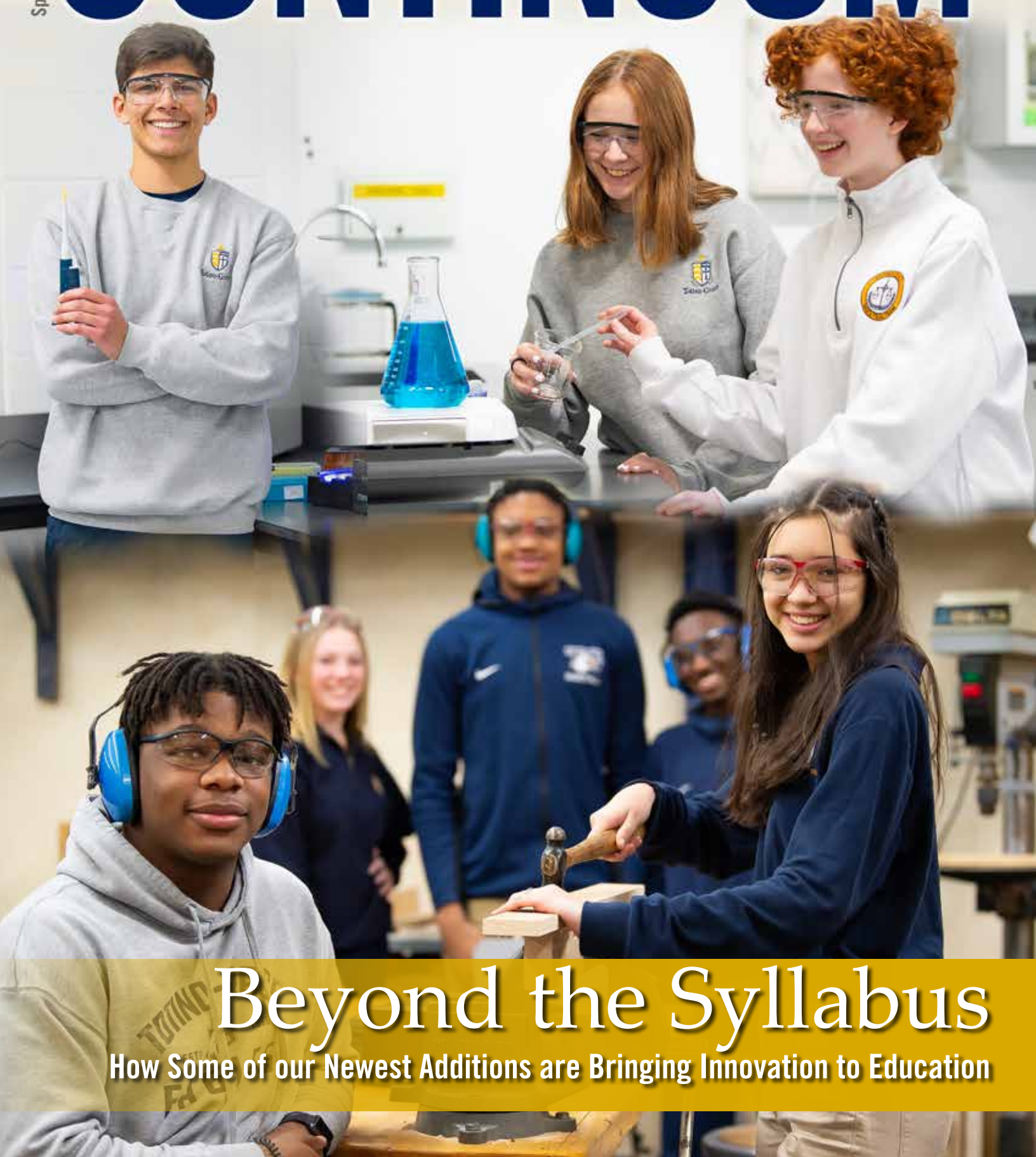


CONTINUUM



TOTINO-GRACE HIGH SCHOOL



Beyond the Syllabus

How Some of our Newest Additions are Bringing Innovation to Education

SPRING 2023

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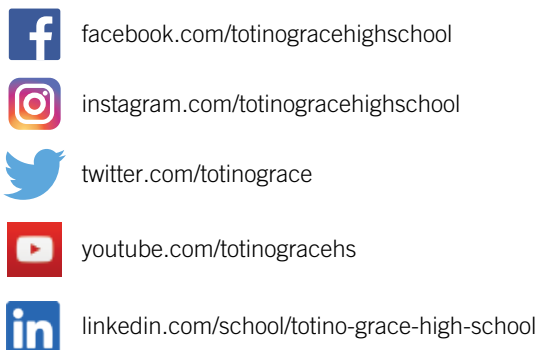
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ADDRESS CHANGES AND ALUMNI NEWS SUBMISSIONS

Submit address changes and alumni notes at www.totinograce.org/alumni or contact Alaina Graupman in the Advancement Office at 763-586-6328, or tg alumni@totinograce.org. The school reserves the right to publish and/or edit material to reflect the values of our mission.

