS BEEN A MAJOR GUIDE IN
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LIFESTYLE TO SERVE OTHERS
AND WORK WHERE I CAN
FOR JUSTICE.**

A lot of Convery's work revolves around educating underserved and minority populations about reproductive health.

"I enjoy problem solving, and so the challenges of unruly data or requests for information are some of my favorite things to work on. I like to use data to tell stories and highlight for people the most important and actionable information," she said. "At the end of the day, public health improvements depend on taking action on poverty, homelessness, racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination. This can be discouraging and is the biggest challenge, because it goes beyond the power

of the health department and into some much deeper injustices and inequalities."

Like most in the industry, however, her career was uprooted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

"Working at the state, the pandemic shifted all of our roles so that we could assist in pandemic response. Our public health workforce has been understaffed for years and so everyone, no matter their day job, got pulled in to help with this crisis," Convery said. "I spent time leading a provider hotline early on when tests were hard to come by, and later was calling patients to do contact tracing."

"During 2021, I have worked a lot with our immunizations team on some data standardization and monitoring COVID-19 vaccine effectiveness and the 'breakthrough cases'—those rare cases where someone who is fully vaccinated becomes infected with the virus."

DETECTIVE

Our health department has adapted a lot and is looking forward to seeing how we can be more resilient and responsive to emerging health crises.”

When asked about her prediction for a post-COVID world and what challenges lie ahead for Michigan, Convery issued a dire warning:

“I think, unfortunately, COVID-19 is only the beginning of an era of global health challenges that we will need some really radical actions to address. In public health (and in human life), all things are connected,” she said. “The threats of climate change and the damage caused by big agriculture and endless consumerism will lead to more disease spillover. Some of the best work

I’ve seen to combat these problems is happening not necessarily in the government but in neighborhoods and communities where people are organizing for sustainable change.”

That is why, Convery believes it is up to society, regardless of one’s own personal political affiliation, to strive for a life of upright citizenship—an ideal her alma mater imparted on her, and one she is forever grateful.

“As individuals we have all been changed by this pandemic, and so there will be a new normal to build. I love what Pope Francis has written about this in *Fratelli Tutti*: ‘The pain, uncertainty and fear, and the realization of our own limitations, brought on by the pandemic have only made it all the more urgent that we rethink our styles of



life, our relationships, the organization of our societies and, above all, the meaning of our existence.’ In the field of public health, this new normal should be a more global approach, since disease doesn’t stop at borders. In government our new normal should put human health and well-being over corporate growth and profit,” she said.

For students interested in the field of epidemiology, Convery offered this advice: “When you are in school, it can be easy to get caught up in classes and exams as the major sources of learning, but to do science (especially public health) well, you need to be engaged in current events and conversations

in your local community. Whether it is research or health practice, there is nothing more valuable than understanding the perspectives of your own neighbors and the populations you are trying to serve. Find service or organizing activities that you care about and make time for those as much as you would for studying and schoolwork.”

If you are interested in connecting with Christine Convery, join the Alumni Career Network by visiting www.ndpma.org/acn and email alumni@ndpma.org. «

ABOVE

Christine Convery NDP’09, an epidemiologist for the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, is with her daughter at their home in Detroit.



Rehab Doc

John Putnam, an alum from Notre Dame Prep Class of 2003, finds joy in healing others through compassionate care

It takes a special kind of person to dedicate his or her life to serving others, but for Dr. John Putnam NDP'03, God called him at a very young age to do just that. Since the fourth grade, Putnam said something inside him ignited his interest in the health care profession and it never let go.

Now a successful medical practitioner, owner and CEO of Back to You Osteopractic Physical Therapy & Rehabilitation in Royal Oak, Mich., Putnam is following his passion and having fun along the way.

Putnam said he always knew he wanted to be a doctor, but it wasn't until he graduated from Notre Dame Prep and watched his mother suffer two strokes helped put his plans into action.

"I watched her rehabilitative process from completely dependent in the hospital bed to living at home with assistance and eventually living independently again," Putnam said. "While I was in college I began volunteering for rehabilitative services for children with special needs, which was partially funded by a University of Michigan dance marathon. I realized I wanted to heal people holistically, spend more time with them, and be able to impact their lives not only physically but psychologically and socially as well.

"We can avoid and even wean patients off of addictive drugs as well as alleviate their mechanical issues, show them how to exercise safely, and teach them about proper nutrition," Putnam added.

That philosophy has been the guiding light for his practice, which he says strives to live out its mission daily through patient-centered care.

"We have been blessed with some amazing people who have walked through our doors. We name our company 'Back to You' because when people walk in, we understand

that many of them are not themselves. Many are in pain, their personality has changed, they are exhausted, they are depressed, they are doing the things they enjoy doing or spending time with their loved ones. Our mission is to get them back to who they were prior to their injury," Putnam said. "Watching that transition occur is exciting. Receiving the gratitude from patients, students, and staff is uplifting."

A graduate of the University of Michigan, University of Scranton, and the American Academy of Manipulative Therapy, Putnam says his success has not been without challenges, however none of them have ever extinguished the fire in his soul to help those in need. Sometimes those decisions meant leaving behind lucrative salaries or promising positions with other organizations.

"I opened my own practice in 2019 because I felt called to do so," he said. "Our company core values include ethical practice, patient-centric care, and a team approach. At other jobs I felt I had to compromise those core values. I learned so much along the way. I grew clinics from five to 40 patients in a day and hired multiple staff. I conducted hundreds of interviews, knocked down walls to expand our spaces, budgeted profits and chased down collections, learned how to maximize treatment reimbursement, upgraded and added equipment, dealt with insurers and referral sources, and continued a pursuit of advancing my education and treatment interventions."

"These are all the foundational elements to starting your own practice. Following my mother's death, I felt inspired to take a leap of faith and open my own clinics. I could embody my core values and truly put patients at the forefront of my care," he added.

That willingness to step out of his comfort zone can be credited to his time at Notre Dame Prep and the numerous teachers who influenced Putnam at a young age.

"My passion for health care was already brewing but NDP reinforced my drive in the sciences. NDP molded me

OPPOSITE

Dr. John Putnam NDP'03 prepares a patient for an instrument-assisted soft tissue mobilization (IASTM) treatment. IASTM uses specially designed instruments to provide a mobilizing effect to scar tissue and myofascial adhesions.



MY PASSION FOR HEALTH CARE WAS ALREADY BREWING BUT NDP REINFORCED MY DRIVE IN THE SCIENCES. NDP MOLDED ME TO BE A HEALTH CARE PROVIDER AND ENTREPRENEUR.

to be a health care provider and entrepreneur. Mr. (Greg) Simon shaped me to be a leader, planner, and implementer as well as how to budget appropriately; Dr. (James) Doyle made science fun and interesting; Mr. (Anthony) Borton made sure I acted in a professional manner; Mrs. (Dolores) Vilcone taught me that no matter how skilled my work was, if I wasn't giving it my all, I didn't deserve an 'A'; Mr. (Dave) Osiecki taught me to embrace myself for who I am, be able to laugh at myself, and make learning fun; Mr. (Jerry) McGhee provided me the foundations for health and physical fitness/wellness; and Deacon (Tony) Morici taught me to carry God with me in all that I do," he said.

Despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, business is thriving and recently Back to You was named "National Clinic of the Year" by the American Academy of Manipulative Therapy. Putnam also has plans to scale up the clinic across the state with eyes on a national presence.

"There are only about 300 other osteopathic physical therapists worldwide and more than 60 fellowship-trained manual physical therapists in the state of Michigan, so we are currently providing some of the latest evidence-based approaches available," he said.

Through monthly lunch-and-learn sessions and biweekly leadership meetings, Putnam said he can bounce ideas off others, tackle challenging diagnoses, and ensure

uniform communication across professions. He and his team also serve as clinical instructors to Wayne State University's physical therapy program as well as Washtenaw Community College's physical therapy assistant program. Putnam is a member of Entrepreneurs' Organization Detroit, multiple chambers of commerce, Business Network International, the





American Physical Therapy Association, and the American Academy of Orthopedic Manual Physical Therapists.

"I'm constantly seeking ways to grow as a clinician and a business owner," he said.

As far as what the future holds, Putnam is excited to be able to teach others and take classes in-person now that some restrictions have been lifted as federal and state officials relax more mandates around COVID-19. Three clinicians from his team are heading to Armenia in September/October for a mission trip to train other physical and occupational therapists and treat their wounded soldiers.

"I myself plan on reducing my rigid clinic schedule so that I can earn more credentials, mentor my staff, educate referral sources, and engulf myself in the community to educate them on the power of physical therapy, our techniques, and the conditions that we can treat, thus saving them time, money, opioid/pharmaceutical dependence, and surgical intervention," Putnam said.

In his spare time, he plans on traveling more with his wife and experiencing other cultures, communities, and places around the world.

"We travel frequently, enjoy the culinary arts, attend concerts, cruise on our boat, explore different downtowns, play sports/participate in exercise activities, spend time with family and friends, manage our homes and clinics, etc. The more we experience, the more we can relate with our patients," Putnam said. "Oftentimes, a patient's goal is to return to a certain sport or hobby. I can mobilize their joint and release soft tissue so that they can move to accomplish that goal and they can strengthen in a context that will make them safe to return to that activity and minimize their risk of reinjury. I can select activity-specific exercises that simulate a return to that activity.

"The more we know about a patient's interests, the more comfortable they are rehabilitating with our company. Engaging in a variety of experiences and activities is a nice learning experience and a way to release stress and get away from work," he added.

For current Notre Dame students who have an interest in physical therapy, Putnam said he would be happy to talk with them and share career advice.



"Never stop learning. Get great grades, not just good grades. Be well-rounded. I took many psychology and sociology classes at U-M because I knew I would be working with authentic people, stories, and issues face to face. Doctors are notorious for having poor bedside manners. Don't be that doctor," he said. "Patients will rely on you heavily and hinge upon every word you say. The more experiences you have in life, the more you can relate to and truly empathize with them."

Most importantly, students should understand that the world of physical therapy is vast, with lots of choices to specialize in.

"We treat in a variety of settings—outpatient, home, acute, skilled nursing, etc. We treat a variety of conditions—vestibular, oncology, lymphedema, women's health, sports, orthopedics, neurology, cardiopulmonary, orthotics/prosthetics, geriatric, pediatric, etc. If you don't like one, don't give up. Shadow a variety of clinicians and volunteer in the community. Question everything. Don't take anything for face value. Learn the value of research and making things make sense," he concluded.

To connect with Dr. Putnam, visit www.backtoyourehab.com or email alumni@ndpma.org. «

OPPOSITE

Putnam works on a patient's neck and facial muscles at his clinic in Royal Oak.

ABOVE

Putnam and his staff cut the ribbon to officially open their Royal Oak clinic.



A (SUSTAINABLE) TOY STORY

Notre Dame Prep alumna launches beach toy line aimed at combating global waste

When a rogue wave swept her children's toys into the ocean during a family outing in Virginia five years ago, alumna Kate Reimann NDP'01 did what every good mother would do—she leapt into the water, soaking herself but returning the beloved items to the eagerly outstretched hands and smiling faces of the rightful owners. No one, including Reimann ever expected this chance encounter with nature would result in a business designed entirely around ecofriendly beach toys.

"Knowing what a disaster we have with plastic pollution in the ocean, I jumped in after (the toys) to pluck them out. It was like a 'not on my watch' mentality, like an emergency. I'm sure people were watching me like, 'what's with this lunatic?!' Once I got all the toys back, I sat on the shore and had this lightbulb moment: I looked up and down the beach and saw plastic everywhere," explained Reimann.

"I knew I needed to make better products. I decided then I'd start with beach toys. It seemed so tone-deaf that we were using this destructive material, literally dirty at the beginning of its life and dirty at the end, at the ocean of all places! I was determined to change it. I had absolutely no idea how! But I knew I needed to try."

Hence Rogue Wave Toys was born. The company specializes in compostable beach pails, sand sifters and shovels made entirely from plants.

"They're more sustainable than conventional beach toys because conventional plastic is made from petroleum, which is incredibly dirty and not sustainable for a number of reasons. Extracting the oil is a fuel-intensive process that emits carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, then converting that oil into a petrochemical (plastic) requires

more greenhouse gas emissions, and whatever that plastic becomes, at the end of its life, it's not going anywhere," Reimann said. "It will break down into smaller pieces, leach chemicals into the soil or ocean, but it's not going to disappear. We create interminable waste when we create and use conventional, oil-based plastics."

Rogue Wave Toys avoids petroleum extraction, allowing the toys to be compostable at the end of their life.

"So, we eliminate a lot of the greenhouse gas emissions, and we solve the plastic waste. We're currently working with a composting partner to ensure that everyone can compost their products regardless of their access to community or municipal composting sites. The plant-based plastic functions like its oil-based counterpart, and it's BPA-free, durable and made in the United States!" she said.

Reimann, who graduated from St. Mary's College with degrees in political science and Spanish, said she never expected interest in the compostable toys to take off.

"If you told me in high school that I'd be making compostable beach toys, I would have called you a liar! I never, ever, had an interest in owning a kids' toy business, and I have no background in materials science or product design," Reimann laughed. "But I saw a problem and felt like I had to get into the space to solve it. We're really using the beach toys as proof of concept—will people pay a higher price for a better material? I found out quickly that, yes, they will. And it's because people are ready for an alternative as they realize the impacts their consumer habits have on the environment.

"Our material can be used as a replacement for all

OPPOSITE

Alumna Kate Reimann NDP'01 developed a line of toys that features compostable beach pails, sand sifters and shovels made entirely from plants.