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Totino-Grace
High School

MISSION STATEMENT

Totino-Grace is an Archdiocesan co-educational Catholic high school in the Lasallian tradition. Welcoming a student body that is academically, economically, and culturally diverse, we strive for equity and excellence in all programs. Recognizing the key elements of our mission as learning, faith, community, and service, we seek to provide a safe environment that places priority on mutual respect, self-discipline, and acknowledgment of our responsibility in the world community.

ADMINISTRATION

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Principal

Dan Vandermyde
Assistant Principal

Andrew Blake '99
Dean of Students and Director of Campus Ministry

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Brennan Lafeber
Annual Giving Manager

Tony Mullen
Vice President for Institutional Advancement



From the President's Desk

Totino-Grace has earned a reputation of excellence in education as a comprehensive Catholic college preparatory school. However, in a time of many divergent views on a number of controversial issues, the challenges our students will face as adults are arguably unprecedented. This is not a time to rest on our laurels. To prepare our Eagles for the future, Totino-Grace teachers and staff members have been having a conversation over the last few years about how to best create academic experiences that unite and excite our students.

First, we are always looking to provide innovative and authentic learning experiences for our students, ones that emphasize learning how to learn, problem solving, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking. Therefore, Totino-Grace teachers are both “sage on the stage” and “guides on the side,” partnering with students to engage social/emotional and blended learning techniques to create more rigorous and relevant experiences for our students.

Second, we are always looking to create learning options that spark excitement and utilize experiential learning. Options that emphasize curiosity, resilience, adaptability, and ethical behavior. We understand that today’s “networked age” learning environment should lead to natural excitement and discovery, which goes hand-in-hand with offering non-traditional courses that students want to take. For the first time ever, next year TG will be offering Digital Manufacturing, Architecture, Advanced Business and Marketing, Catholic Social Ethics, and Advocacy and Justice. We don’t want our students merely sitting and listening. We want them actively absorbing, analyzing, and applying content to novel or real life situations. We want to empower them to collaborate, research, create, and make a positive contribution to the world. At TG, we want attending school to be fulfilling, preparatory, and even inspiring.

Third, we are always looking to provide classes that tap into students’ passions to fuel learning. TG students today can take up to 20 college credit eligible courses during their high school career, which is the most ever. In addition to a host of Advanced Placement and PACC (Program for Advanced College Credit) courses, Totino-Grace offers a menu of College in the Schools (CIS) courses. This year alone, over 220 of our students are enrolled in at least one college credit eligible course.

Emerging from our conversations are not only student mastery of core knowledge but also of skills and dispositions that will give our students an edge in the next step of their education and life. In this edition of *The Continuum*, you will find stories that show how TG is continuing to evolve, creating learner-centered environments and opportunities for growth, in and out of the classroom. After all, every student deserves a great education. At TG, we are committed to providing just that: a transformational learning experience.

Live Jesus in our hearts. Forever!

Dr. Craig W. Junker, President



Beyond the Syllabus

How Some of our Newest Additions are Bringing Innovation to Education

Totino-Grace is so lucky to have some of the best teachers around and even more fortunate that so many of them have been at the school for decades – we're looking at you, Paul Cleary (our most tenured faculty member). But TG has also been fortunate over the last year to add some new all-stars to the lineup. Meet five of the newest Eagle faculty members teaching, leading (and lifting) their way into our hearts.

We couldn't highlight everyone, but they are equally awesome.

Here are all the other Eagles who joined TG in 2022-2023:

KELLEY BEITZ, Advancement Database Analyst
KAYLEEN BERG, Social Studies Teacher
SHAMIR BRICE, Theology Teacher
ANGELA DOWNING, Spirit Shop Manager
SARAH DUNFEE, School Counselor
MEGAN GOSDA, Social Studies Teacher
SHANNON HARTINGER, Major Gift Officer
BRENNAN LAFEVER, Annual Giving Manager
DEVIN LEARY, Visual Content Specialist

NATHAN LUNSFORD, Theology Teacher
JENNY MAHAR, School Nurse
KESNEY McCARTHY, School Counselor
TONY MULLEN, Vice President of Advancement
KASSANDRA MURPHY, Math & Science Teacher
AMY NELSON, English Teacher
KAREN OSTAFFE, Math Teacher
DAN QUICK, Grounds Assistant

ROSE DEBOER

Theology Teacher

I grew up in Winona and St. Cloud, MN. I have lived in many places as an adult - including Chicago, New Orleans, and Seattle. I always pictured myself moving back to MN at some point with my family.

Q&A

Q What did you study? Was it always a passion of yours?

A I went to college at the College of St. Benedict. I studied English and Spanish. My parents both taught English literature classes at the college level and reading was a passion of mine from a young age. I loved learning Spanish and studied abroad in Guatemala when I was in college.

I loved studying abroad and learning about another culture and way of life.

Q What made you/wants you want to work in education?

A I've wanted to be a teacher for as long as I can remember. I grew up attending classes my parents taught and fell in love with the learning environment they created and the passion they had for teaching and for their students. I love working with high school students because this is a really special point in life where each person is learning more about who they are and who they want to be. It's really beautiful to watch students grow and mature throughout their time in high school.

Q What brought you to TG?