I ALWAYS FELT INCREDIBLY SUPPORTED (AT NOTRE DAME PREP), SO IT FELT LIKE AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE I COULD TRULY TRY ANYTHING. AND I THINK, BECAUSE OF THAT SUPPORT, I TRIED AND FOUND SUCCESS IN LOTS OF DIFFERENT THINGS.



ABOVE AND OPPOSITE

Rogue Wave Toys avoids petroleum extraction, allowing the toys to be compostable at the end of their life.

kinds of products, so I see this as our entry point. I like to say, we're making it better, starting at the beach but not stopping there. We've had inquiries from other businesses that want to use the Rogue Wave material in their products as well, so I'm excited to be working on that. It's inspiring to know that this idea resonates with both consumers and business owners, and that people really believe in the idea."

Now living in Hawaii with her husband, who serves in the U.S. Airforce, Reimann said challenging herself to try new things goes all the way back to her time at Notre Dame Prep.

"I always felt incredibly supported (at Notre Dame Prep), so it felt like an environment where I could truly try anything. And I think, because of that support, I tried and found success in lots of different things—not because of any special abilities I had but precisely because of that support, which built my confidence," Reimann said. "And that was how I approached other aspects of my life post-high school. I have tried so many different things, from living for two years in Mexico as an English teacher to applying to law school to getting a master's in education

to becoming a freelance writer, and now, running a sustainable startup company. I think the security I have in my capabilities was honed at NDP and it's shaped the rest of my life."

She credits longtime Athletic Director and softball coach Betty Wroubel for pushing her to be her best self.

"Ms. Wroubel never settled and, as an underclassman, it was so intimidating when she pulled me up to junior varsity and then varsity (softball). But that was a feeling that I was forced to get comfortable with/leave behind if I wanted to improve. It's a feeling I have now when I'm in meetings or on calls with people I think are 'better' than me in business or in areas of sustainability," Reimann said. "I try to

remember to shake that feeling off, to level up my game, rely on the basics, and bring my best. Who knew that my softball practices were really life lessons?"

Other staff including Director of Admissions Greg Simon, Reimann's then-political science teacher, and former preparatory school principal Fr. Joe Hindelang, s.m., also come to mind as role models.

"Greg Simon was like family and was one of the reasons the school felt like home. The same goes for Fr. Joe, who married my husband and me. He was someone I knew I had in my corner, and Mr. (Dave) Osiecki. Mr. Smith, AP art, a class where he really let us find our artistic voice, and it was the first time I didn't have explicit guidance on how to achieve the result—which was terrifying for a perfectionist/overachiever. I wanted specific directions! I wanted to know exactly what he wanted. But he didn't give instructions, he wanted us to make, to get messy, to explore. There was no map in his class, which ended up being a great crash course in real life, and I wish I had told him," Reimann said.

"My Spanish teachers, Senorita Rose (Kim Anderson)

and Senora Tessada fostered my love of language and were responsible for some of the best years and experiences of my life. I remember a day when I cried to Senora Tessada because I wasn't improving in my Spanish and felt incredibly frustrated. She told me, 'We all plateau. But if you want to get to the next level, you have to keep going.' Another life lesson. Without them, I wouldn't have lived in Spain, Ecuador, Mexico, or Argentina."

Reimann said she hopes to continue growing the company in the coming years with a focus on being more competitive in the materials space.

"Part of this endeavor is simply introducing an alternative material to a larger market so we can reduce the overall cost of the material, and eventually make it more accessible for both businesses and consumers," she said. "That's the best way to reduce our consumption of petroleum-based products—by creating other options."

And timing is of the essence, Reimann says, if humanity is to preserve the planet for the next generation.

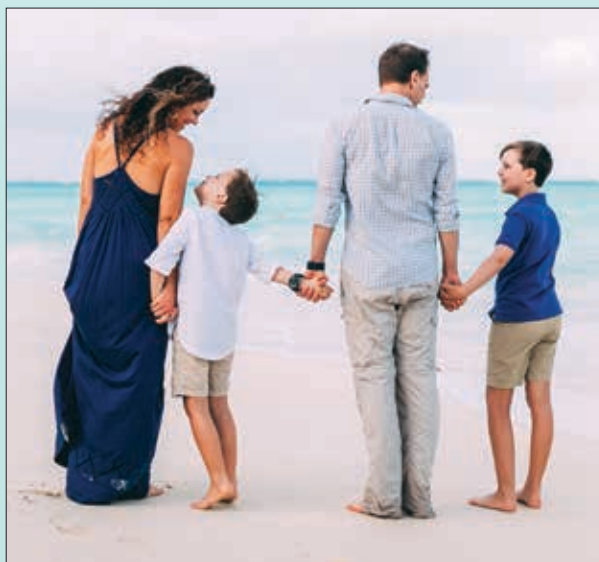
"At the risk of sounding like a complete downer, if we don't make some major changes, the future looks bleak. I want better than bleak for my kids. The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change released its latest findings in August of this year and the report confirms what we suspected: that global temperatures and ocean temperatures continue an upward trajectory at a pace that's too quick, and will continue to manifest in severe weather, sea level rise, droughts, etc. The major contributing factor is human influence," she said.

"There's a lot of reason to be pessimistic, and sometimes, I am. But what brings me back to center is that phrase 'human influence.' In other words, we are the reason we're here. But we can also be the way out. Which brings me back to the origin/mission of Rogue Wave: to make it better. Because we must. At this point, we have



everything to lose. I'm trying to do my part to leave it better than I found it, to be an 'upright citizen.'"

For more information on Rogue Wave Toys, visit www.roguewavetoy.com. To connect with Kate Reimann on the Alumni Career Network, email alumni@ndpma.org. «



LEFT

Reimann lives in Hawaii with her husband and two children.



VIDEO

Alum and familiar face (behind a camera) on the sidelines of NDP athletic games stays connected to Notre Dame family

W

hen alum Mike Gurlides ND'00 was taking a sports journalism class at Oakland University, he was witness to a special session featuring legendary sports anchor and broadcaster Fred McLeod (d. 2019). McLeod, who also served as a television play-by-play announcer for the Detroit Pistons, was so impressed with Gurlides that he got him

an internship with WDIV-TV and the State Champs! Sports Network, where McLeod also worked. "Fred provided me with plenty of knowledge on the broadcasting side of things — mainly interviewing, script-writing and voiceovers," said Gurlides, who holds a communications degree from OU, and spoke recently to Notre Dame Prep as part of its recently launched NOTRE DAME CONVERSATIONS initiative.

That internship with State Champs! eventually led to a position with the Emmy award-winning producer of sports and feature shows, TV series, and radio and podcast shows. It's a job that takes him all around metro Detroit for MHSAA-sponsored athletic contests — from golf, basketball and softball to hockey, lacrosse and football.

He said his time at Notre Dame High School inspired a lifelong interest in capturing the drama and unique atmosphere of high school sports, which, he said, included many dramatic contests held at Notre Dame Prep.

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE SPIRIT

"I was always drawn to the excitement and spirit that surrounds a big game, both as a student and a player," he said. "That interest in being a part of the excitement started for me as a student at Notre

Dame and it's a big reason why I enjoy capturing that same feeling with current student-athletes through my work today."

Gurlides noted that the recent pandemic put a real damper on his job at State Champs! and his love of sports journalism, especially when Michigan completely shut down its high school sports seasons. Fortunately, his second vocation in the legal field kept him busy and gainful employed until the state reopened high school sports.

"I've been very lucky to work remote this whole time with my other job as a legal videographer," he said. "The pandemic seriously affected State Champs! and live sports in general. My job with State Champs! was always my creative outlet, so it was tough for a while when things were completely shut down. Luckily, by taking the proper safety precautions, we've been out at the fields, gymnasiums and hockey arenas quite a bit in 2021."

Like many Notre Dame alumni, Gurlides had good things to say about his Marist-sponsored high school experience, especially the friendships he established there.

"There are many positive aspects that come to mind when looking back on my time at Notre Dame, but it was the camaraderie between students as well as the Notre Dame pride and tradition that really has stuck with me to this very day," he said. "One of my favorite classes that also stands out was Father Kiselica's American History class. He always

put a very interesting spin on the topics we studied, including all the different angles that led up to the events in question."

Gurlides added that Renard Gueringer ND'75 (d. 2020) also was a favorite teacher.

"He always had a positive attitude and would stop students in the hallway just to



WHEN I LOOK BACK EVEN

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DAME EXPERIENCE, I NOW

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VERITAS



catch up and always seemed genuinely interested in how we were doing.

DISCIPLINE AND HARD WORK

“When I look back even more deeply to my Notre Dame experience, I now can really appreciate the discipline and hard-work ethic that the school instilled in me,” he said. He also mentioned Duane Holmes, former NDHS dean of students, who now works at Notre Dame Prep.

“At NDHS, he kept us on the straight and narrow and did so in a very positive way,” Gurlides said. “Much like Mr. Gueringer, he was there to talk to and always seemed interested in what we had to say. I still enjoy catching up with him at ND Prep games when I’m on campus.”



When he’s not behind a camera on a football field or in a courtroom, Gurlides says he’s not just sitting at home, to be sure.

“I enjoy being active in the outdoors, jogging, biking, traveling and attending sports events are some of my favorite hobbies,” he said. “I lucked out and feel very blessed to have a wife who also enjoys all those same things.”

He says that he stays in contact with many of his Notre Dame alum mates as well.

“I consider Patrick Kelly ND’00, Eric Stinebiser ND’00, Daniel Drop ND’01, John Drop ND’05, Matt Munerantz ND’01 and Alex Johns ND’05 to be not only fellow high school grads, but also very good friends.”

Now, going forward, Gurlides is interested in NDP’s Alumni Career Network and said he’d be willing to speak with alums or current students who may be interested in sports journalism and/or video production.

“After all, it was a mentor, Fred McLeod, who set me on my own career path,” he said.

To connect with Mike Gurlides on the Alumni Career Network, email alumni@ndpma.org. «

OPPOSITE

Notre Dame alum Mike Gurlides is with his wife, Kathryn, on their wedding day.

TOP LEFT

Gurlides, center, works at many Michigan high school athletic events as part of his position with State Champs! Sports Network.

LEFT

Gurlides, second from left, is at a Detroit Red Wings game with Kathryn, fellow alum John Drop NDP’05, and a friend.



A diverse lineup of colleges and universities awaited Notre Dame Prep's Class of 2021 this fall

The Next Level

The seniors in the Class of 2021 who received diplomas from Notre Dame Preparatory School on May 23, 2021, left behind one of Michigan's most beautiful high school campuses and a very proud faculty and staff along with a number of impressive statistics.

Thirty-one graduates filled out this year's valedictory court,

which also featured 31 candidates for the prestigious International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma. The graduating seniors averaged 27 on the ACT and 50 of them scored a 30 or above on the test. The average SAT score was 1,252. Collectively, they earned more than \$8 million in academic merit scholarships from colleges and universities. «

2021 COLLEGE ACCEPTANCES AND MATRICULATION

Notre Dame Prep's Class of 2021 received offers from more than 140 colleges and universities across the country, including:

Adams State University
Adrian College
Albion College
Alma College
AMDA College of the Performing Arts
Aquinas College
Arizona State University
Auburn University
Ave Maria University
Babson College
Ball State University
Bates College
Baylor University
Belmont University
Boston University
Bowling Green State University
Brandeis University
Butler University
Carnegie Mellon University
Case Western Reserve University
Catholic University of America
Central Michigan University
Clemson University
Coastal Carolina University
College of Charleston
Colorado College
Colorado State University
Columbia College
Concordia University-Chicago

Cornerstone University
Culinary Institute of America
DePaul University
Drexel University
Duquesne University
Eastern Michigan University
Emory University
Florida Atlantic University
Florida Gulf Coast University
Florida State University
Fordham University
Furman University
George Mason University
George Washington University
Georgia State University
Gettysburg College
Grand Valley State University
Hillsdale College
Hope College
Indiana University-Bloomington
Indiana University-Purdue University-Indianapolis
Ithaca College
Juniata College
Kalamazoo College
Kettering University
Lipscomb University
Loyola University Chicago
Loyola University New Orleans
Macomb Community College
Marquette University
Miami University-Oxford
Michigan State University
Michigan Technological University
Montana State University
Montana Technological University
Murray State University
New York University
Northeastern University
Northern Michigan University
Northwood University
Nova Southeastern University

Oakland Community College
Oakland University
Ohio State University
Old Dominion University
Olivet Nazarene University
Oregon State University
Pace University
Pennsylvania State University
Pepperdine University
Point Park University
Purdue University
Reed College
Rice University
Rochester College
Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
Saginaw Valley State University
Saint Louis University
Saint Mary's College
Savannah College of Art & Design
Seton Hall University
Southern Illinois University
St. John's College
Texas A & M University
Texas Christian University
The King's College
The University of Alabama
The University of Arizona
The University of Tampa
The University of Tennessee
University of California-Berkeley
University of California-Davis
University of California-Irvine
University of California-Los Angeles
University of California-Santa Barbara
University of Central Florida
University of Cincinnati-Main Campus
University of Colorado Boulder
University of Dayton
University of Detroit Mercy
University of Evansville
University of Illinois
University of Iowa

University of Kentucky
University of Louisville
University of Maryland-College Park
University of Miami
University of Michigan-Ann Arbor
University of Michigan-Dearborn
University of Michigan-Flint
University of Minnesota
University of Mississippi
University of Missouri
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
University of Notre Dame
University of Pennsylvania
University of Rochester
University of South Carolina-Columbia
University of South Florida
University of Southampton
University of Toledo
University of Utah
University of Virginia
University of Washington
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Vanderbilt University
Washington State University
Washington University in St. Louis
Wayne State University
Western Illinois University
Western Michigan University
Xavier University
Xavier University-New Orleans

LEFT

Charlotte Milback, Amishi Mahajan, Eli Thummel, and Lindsey Creek celebrate their graduation from Notre Dame Prep on May 23, 2021.