A I was drawn to Totino-Grace as a Lasallian high school. I love the Lasallian charism and have enjoyed learning more about Blessed Theresa Gerhardinger during my time here. Dr. Junker was also my principal when I was in middle school. I remembered him as an incredible administrator who got to know each student and what they were involved in and good at. This was inspiring to me as an eighth grader and was another part of TG that drew me in.

Q What kind of innovation or unconventionality do you bring to your classroom?

A I feel very strongly about building rapport and a strong community in my classes. I find students learn better when they know one another and feel comfortable with each other. St. John Baptist de La Salle said education was all about relationships. This is something that has always been important to me as a teacher.

Q It's clear you have a strong faith. How did that develop? How do you keep your faith a priority in your life and work?

A My parents had a very strong faith life. We went to weekly Mass and we also prayed together as a family. We also grew up doing weekly service together on Thursday nights. My parents ran a service-learning program in their college curriculum and so I grew up with the experience of service to others as an integral piece of living out my faith. My dad used to say to me, "Sometimes we have to make our life a prayer." In other words, make every interaction with other people a form of prayer in the way we treat others. This is not always easy to do, but it is a goal of mine each day.

Q What do you do for fun?

A My husband and I have three young kids, so we do lots of reading and game nights together. I also am an avid runner and it's my favorite way to spend time reflecting on the day.



WILLIAM KVOT

French Teacher

I am 31 years old. I was born in Avignon, France, in the Southern region of Provence. This is my 10th year teaching French in the United States.

Q&A

Q What made you/makes you want to work in education?

A I have always wanted to become a teacher, since I was a little kid.

Q What brought you to TG?

A Last year, I taught English at John Paul II Private Institute in Uzès, France. That's where I got introduced to Lasallian Education. I knew I wanted to be at a Lasallian institution, wanted to come back to Minnesota, and TG was looking for a French Teacher - so it all worked out perfectly!

Q What kind of innovation or unconventionality do you bring to your classroom?

A I am a native speaker of France where I lived for 20 years. My parents were born in French-speaking Africa and so I do believe that I bring lots of Francophone Culture to the classroom.

Q What questions do you recommend parents ask their students to get them to talk about your class?

A I tell parents and students to try as much as possible to watch movies with French audio and subtitles and also listen to podcasts and music in the car in French. I also often send communication home via email to let parents know what is going on in French class so they can keep the conversation and interest going with their children at home.

Q It's clear you have a strong faith. How did that develop? How do you keep your faith a priority in your life and work?

A I was born and raised in a very traditional French Christian family. We attended Mass every Sunday as a family and I went to Sunday school as a kid. My Christian faith has always been strong and important in my life. I continue to go to church here in the Twin Cities on Sundays.

Q What do you do for fun?

A I travel a lot during my time off, often I travel internationally, but I also like to travel locally. My favorite place to go here in MN is up north, along the North Shore. I lived in Phoenix, AZ for two years, so I often go back to the desert to visit friends. I also swim every day after school and I am currently trying to get back to learning Spanish. I love languages and cultures A LOT!



WENDY FRANTZ

Physical Education
& Health Teacher

I'm originally from southern CA, but after I went to St. Olaf, I got married and stayed in MN. I was a 3-sport HS athlete and collegiate soccer player. I have four kids and fill my time with multiple side hustles including personal training, group fitness instructing, coaching, and reffing.

Q&A

Q What brought you to TG?

A I coached soccer and lacrosse for TG from 2005-2013 and loved the community. I was always on the lookout, but there wasn't an opening for me until this past summer.

Q What do you like most about working at TG?

A The feeling of community, the staff that intentionally help and support each other, and the atmosphere that encourages doing one's best among the students AND staff! I also love the energy and spark when someone learns something new or improves at something they do. Physical health offers great opportunities to be able to do that.

Q How is creative thinking encouraged or used in your classroom?

A Health researchers continually learn new facts and challenge assumptions, so I want the health students to voice their own questions. In PE I want the students to understand that every body wants and needs to be active, and they can have excellent physical health through exercise even if they don't compete in a single "sport" their whole life - there are SO many options!

Q What questions do you recommend parents ask their students to get them to talk about your class?

A In Health class, it's probably more the students coming home with questions. I encourage the students to learn about their family's health history. It's an important tool that can be used as a "road map" for navigating the choices they make. In PE it is a really important distinction for parents to ask "did you have fun?" instead of "did you win?"

Q It's clear you have a strong faith. How did that develop? How do you keep your faith a priority in your life and work?

A I grew up in the Church and my family made it a priority. I chose to marry a man with a strong faith as well, so we support each other in the journey and within our family.

Q What do you do for fun?

A If I'm not doing one of my side jobs, I am baking cookies, training on a competitive ninja obstacle team, or running with my dogs. You can also always distract me by talking about dogs, lacrosse, or soccer.



ARTURO CRUZ

Art Teacher

IN PRACTICE: Michael Catherwood is a poet Cruz used to work with while teaching Art History classes at Metro Community College. Catherwood picked one of Cruz's photos for the cover of his most recent collection of poems.



I am originally from Omaha, NE. I met my wife Victoria at graduate school here in the Cities. After returning to Nebraska for twelve years for family reasons, we have settled down in her hometown about 20 minutes west of Minneapolis. I have four children, two at home: Aidan who is a junior at Holy Trinity in Winsted, and Clara who is an 8th grader there (she hopes to attend TG); then, Sophia who is a freshman at NDSU (Go Bison!), and my oldest son Arturo who is an aerospace engineer in Salt Lake City, and will be married this May.