Determined dentist

Alum from the most recent NDP graduating class says he's already well entrenched in college after a "phenomenal experience" in high school

When 2021 Notre Dame Prep grad Andrew Marshesh was deciding on his next academic journey during his last year of high school, he looked at lots of the top colleges and universities in the country and applied to more than a few of them. But it was the University of Dayton that ended up at the top of his list.

He said there were three very good reasons why, including the fact that it's ranked in the top-five colleges for pre-dentistry, his chosen major. Another reason ties back to his high school alma mater.

"I loved the idea of continuing my Catholic and Marianist-based education in an institution like the University of Dayton," he said. "My faith life had greatly evolved at Notre Dame Prep, especially through the past year or so, with the help of some wonderful NDP staff, such as Mrs. Zuccaro, and through various activities, including the amazing Kairos retreats."

The final reason for Dayton came down to numbers.

"I ultimately decided on the University of Dayton because of the large scholarships that I was awarded from the school,"

said the NDP valedictorian. "Along with a few other smaller scholarships, I was awarded the highest merit scholarship that the university offers, which definitely had an influence on my decision."

Marsheh added that at the end of the day, he thought Dayton was the right fit and even though he's only a few weeks into his first term on campus, he's pretty sure it was the right decision.

"My peers constantly ask me why I turned down an acceptance to some other great schools, such as the University of Michigan, for Dayton and I always explain to them that U-D was just the right fit."



That right fit ultimately will lead him to dental school and a career as a dentist, and "possibly picking up a specialty in dental surgery or orthodontics."

Even though he's only a few months removed from Notre Dame Prep, Marshesh, who attended Holy Family Regional School for grade school, said he still likes to reflect on his time at NDP.

"First, from an academic perspective, Notre Dame was a phenomenal experience as the classes are taught by teachers who are interested in the subjects and really care about their students," he said.

"From an extracurricular perspective, NDP also was a great experience for me personally. Whether it was founding a club, Spikeball Club, with Tommy Joppich or dedicating time to the sports I loved, such as soccer and lacrosse, my extracurricular life at NDP always was enjoyable and immersive."

He reiterated how much faith had become such a huge part of his life at NDP.

"I cannot thank campus ministry and Mrs. Zuccaro enough," he said. "They truly had a life-changing impact on me."

Marsheh also said he'd be more than happy to pass along the good news of Notre Dame to anyone considering the school.

"I would tell students who are thinking of attending my alma mater that NDP is a great place to grow as a person, not only in their academics but, more importantly, in their character and faith." «



ABOVE

Notre Dame Prep grad Andrew Marshesh NDP'21 is on the campus of the University of Dayton in southwest Ohio.

TOP RIGHT

Marsheh is with the University of Dayton's sports mascot, Rudy Flyer.



NOTRE DAME

Many alumni, parents and friends are already supporting the next generation of students by including Notre Dame in their estate plans.

BEQUESTS THROUGH A WILL OR TRUST

One of the easiest ways to create a legacy with Notre Dame is through a bequest in your will or trust. You can leave a specific amount, percentage, or the residue of your estate.

BENEFICIARY DESIGNATIONS

Naming our school the beneficiary of a retirement account, insurance policy, or bank or brokerage account only takes a few moments and allows flexibility if your plans change in the future.

For more information about how you can support the next generation of students, please visit
www.ndpma.org/planalegacy



NOTRE DAME

Garden of good

Sophomore embraces Notre Dame/Marist values by planting and maintaining a community garden at local hospital

Notre Dame sophomore Michael Kenny was recently honored by Ascension Providence Hospital in Rochester for his work in planting and nurturing a community garden on hospital grounds to benefit Neighborhood House, a nonprofit serving the area with programs for those in need and experiencing hardship.

According to Kenny, his project grew from researching an Eagle Scout project.

"When I was looking for an Eagle project for the Boy Scouts, I came into contact with Lynn McCabe, who is director of volunteer services at the hospital, and she offered me the opportunity to develop and maintain their garden and give the produce to Neighborhood House," he said. "While the

garden did not specifically meet the specifications to qualify for an Eagle project, I still wanted to run the garden. So I made it my IB Personal Project."

He said that throughout the process of starting the garden, he learned that one in four people in the Rochester area suffer from hunger.

"I know that if I can help just one of them, I can make a difference, said Kenny, who also serves as one of Notre Dame Prep's student ambassadors. "Throughout this past summer, I was able to harvest more than 100 pounds of food for many of the needy in my community."

Chris Palazzolo, who is president and CEO of Ascension Genesys Hospital and Ascension Providence Rochester Hospital, recently honored Kenny in a celebration that included McCabe and Kathy Losinski, executive director of the Neighborhood House in Rochester Hills, and other hospital staff. Palazzolo placed a commemorative plaque in the garden to honor the



volunteer work that Kenny and his family have done over the years with the hospital.

"It was an absolute honor to meet all those wonderful people and I look forward to continuing to maintain the garden and work with Ascension in the coming years," said Kenny, who attended Holy Family for grade school.

Notre Dame's Marist theme for this school year is "ardent love of neighbor," and it's something Kenny thoroughly embraces with his work in the community.

"The garden can help neighbors in the Rochester area by supplying them with fresh vegetables," he said. "I believe that by running such a community garden, I can definitely show a love for my neighbors while also being a Christian person and an upright citizen."

Now into his first semester of school at Notre Dame Prep, Kenny is hopeful that the school year will be relatively normal given all of the external issues the community and the world has been dealing with.

"Coming to Notre Dame has been an incredible opportunity to grow both academically and spiritually," he said. "Despite all the challenges the pandemic has presented, every day I come to school I'm surrounded by amazing teachers and motivated classmates and I'm encouraged to do my best in everything whether it's in the classroom or as part of the school's clubs and extracurricular activities. This school has such an amazing atmosphere for all students to truly learn and serve." «



ABOVE

NDP sophomore Michael Kenny is with Chris Palazzolo, president and CEO of Ascension Genesys Hospital and Ascension Providence Rochester Hospital, at a recent ceremony honoring Kenny's work in the hospital's community garden.

TOP RIGHT

After being honored by Ascension Providence Rochester Hospital, Kenny is with the plaque mounted in the community garden he helped create on the hospital campus.

JAZZ AT THE COLIN HOUSE

Notre Dame Prep students play solid jazz as part of the school's Colin House Concert Series

Notre Dame Prep students John Milback NDP'23, Josh Reid NDP'22 and George Moussa NDP'24 spent a Saturday afternoon last spring performing six classic jazz standards for a small group of friends and school staff members gathered in the main room of NDPMA's Fr. Colin House.

The students' May 28 performance was another edition of the Notre Dame recorded "Colin House Concerts" in which members of the Notre Dame community are invited to sing and play in a small, informal setting at the school. The jazz trio, who said they've been playing together for a while, performed covers of popular jazz tunes, including those written by Duke Ellington, Antônio Carlos Jobim and Paul Desmond (Dave Brubeck Quartet).

A video recording of their performance is available at our YouTube channel: "NDPrepandMarist."

Song selections on the video:

AUTUMN LEAVES

By Joseph Kosma

IN A SENTIMENTAL MOOD

By Duke Ellington

THE GIRL FROM IPANEMA

By Antônio Carlos Jobim

BLUESETTE

By Toots Thielemans

TAKE FIVE

By Paul Desmond

FOOTPRINTS

By Wayne Shorter



Pror to this latest concert, Notre Dame alums Tony DeNardo ND'90 and Stephen Garcia ND'94 performed at the Fr. Colin House and before that, alum Stephanie Hamood NDP'10 played a number of tunes. Her performance and a number of others, including more from NDP students, also is available at the school's YouTube channel.

Alumni, students, faculty and staff interested in performing for the Colin House Concert Series should contact Notre Dame Marketing and Communications at mac@ndpma.org. «

BELOW

From left: John Milback NDP'23, keyboard, Josh Reid NDP'22, drums and George Moussa NDP'24, saxophone.





Frequent flyer

Junior earns big flight training scholarship from world's largest aviation association

In early July, Notre Dame Prep junior Alexis Kuyoth, 16, completed her first solo flight as a pilot of a small airplane. It was just another step in her lifelong quest to get a full pilot's license by the time she's 17.

Near the end of last school year, the Lake Orion resident got some big help in that quest when she received a \$10,000 flight training scholarship from the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association Foundation.

"My family and I have been members of the AOPA for decades and have known about this scholarship for a while," Kuyoth said. "This year, since I was old enough to start flying lessons, I decided to apply for the AOPA Flight Training Scholarship, sponsored by the Ray Foundation. AOPA said they were looking for excellent students with a passion for aviation along with a record of volunteer work within the aviation community. When I found out that I was getting this scholarship, I was more than elated. I plan to use the money to finish the flight training I've already begun."

AOPA Foundation Executive Director Melissa Rudinger said her organization was thrilled to be able to make such a difference to those interested in flying.

"High schoolers like Alexis are able to get an early start in aviation; aviation teachers can gain a better understanding of the material they teach by learning to fly; others can continue their primary training; and already certificated pilots can work on higher ratings and certificates," Rudinger said.

For Kuyoth, though, whose sister, Audrey, is

a sophomore at NDP, her "early start" in flying airplanes began a long time ago.

"Ever since I was six weeks old, I think I was well on my way to becoming the fourth-generation pilot in my family," she said. "Even though I've been surrounded by aviation my whole life, the main reason I decided to officially start my own flight lessons was to obtain the total freedom and convenience that flying offers."

She noted, for example, that a trip most people make by car in a weekend only takes a day in her Piper Comanche 260.

"From the moment of rotation when the wheels lift off the runway, I am in complete control of the aircraft and the liberating feeling I get from takeoff never goes away, even after thousands of takeoffs," said the St. Joseph Catholic School alum.

Kuyoth is taking her "takeoff" and flying lessons at the Romeo State Airport in Ray Township, but her family's plane is located at Oakland County International Airport in Waterford.

"At Romeo, for my lessons I fly a Cessna 172 and I currently have more than 20 flight hours in that plane," she said. "I love everything about each lesson, even the 'boring' bookwork. One of the best things I've experienced so far is doing an in-flight stall and spin recovery. My instructor, Carl Harris, is amazing and encourages me to figure out difficult situations on my own. I have learned a lot from flying, including how to read weather reports, analyze engines and make quick decisions."

Nicole Kuyoth, Alexis' mother, said her daughter has had the flying bug seemingly forever.

"Alexis has always wanted to become a private pilot and has put in a lot of time and dedication in order to achieve that goal," Nicole said. "She's now achieved the goal of soloing at the age of 16 and will continue working on her full pilot's license by the time she's 17. Alexis chose to apply for the scholarship since she's so passionate about aviation and met all of the requirements. We couldn't be prouder of Alexis and all her achievements."

While it was still relatively early in her current summer break from high school when she was interviewed, Kuyoth nonetheless was looking forward to when her high-flying airplane classroom transitions to a more earth-bound Notre Dame Prep classroom.

"I love Notre Dame and everything it has



||

I LOVE NOTRE DAME AND EVERYTHING IT HAS TO OFFER.
I LOVE THE GREENHOUSE AND THE SCIENCE CLASSES.
I LOVE THE ATHLETIC COMMUNITIES, ESPECIALLY THE
SKI TEAM, AND I HAVE BEEN VERY WELCOMED INTO
ANYTHING NEW THAT I'VE TRIED AT NOTRE DAME PREP.

||



to offer," she said. "I love the greenhouse and the science classes. I love the athletic communities, especially the ski team, and I have been very welcomed into anything new that I've tried at NDP. I'm also on student council and I'm a peer leader because I definitely love being a voice for the school any way I can."

Mom agrees with her daughter's assessment of her high school.

"We've been blessed to send both of our daughters to Catholic school their entire lives," Nicole said. "We loved St. Joseph school and have come to love Notre Dame as well. Alexis has excelled academically and is a member of the National Honor Society. She gives everything she does 110 percent and sets goals she knows she can achieve." «

LEFT

Notre Dame rising junior Alexis Kuyoth preps her Piper Comanche 260 before a recent flight.

RIGHT

Kuyoth takes flying lessons in a Cessna 172 at Romeo State Airport in Ray Township.



IRISH NEWS FROM PAGE 7

gaps and coordinating with technical experts,” said Outman, who lives in Seattle, Wash., and works remotely with her team in Philadelphia, Pa., where Boeing Rotorcraft Systems is headquartered. “I’ve been with Boeing for almost five years now and have previously supported the 777X, 787, V-22 Osprey and Chinook programs.”

It’s a hugely responsible job for anyone let alone for someone still relatively early in her career. At the same time, though, it’s not a surprise for an alum of Notre Dame Prep, especially for one who excelled in a couple of signature activities at the school.

“There are two experiences that I had in high school that primarily shaped my foundation for college, my career and my personal life: the IB program and the robotics team,” Outman said.

“I was challenged both academically and personally throughout NDP’s IB Diploma program,” she added. “The IB History, English and Theory of Knowledge courses especially pushed me to think critically, which is such an important skill in STEAM fields because you need to be able to analyze problems and their available solutions mindfully and concisely to effectively solve problems.”

She said that along with critical thinking, the IB program required her to practice effective communication, which isn’t typically associated with the engineering field.

“It’s often assumed that in STEM careers, the soft skills aren’t as important as technical knowledge,” she said. “But if you cannot communicate well, you will never be able to effectively utilize that technical knowledge. Through my IB classes, I also was forced to become more comfortable with the arts of writing, speaking and even painting my thoughts and feelings.” «

PRAYERS

Notre Dame mourns the loss of our dear brothers and sisters and invites our community to join with us in prayer.