Q&A

Q Where did you go to college and what did you study? Was it always a passion of yours?

A I studied art at the University of Nebraska at Omaha (BFA 1991) and at the University of Minnesota (MFA 1997).

I received my K-12 teaching certificate from UNO in 2004. While I've studied and taught all mediums, I've always been most passionate about drawing. I remember as a kid drawing the record covers for Kiss or making comics.

Q What made you/makes you want to work in education?

A I love art. Teaching is a way for me to give back and serve my community. Art can be therapeutic on a personal level; more generally, art can be a vehicle for social justice which is central to my teaching philosophy and practice.

Q What makes you excited about teaching?

A It's really a collaboration: I throw ideas out to the students, their responses are shaped by their own experiences and personal outlooks. I get an infinite variety of responses. These lead to new ideas or approaches.

Q What is your philosophy on homework?

A I don't currently assign homework unless it is for a catch-up or e-learning. I think people should be creative whenever and wherever they can; they should live creatively.

Q How is creative thinking encouraged or used in your classroom?

A I provide the parameters to the assignment, how the students get there is up to them. We brainstorm, I also suggest options to be considered. I try to bring a Bob Ross vibe to the classes - the voice if not the hair. 😊

Q What do you do for fun?

A I paint, take photos, spend time with my family enjoying movies, cooking, rock climbing, and tying knots (although my kids found this to be less than enjoyable for some reason...).



TONY MULLEN

Vice President for
Institutional Advancement

I grew up in West St. Paul and attended St. Joseph's Catholic Grade school and St. Thomas Academy. I am married to Jocelyn and we have a 13 year old daughter, Madeline. We live in Mendota Heights and are parishioners at Assumption Catholic Church in St. Paul, MN.



Q&A

Q Tell us about yourself.

A Prior to joining TG, I've worked in a variety of sales and marketing leadership roles with three large global companies. I have a passion for leading teams and achieving exceptional results.

Q Where did you go to college and what did you study? Was it always a passion of yours?

A I went to college at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and received my degree in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. I've always enjoyed science, but started out in a career in sales. Two years into my sales career, I went back to school in the evening and completed my MBA and JD degrees while working during the day.

Q What brought you to TG?

A After a long period of careful reflection and discernment, I decided it was important for me to take my skills and experiences gained in a 25 year business career and use them in a way that would make a positive impact on others. I am a strong believer in Catholic education because of the impact it had on my life. When the opportunity to lead the Advancement team was posted, I pursued it, and here I am!

Q What do you like most about working at TG?

A I like many things about TG, but my favorite thing is the individuals on my team. Alaina, Brennan, Kelley, and Shannon are all very talented and bring a lot of energy to work each day. I am lucky to work with this team.

Q What kind of innovation or unconventionality do you bring to your department?

A I am bringing a business mindset to fundraising and alumni relations. I have a background in sales and marketing so I am able to leverage these experiences to connect with the greater TG community.

Q What makes you excited about your job and Catholic education?

A I am excited for the opportunity to be in a Catholic school because Catholic education has had a positive impact on the man, husband, and father that I've become. I will be working hard to ensure more young adults can have the opportunity to share in the experience that I was fortunate to have.

Q It's clear you have a strong faith. How did that develop? How do you keep your faith a priority in your life and work?

A My faith has developed primarily through my education in Catholic schools. I have continued to work hard to make my faith life a high priority through my involvement in my daughter's school and involvement at our parish. Keeping my faith a priority helps me stay grounded on the things that truly matter in life and serves as a good reminder of areas of life I am working to improve.

Q What do you do for fun?

A Spending time with my wife and daughter is my favorite activity. We enjoy long walks, playing golf, and attending our daughter's swim meets. We also find joy in vacations and trying new restaurants. I am an avid Wisconsin Badger fan and football season ticket holder.

Meet Gianna Richie | TG Class of 2023

Although Gianna Richie only joined the Totino-Grace community last year as a junior, she has made her mark and engrained herself in the community. One innovative way she has left a lasting impression is by creating a podcast and using her platform to share other people's stories. Richie has decided to dedicate her podcast to creators, non-profits, and bringing people together. She recently interviewed social studies teacher, Phil Trovato, about his diagnosis with T-Cell Lymphoblastic Lymphoma Leukemia and raising money for The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. If you're interested in finding her podcast and supporting her work, search The Gianna Richie Podcast on any major streaming service.



Richie in the TG recording studio, which was made possible through generous donors.

Tell us about yourself and how you came up with the idea for your podcast.

Before TG, I attended a performing arts school and pursued theater hoping someday for a career. During my time there, I worked on student-directed plays and musicals. When COVID hit, I was swept off stage. Like everyone, I was wondering "when are we going back?" and "will it ever be the same?" As the pandemic became more workable I found an opportunity to work in production and took an internship. Then through some great mentors, feeling stuck by COVID, and the inspiring voice of Guy Raz at NPR, I decided to start a podcast. Using skills from my background in theater and that production internship, I began interviewing my friends who were artists or activists. I started to realize that my love for theater was really deep down the love of storytelling. I am inspired by people who want to be innovators and are willing to put in the work to seek change. There's one thing I believe in and that's dedication. I'm forever grateful for the help along the way and am excited for my next

journey - which will be finding youth to interview who have started community-based projects to actively create change.