Michael Bammer, father of Justin NDP’04, Aileen NDP’07, and Mary NDP’09, March 10, 2020

Isabell Bucchi NDP’15, March 6, 2021

Lance Butler SM’58, May 4, 2020

Ron Chapp ND’64, June 14, 2021

Donald Chmura, father of Mark ND’88, Jan. 13, 2021

Frances Corti, mother-in-law of Marty Simmonds, mother of Katherine, and grandmother of Riley NDP ’18, Ryann NDP ’23, and Raymond, Aug. 6, 2021

Everette Dropps SM’46, July 20, 2020

James Hildebrand, who served as Pontiac’s police chief from 1981 to 1986, father of Joe, Jayne (Iliades) PC’83, Joan (Norman) PC’85, and James, Aug. 28, 2021.

Scott Holland, father of Bill NDP’00, Peter NDP’04, and Rose NDP’08, April 8, 2021

Bill Horsey SF’65, March 3, 2021

Gregory Valentine Juliano NDP’07, Sept. 8, 2021

Norbert Kidd ND’60, June 30, 2021

Michael Kotzan NDP’05, son of Donna and Joe, brother of Kathy NDP’98 and Karen NDP’01, June 1, 2021

Elaine Kraft SM’54, Dec. 6, 2020

John Lane ND’73, Aug. 9, 2019

Frederick Lauinger SM’60, May 7, 2020

Charles “Chuck” Lauinger SM’48, July 24, 2020

Timothy Loviska PC’68, Oct. 12, 2020

Marcia (Pesta) Lucas, wife of Raymond Lucas ND’61 and sister of the late Timothy Pesta ND’58, the late Dennis Pesta ND’60, and Terry Pesta ND’68 10-23-20

Kenneth Maleck ND’67, Jan. 20, 2021

Ed Maloney, former teacher, coach, and NDP athletic director, June 8, 2021

Sr. Jean Joseph Martin SM’43, March 23, 2020

Ann Marie St. Charles McGaffey SM’51, May 3, 2021

John Charles Merlo ND’65, April 14, 2020

Rose Ann Nash SM’56, March 31, 2020

Gary O’Rourke SM’63, April 6, 2021

Richard J. Platz ND’64, April 18, 2020

Geraldine Potwardowski, mother of Larry ND’74, Jim ND’76, Ron ND’78, and Mike ND’82, May 15, 2021

Paul Priemer ND’62, July 21, 2020

Jerome Robak SM’50, March 12, 2020

Kenneth Rogers SM’57, Feb. 16, 2021

Barbara Gottschalk Ross SM’60, May 2, 2021

Rene Rutkofske ND’72, May 9, 2020

James Salfi SM’53, May 15, 2020

Barbara Simon, mother of Brad ND’72, Phil ND’74, Mark ND’75 and Jim ND’77; grandmother of Liz NDP’12, June 6, 2021

John Tenuta SM’48, May 19, 2021

Josephine Julia Testori, mother of Jim ND’71, April 17, 2021

Gary Traynor ND’63, Jan. 30, 2021

Tom Trompics ND’83, April 8, 2021

James Wasmund ND’62, brother of Gary ND’67, Sept. 4, 2021

Stanley Wegrzynowicz, former Notre Dame High School teacher, May 29, 2021

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

If you would like our community to remember a loved one in prayer, please email prayers@ndpma.org.

St. Frederick alumna and centenarian still going strong at 101

A century-plus strong



When you ask Helen Clark the secret to her longevity, the 101-year-old Pontiac, Mich., resident chuckles.

“People ask me all the time what’s my secret to aging gracefully...well I don’t smoke, I don’t drink, I never had a husband, and I never had any children,” she said.

Clark, an alumna of the St. Frederick Class of 1938, has certainly seen and done a lot in the decades since the 1920s. From living through the Great Depression to the attack on Pearl Harbor that led to the U.S. involvement in World War II, the British Invasion and the Beatles, the Kennedy assassination, moon landing, invention of the internet, 9/11, the election of the country’s first black president, and now COVID-19.

“The world is a different place; I almost don’t even recognize it anymore,” she said. “I didn’t use the television a great deal so now when I read about some of those events, I can tell I don’t really remember them.”

Clark has lived in Pontiac her whole life and attended Catholic school along with her six siblings, from first grade through graduation.

“I have very fond memories of St. Frederick’s,” Clark said. “My only regret is that I never learned how to type.”

In recalling her time at the school, Clark said she mostly remembers the strict rules enforced by the school’s nuns, who she said kept students in line.

“They put a lot of emphasis on education and following rules, which was good for me. When I started college, I never had to repeat any courses,” she said.

Clark graduated from the Mercy School of Nursing in Detroit in 1943, and, the following year, joined the U.S. Army Air Corps as a nurse. She was stationed in Florida, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, as well as the 122nd General Hospital

in India and China. She served her tour of duty until 1947.

“The male soldiers, some of them only 18 years old, would come and knock on our door all the time looking for company. They liked to talk about their families,” she recalled.

After returning to Oakland County, she took advantage of the army’s GI bill and furthered her education at Wayne State University before being hired at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital. In 1953, she started working for the Oakland County Health Division as a public health nurse, and was later promoted to assistant director of nursing.

“I was primarily involved in health promotion and working with local schools and teachers to raise awareness around healthy habits,” Clark said.

In 1966, Clark earned her Master of Public Health degree from the University of Michigan.

Despite retiring in 1986, Clark said she remained active as much as possible, whether helping out at the senior center, giving rides to church, volunteering, or making baby blankets for new mothers. Now, she mostly enjoys spending time with her nieces and nephews, especially with the COVID-19 pandemic keeping her largely at home.

“I don’t go out much. I’ve had a few visitors who have been vaccinated but even that has become such an issue,” she said.

In September, Clark attended the 40th annual St. Frederick All-School Reunion, which included a mass, tours of the old school and a luncheon.

“It was like a birthday party for me; I very much enjoyed seeing some familiar faces,” she said. «

ABOVE

Helen Clark SF’38, an alumna of St. Frederick, Class of 1938, worked many years at the Oakland County Health Division as a public health nurse and later as assistant director of nursing.

ALUMNI NOTES

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

NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI

Johnny Collins III ND'03 married his wife Ciera on June 15, 2021.

Jim Denys ND'74 is retired and involved in many philanthropic organizations including the Fraternal Order of Eagles, Lighthouse Krewe and the Bolivar Yacht Club (BYC) in Texas. The BYC hosted the largest beach catamaran event on the Texas coast in 2021.

Matthew Fleming ND'86 proudly serves the people, businesses, and visitors of Chicago within the city's Bureau of Information Technology.

Daniel Hutchinson ND'71 has a granddaughter, Hannah Hutchinson, who is a freshman at Notre Dame Preparatory School this year. She is a member of the girls' swim team and third generation at Notre Dame.

Gary Mahoney ND'80 enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps after high school and served four years as a military policeman. After receiving an honorable discharge, he was hired by the Las Vegas Metro Police Department where he enjoyed a 27-year career and retired as a sergeant in 2012. He keeps busy by playing ice hockey, traveling, and "loving the thought of never having to work another day in my life."

Robert Majkowski ND'77 and his wife, Sue, recently celebrated their 38th wedding

anniversary on Sept. 9, 2021. The couple has been living in the Houston area for more than 11 years. Robert retired in the spring from TransCanada Pipelines.

Paul Nowaske ND'60 contacted COVID-19 in January but recovered and is back to flying his plane and enjoying family and friends.

Brian Pencak ND'82 recently moved to Oxford, Mich. and would like to connect with fellow Notre Dame High School alumni.

Frank Zielinski ND' 63 graduated from the University of Southern California in 1971 with a doctoral degree in dental surgery.

NOTRE DAME PREPARATORY SCHOOL ALUMNI

Caitlin (Dodge) Anglin NDP'99 got married to Ian Anglin on Jan. 2, 2021 at Our Lady of the Lakes Catholic Church in Waterford, Mich.

Carla Aranda NDP'16 works as a paraprofessional and admissions associate at Austin Catholic High School in Macomb.

Erica Bommarito NDP'04 reinvented her career during the COVID-19 pandemic and is now known as "Cosmetics Queen" on social media, gaining roughly 160,000 followers on TikTok; nearly 4,000 on Instagram; and now represents more than 20 major cosmetics/skincare brands. She is getting married in October.

Ann Marie Calvaneso NDP'13 is a full-time entrepreneur running a successful business,

offering fitness coaching and business coaching (@theglamfitdiva on Instagram); was featured in Yahoo News and Finance in April 2021; singing the National Anthem for the Detroit Pistons in December 2021; headline performer for the "Summit of Slay" female entrepreneurship event in August 2021.

Matthew Croft NDP'06 is performing with the national tour of Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Jesus Christ Superstar" as an associate conductor/keyboard 2.

Matthew Durkin NDP'16 got engaged to Anna Madison NDP'17 on Aug. 2, 2021. The couple is currently planning their wedding. They met during Matt's sophomore year. Anna will be graduating with her master's degree in accounting from the University of Dayton in December. Matt works as a contract employee for General Motors as a customer care and aftersales district manager.

Felicia Falvo (Guest) NDP'06 married Sean Falvo on July 3, 2021.

Andrew Kukawinski NDP'06 married Kaitlyn Schutt on May 8, 2021.

Christina (Roberts) Lazzara NDP'08 and her husband Matthew welcomed the birth of their first child, Henry Thomas Lazzara, on July 25, 2021.

Scott Lockhart NDP'98 and wife Beth welcomed their baby daughter, Mackenzie Scott Lockhart, on July 15, 2021, weighing 7 pounds, 7 ounces and 21 inches long. She



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is the sister of Haleigh Campbell NDP'25, Rylee Campbell NDP'27, and Liam Campbell NDP'30.

Timothy Malter NDP'10 and his wife Lindsey welcomed their first child, Liliana Lynn on April 26, 2021. The proud parents are adjusting to life with a newborn.

Patricia McCormick NDP'o8 and Alistair Phaup married on July 24, 2021 in York, Maine.

Sajel Nuwamanya NDP'o8 graduated from Cahaba Family Medicine Residency in Birmingham, Ala. in June and moved back to Detroit. She now serves at Covenant Community Care as a primary care physician. Nuwamanya and her husband have two daughters who are navigating a new school in kindergarten and first grade.

Elizabeth Suchocki NDP'13 got engaged to Daniel Ciesielski on July 21, 2021.

Katie Vitale (Miller) NDP'o2 welcomed her third child, Justin Marshall DuBois, in August 2021.

Billy Whalen NDP'17 graduated with a degree in sports management from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh. He is a videographer with the Duquesne football team.

Kathryn Zix NDP'o6 and her husband celebrated their first year of marriage in July. They are expecting their first child in October.

PONTIAC CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI

James Bleau PC'76 is a retired administrator in the Michigan public school K-12 system.

Carl Bevins PC'85 is a former golf professional with the PGA and happily served as the Notre Dame Prep girls' golf coach for the 2008 season.

Mark English PC'91 earned a specialist degree in school administration and leadership from Oakland University in 2006. He retired from the Michigan Department of Corrections as a teacher in 2011.

Douglas Henderson PC'80 founded A2 Home Improvements LLC, a general contracting business based in Ann Arbor after 35 years in the automotive industry.

Randy Payne PC'85 was married on Aug. 12, 2021. The couple is planning a celebration in St. Petersburg, Fla. in November.

Carla Temple PC'75 graduated from Michigan State University with a degree in humanities in 1979, and University of Minnesota with a master's degree in education in 1988. She retired in May from teaching Spanish to elementary children for 21 years.

UPCOMING REUNIONS

INTERESTED IN PLANNING A CLASS REUNION?

Contact Beth Lockhart, Director of Alumni Relations, at alumni@ndpma.org or 248-630-7722.

NOTRE DAME PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Class of 2015

Plans are underway for the five-year reunion. If you are interested in joining the planning committee, please contact Hailey Atkins, hatkins1022@gmail.com.

Class of 2010

Plans are underway for the 10-year reunion. If you are interested in joining the planning committee, please contact William Mott, mottwilliamiii@gmail.com.

Class of 2000

Planning is underway for the 20-year reunion. Please contact Francis LeGasse, flegasse@gmail.com, to join the planning committee

NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL

Class of 1962

The Notre Dame High School Class of 1962's 60th reunion will take place on Sunday, May 1, 2022. Rev. Robert Nalley ND'62 will celebrate a Mass at 10 a.m. inside the chapel at Notre Dame Prep, 1300 Giddings Road, in Pontiac. Coffee and a tour of the school will follow at 11 a.m. Join fellow alumni for a family-style luncheon at Alfocchino's Italian Restaurant, 2225 N. Opdyke Road in Auburn Hills at 2 p.m. RSVP online at www.ndpma.org/nd1962 or by calling John Trinkwalder at 586-214-3137. The cost is \$35.

PONTIAC CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Class of 1971

The 50-year reunion will be re-scheduled to the fall of 2022. Stay tuned for more details. For more information, please contact MaryAnn Moreno at moreno.bacon@gmail.com.

Class of 1976

The 45-year reunion will be held on Saturday, Oct. 23, 2021. There will be a 10:30 a.m. tour at Notre Dame Prep, 1300 Giddings Road, in Pontiac. Tour followed by noon lunch at Luca's Coney Island, 2010 N. Opdyke Road, Auburn Hills (individual tabs). Reunion from 6:30 to 11 p.m. at Crowne Plaza, 1500 N. Opdyke Road, Auburn Hills. The cost is \$15 at the door and includes appetizer buffet. Cash bar is separate. For more information, contact Carol Biegum on Facebook's Pontiac Catholic Class of 1976 page or Sue Spring at 248-620-0176.

The Notre Dame Alumni Association Board of Directors:

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