Why did you choose TG for your high school experience?

I was a transfer student halfway through my junior year. I started my high school career at an inner city art school and felt that, after COVID, I was craving something missing in my education. I found the missing piece at Totino-Grace in the form of a diverse perspective and caring community.

What is the strongest way TG has helped guide and shape you?

For me, it's the constant motivation from teachers. One major difference I've noticed with Totino-Grace teachers is the effort they put in to get to know you outside of just being a student in your class. I feel so supported, guided, and have the tools to navigate the resources provided to us.

What is your favorite class and who is your favorite teacher?

I wouldn't say I have a favorite class, but I think we have educators who each care about what they teach. As a student, I take it seriously because I can tell they love their craft.

What are you most proud of during your time at TG?

For me, it's having been able to diversify my interest and learn a new spectrum. I truly can see the growth that this environment sparks. The thing that has impacted me the most was having the privilege to interview Mr. Trovato for my podcast. It takes a lot to be vulnerable about our toughest battles and I am motivated by people like him.

What are your future career plans?

I hope to land in Broadcasting and Production in the future. It is so cool to have started this early in life with my long-term passion. Besides working in the media industry, I hope to continue service work as a pillar in my life and ultimately be planted in New York.

What lessons learned from TG, will you take with you?

Always ask for help, and surround yourself with people who want to grow in the same direction. I also take with me the fact it's never too late to change. I remember a teacher this last semester telling me after class to slow down and don't think the worst. That conversation instilled in me that it's always possible to strive to be your best self, which helped me know I wanted to implement more positivity in my life and be present. I feel loved by my educators and appreciate the realness I've experienced from them. I want to say a huge thank you to the administration at Totino-Grace for recognizing this work.

Meet Keith Welle | Industrial Arts Teacher

Keith Welle started his Totino-Grace teaching career as the part-time Wood, Metals, Drafting, and Power & Energy teacher in 1985. Thanks to his innovation and interest in the ever-changing fields of production and design, he developed a minimal Industrial Arts Department into a flourishing program. Under Welle's guidance, and thanks to the generosity of the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation, students have the rare opportunity to use a CNC (computer numerical control) machine in the classroom. Welle develops students who aren't only precise, safe, and original, but are excited to bring their knowledge to real-world applications.

buy into the concept that there is almost always a better way to build a piece, create a design, and strategize processes. At every step in a production process we ask, "have we found the best way to do it?"

How do you believe that the CNC machine will inspire new innovations at TG?

First, the addition of high precision machining has had the impact of totally restructuring our scope and sequence in the Industrial Arts curriculum. Our students will be able to make real world industry connections with their experiences in digital



TG is one of the only high schools in the state with access to a CNC machine. Thanks to a grant from the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation, our Career and Technical Education department was able to purchase this CNC machine.

Please share with our readers a brief history of your time at Totino-Grace.

I started here in 1985, left briefly for one year in '87, came back in '88 and I have been here ever since.

In your decades of teaching at Totino-Grace how have you brought innovation into your classroom?

In my time teaching woodworking, I have made a strong effort to change the mindset of woodworking precision. Woodworking is generally regarded as an industry where high precision isn't always a priority. It is in my classroom. Our students have learned processes and strategies where dimensional tolerances of a few thousandths of an inch can be achieved.

Describe a time when you helped to inspire innovation or creativity in your students.

I think to get students to push themselves with respect to creativity and innovation, it starts with working to get them to

manufacturing. Additionally, we will be able to more effectively strengthen the relationship between our E3 program and Industrial Arts. Students in both areas will have the capability and opportunity to create some amazing original designs.

What is an innovative project that a student has worked on in the past that made you go "whoa?"

I had a student a number of years ago who took almost every class Industrial Arts offered. He loved woodworking, he loved technical drawing, and he really loved engines. For his senior E3 capstone project in 2016, he designed a piston driven engine prototype that, instead of running off of combustible fuels, ran off of compressed air. He drew all of the parts in CAD, he 3D printed them, he assembled the engine, and it ran independently. Now, he experienced his share of mechanical failures and design changes along the way, but the engineering processes he employed and the creative solutions he found to some really hard problems made that project amazing.



Meet Al Hofstede, Jr. '99

Totino-Grace Board Member

After four years on the Totino-Grace board, Al Hofstede, Jr. '99 has seen many changes made to our school. Hofstede takes great pride in how our school uses innovation to push our student

and alumni community forward. What's the best way forward? Hostede argues, "reflecting on our past is just as important as thinking of the next best idea." Now a Health Benefit Consultant at One Digital, Hofstede is bringing his knowledge back to the hallways of TG with the hope of shaping the next generation.

Please introduce yourself, tell us about your background and what interested you in serving on the board of your alma mater, Totino-Grace.

Growing up in Northeast Minneapolis and attending St. Charles Borromeo, the transition to TG was a natural one. We had family and friends who had gone before, creating excitement based on their experiences, as well as grade school classmates headed to high school together. I was blessed to play numerous sports, participated in the men's choir, and of course had the pleasure to work with some of the best educators ever. I had a wonderful experience and learned critical lessons that stay with me and continue to teach me in my personal and professional life. My interest in the board was and remains a strong desire to ensure as many students as possible, from any walk of life, can have a similar or even better education experience. I believe every child is deserving and should have access to Totino-Grace.

In your opinion, what are the unique attributes of a Catholic education?

The largest differentiator is a faith-based foundation which shapes how we teach, support, and challenge all our students, Totino-Grace leadership, and ourselves as board members. When things are going well, or equally as important, when we have challenges, there is nothing stronger than being able to reflect on our Catholic and Lasallian teachings to remind ourselves of our core mission which is to serve each and every person, taking care of each other, evolving current and future generations to come.

What role does innovation play in the high school curriculum?

Innovation is maybe the most important component for all educational institutions. Students currently attending TG bring an amazing pool of talent that will have lasting impact on everyone's future. To maximize everyone's potential, it is our responsibility to always be evolving with fresh thinking. Not only to keep pace with our current student's interests and abilities, but proactively being a part of shaping the needs as new students and families join our community with new and exciting interests and talents.

As a 1999 graduate of Totino-Grace and a board member since 2019, how have the teaching styles and classroom interactions changed since you were a student?

Personally, what has not changed drives my inspiration to serve at Totino-Grace. The love and care for each student in our hallways remains loud, clear, and felt every day. That has not and never will shift. As I have conversations with teachers and leadership, "the torch," that love and care, is continually being passed on as we welcome new staff members and continue to grow with veteran members.

What are the two or three most important components of being a board member in a Catholic high school?

Hands down, the number one component is to continue creating opportunity for every student and generation that comes through our school. While I grew up in Catholic schools (St. Charles, Totino-Grace, St. Thomas) my experiences at Totino-Grace made the most profound impact on me personally. I made life-long friends and learned life-long lessons. When I was invited to join the board, I was all-in to give as many students and families as possible the same experiences that my family and I were given.

There is a critical description of leadership culture that was articulated to me when interviewed for the board, but I was unable to see it live until officially joining. We have an amazing team of different skill sets, a variety of ways of thinking, diverse backgrounds, and a ridiculously strong desire to collaborate with all TG staff to drive the school's mission forward. While I know this exists in many educational institutions and other organizations, it is a true gift to have a culture where we invite absolutely everyone to the table with a core focus - which is student success and opportunity.

Meet Michael Hamerlind '91

Totino-Grace Benefactor

Michael Hamerlind '91 knows what it means to donate his time, talents, and treasures to TG. Hamerlind attributes Totino-Grace in the development of his creativity and curiosity, eventually leading to him becoming a professional photographer (in fact he took the photos featured on the cover of this edition). You can find Hamerlind using his photography talents at TG events, donating during fundraisers like Give Day and the Eagle Shoot, and developing students into innovative professionals -like himself- as a board member. As Hamerlind continues to capture moments in our halls, he reflects on how TG continues to be a community of creativity and critical thinking.

What is photography in your own words?

Photography isn't about using the most expensive camera or lens; some of the best photos I've captured were taken with my phone. Photography is about capturing what is beautiful or unique or funny or emotional to the eye of the beholder. It's about freezing that moment in time so that we may glimpse into the past and never forget how we felt or what we thought. Photography allows us to catalog life as it happens and allows the photographer to tell a story without words or narration. Photography is art.

What is your favorite genre of photography? Why?

I love senior sessions. There's that moment in every high school senior shoot where the young man or woman realizes, "wow! I'm a rock star!" And when gallery delivery day comes, it's THEIR moment to see just how special and unrepeatable they are!

In your career as a professional photographer, in what ways does your occupation demand innovation?

Unlike the media of video and videography, a photographer must captivate the viewer with a still image, without the benefit of a soundtrack or special effects. I am always looking for unique backdrops or ways to frame my subject by utilizing the natural environment when we're shooting on location. Understanding light is probably the most important fundamental principle in any genre of photography, and mastering can lead to some stunningly innovative shots that make people go "WOW."

How did/does the curriculum at Totino-Grace foster innovation? Who would you say is the one teacher that encouraged you to try new things?

Even in the late 80s/early 90s, Totino-Grace was offering students opportunities for exploration that fostered and promoted innovative thinking. TG grads over the 5+ decades of school history seem to have one common thread; our finely tuned skill for critical thinking. Our teachers are always fully invested and challenge us to think for ourselves and always be questioning.

What exploration (courses, What motivates you to stay involved?

When I think of the legacy of Totino-Grace, I think of the generations of alumni that remain involved, long after they've graduated and long after THEIR kids have graduated. It's truly a community that lifts up Totino-Grace. That sense of community is palpable when you walk the halls of the school or attend an extra curricular event or function. The pride in our school community is truly something special. How could I NOT stay involved? I'm forever an Eagle and a proud advocate of our school.

Why do you volunteer/donate?

Like many high schoolers, it wasn't always easy as a teenager, and while there were many good times, there were also struggles. During those challenging times, there was always a faculty or staff person who checked up on me, offering mentorship, friendship, and guidance. It meant a lot to me and I'll never forget how it made me feel. I volunteer in the small ways I can to give back to the TG community that lifted me up. I donate to help offer those same opportunities to current students who might not otherwise be able to come to TG. That's what community does for one another. That's what makes Totino-Grace the special place that it is.





Meet Christine (Anderson) Olson '87

As the Marketing Manager for Midwest Rubber Service & Supply Co., Christine Anderson Olson '87 constantly thinks about the next fresh idea. While she is always looking forward, she took the time to reflect on how innovation in her

TG classrooms and co-curriculars prepared her for her future. After watching her three children, Amanda '16, Charlie '19, and Mariah '22 graduate from TG, Olson shares the stand-out moments from her family's education, and explains how TG crafts students into people of distinction.

What is your current position and how did Totino-Grace prepare you for your career?

Totino-Grace played a big part in how and why I ended up in business as a Marketing Manager. In all my classes, regardless of the subject, the teachers gave us projects where we had to use creativity to present information. I took a few business courses at TG too. In one of them we had to plan and open a fake restaurant. We had fun recording a radio ad and designing a menu that would attract customers. Out of the classroom, being an E'gal on the dance team taught me hard work, how to be a team player, how to win with humility and lose with grace; but most of all I learned how to take corrections! With dance you need a strategy, a theme, costumes, music, and ultimately you need to know and understand your audience and the judges. That's exactly what marketing is!

Did the TG curriculum prepare you for your first/next/current job?

Yes, the TG curriculum prepared me for all the steps in my career journey. The strong writing skills I learned in the English classes and literature classes at TG were the foundation for what I do today. Mrs. Newman's English class stands out for teaching us the mechanics of writing as well as giving us the opportunity to write, rewrite, and rewrite again until it's just right. I still use this process to get my marketing messaging just right.

Innovation is an important skill to help employers create new ideas and solve complicated problems. As a leader in your company, what do you look for with new hires when it comes to innovation?

I often look for someone who has a background in psychology. Understanding human behavior and why people do what they do is very helpful. I like someone who shows me something a bit different on their resume or their LinkedIn page. People who are willing to experiment with interesting angles on subjects, and/or try new technology and software to create reports, content, and messaging are great hires.

You are a parent of three alums, and the aunt of two current TG students, how have you witnessed TG incorporate innovation in the classrooms or in its co-curricular activities?

The electives offered at TG helped all my kids determine their potential path of study in college. My daughter Mariah graduated from TG in 2022 and took a marketing class at TG that required her to make a store window display shadow box for a clothing store. I loved hearing her explain her project and seeing the result. She is currently in the school of communications at Marquette. Charlie was in the E3 engineering institute and learned so many great skills. He ultimately decided he did not want to go into engineering but the problem-solving skills he learned helped him in his double major of Information Technology and Finance. Amanda '16 and Mariah '22 were both E'gals on the dance team. The dedication of this program to turn out women with character is second to none! It taught them grit, teamwork, how to take corrections, and how to be a good person who happens to be a talented dancer.

How would you advise TG to plan for the future and encourage innovation in our students?

I would encourage TG to keep up the good work! I have always been impressed with the cutting-edge programs being offered, like the E3 institute. The new recording studio sounds fantastic, and I'll bet the students could write and record a podcast, which are very popular marketing skills these days.



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Totino-Grace Homestay Program: An International Experience at Home

Beginning with the 2023-2024 school year, Totino-Grace is excited to offer a homestay program for international and domestic students outside of Minnesota. Homestay placements are a great way for students to become fully immersed into daily life and establish strong connections in our community. Truly offering a home away from home.

Families interested in learning more about hosting an international or domestic Totino-Grace student and compensation should contact Shanna Peterson, Assistant Director of Enrollment and International Students, at shanna.peterson@totinograce.org or 763-586-6318.



Thuy and her host sister, Mary Seifert '21.

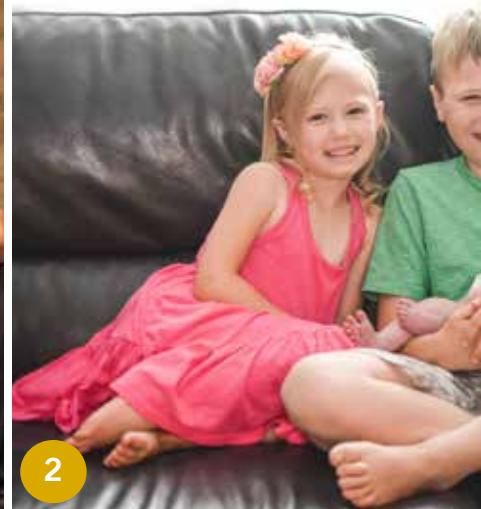


Thuy '19, Jodi and Bill Seifert and Jodi's parents, Joyce and Gary Robinson, gather at TG.

Class Notes

1990 PHOTO 1

Kris Swarthout '90 created a beer "Basil McRae" that was recently picked up by Fulton. The name comes from the Minnesota North Star player and Mighty Ducks actor, Basil McRae. The photo shows Swarthout and McRae during a meet-and-greet event at the brewery.



2000

Aleks Rowinski '00 and spouse Sara Mengwasser welcome baby Michael Aleksander Rowinski on January 24, 2023.

PHOTO 2

Donovan Foley '00 and **Wendee (Lensing) Foley '00** welcomed their 5th child, Eliza Grace, on June 28, 2022.



2002 PHOTO 3

Dave Schmidt '02 and wife Laura welcomed their third son, George, in 2022.

2003

Kristen (Rafferty) Wilde '03 and spouse Jacob Wilde got married on September 17, 2022 in Wayzata, MN.

2004 PHOTO 4

David Combs '04 qualified to play in the USGA Mid Amateur at Erin Hills in WI, September 2022. Pat Wotta '04 served as his caddy.

2005 PHOTO 5

Rob Shinar '05 and wife Bre welcomed their first baby, daughter Ferris Ann, on May 5, 2022.





2007

After receiving the 2020 MNSHAPE (Minnesota Society of Health And Physical Education) Teacher of the Year Award, **Jen (Terry) Heebink '05** won the 2022 Central District Adapted Physical Education Teacher of the Year Award. In April of 2022, it was announced at the SHAPE America National Conference that Jen was the 2022 SHAPE America National Adapted Physical Education Teacher of the Year.

PHOTO 6

Matt Norris '07 was elected in the Minnesota House of Representatives on November 10, 2022.

Ellen (Bina) Koneck '07 was named the Executive Director of Commonweal Magazine, in anticipation of their centennial celebration in 2024, on August 15, 2022.

2010 PHOTO 7

Adam Riess '10 and wife Lindsey welcomed daughter Elaine Tyler, born January 2023.

2012

Krista Pylkki '12 co-authored a publication titled, "Trauma-Informed Care Policies and Practices for Higher Education" on the University of St. Thomas School of Education website, November 10, 2022.





2013 PHOTO 8

Lexi Wright '13 and husband Andrew Wright welcomed a baby girl, Leighton Wright, on October 27, 2022.

PHOTO 9

Abigail Groves '13 and Matt Meyer got married in September 2022 with many Totino-Grace alumni in attendance including: **Megan (Dahl) Durbin '13**, **Alexis (Rice) Wright '13**, **Kathryn Eischeid '13**, **Andrea (Gagnon) Bonine '13**, **Maddie (Cheasick) Barry '13**, **Julia Cheasick '15**, **Darian (Winslow) Hughes '13**, and **Molly (Groves) Schiavo '09**.

2014 PHOTO 10

Madison (Meritt) Lyden '14 married Lane Lyden on June 25, 2022. **Sisters MaKenna Merritt '25**, **Marisa Merritt '17**, and friend **Katie Moynagh '14**, were beside her on the big day.





2014 PHOTO 11

Gabby (Schauer) Lehner '14 married husband Ben Lehner on September 10, 2022 at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church. The photo includes all the past staff/faculty, current staff/faculty, and TG graduates ranging from 1971-2026. After the picture, they sang the Totino-Grace fight song.

PHOTO 12

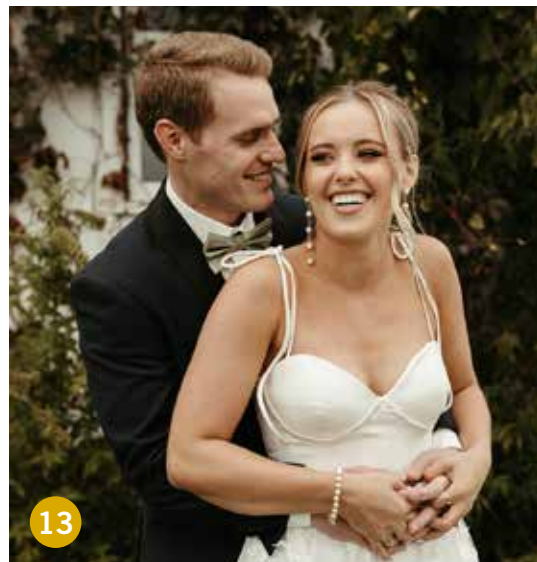
Madison (Merrit) Lyden '14 married Lane Lyden on June 25, 2022. **Sisters MaKenna Merritt '25, Marisa Merritt '17**, and friend **Katie Moynagh '14**, were beside her on the big day.

2016 PHOTO 13 & 14

Nicole Gagnon '16 and **Nick Holtan '16** started dating their sophomore year at TG and got married in September 2022 with many alumni in the wedding party and in attendance including: **Tyler Delwiche '12, Andrew Lyons '16, Ron Johnson '16, Jake Pinc '16, Drew Lodermeier '16, Dan Jacobs '16, Jake Sitarz '16, Blake Walczynski '16, Matt Gullickson '16, John Wander '16, Alec Spevacek '16, Hayden Lacy '16, Anna Kinnan '16, Rosie McGinty '16, Andrea Gagnon '13, Danielle Gagnon '22, and Chloe Delwiche '12** all in the wedding party.

2017

Ethan Tollefson '17 graduated last Spring from KU with his Master's degree in Architecture and is working at the Smith Group in Colorado.





Totino-Grace
High School

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Luncheon begins at 11:30 a.m.
Shotgun Start at 1:00 p.m.



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