



ISSUE 01

DAMIEN CONNECTION

OCT 2025

WELCOME TO OUR

Alumni Newsletter



Welcome to the Damien Connection

We are excited to launch this newsletter to our alumni as a way to connect our past and present. As part of our #WeAreDAMIEN campaign, this newsletter celebrates the alumni who continue to shape the legacy of Damien Memorial School.

You are an essential part of our story, and it is our hope that these updates bring you both nostalgia and pride for the community we've built together.

In this newsletter:

Alumni Spotlight, College Visits, Campus Updates

Upcoming Events

- 11/1 – Backyard Paʻina
- 11/6–7 – Day of Giving
- 11/08 – Open House

Dear Damien Alumni

I'm delighted to welcome you to the inaugural edition of our alumni newsletter—a space dedicated to celebrating the legacy, growth, and continued connection of our remarkable community.

Whether you graduated last year or decades ago, you remain an essential part of the Damien Memorial School story. This newsletter is our way of keeping you close to the heartbeat of campus life, sharing updates on student achievements, faculty milestones, upcoming events, and ways you can stay involved.

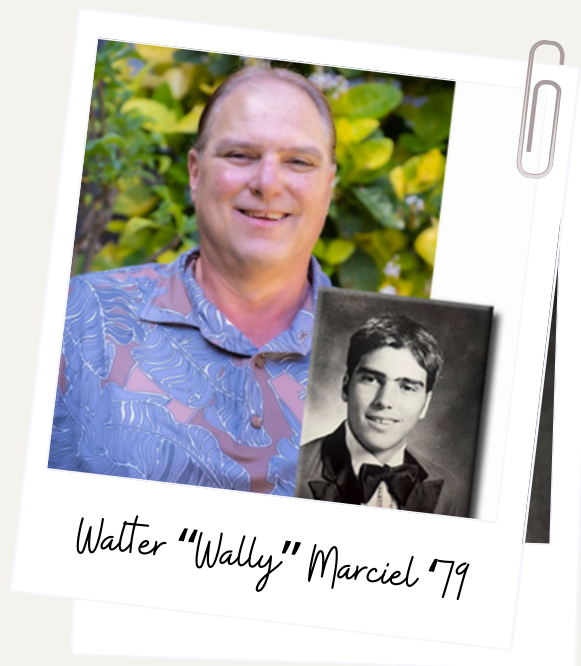
As interim president and proud alumnus, I've had the privilege of witnessing firsthand the impact our alumni make in the world. Your accomplishments inspire our students, your generosity strengthens our programs, and your stories remind us why our mission matters.

Each week, we'll bring you snapshots of life at Damien Memorial School, opportunities to reconnect, and reflections from fellow alumni. I hope this newsletter becomes a source of pride, nostalgia, and renewed engagement.

Thank you for being part of our enduring legacy. We're excited to walk this journey with you—week by week.

Mahalo for being part of our story.

Wally Marciel
Interim President



BE PART OF OUR NEWSLETTER

Have a life update you want to share? We want to celebrate with you!

Email us at communications@damien.edu

SHARE

COLLEGE UPDATES

One of the new additions on campus is our College and Career Center. We are fortunate to have Ms. Emma Ka'aha'aina as our College Counselor. Ms. K is not a new face on campus as she previously held the role as high school counselor for the past 3 years.



The new College and Career Center provides students with a welcoming space to explore their postsecondary options. Students can schedule one-on-one or small group meetings based on their needs, whether for college planning, career exploration, or application support.

The center is stocked with brochures, flyers, and other resources from a wide variety of colleges and universities. In addition, students can find up-to-date information on internships, scholarships, SAT preparation, and application tips to help guide their next steps.

This October, our junior class will be attending the NACAC where students will get to speak to over 100 college admissions counselors from around the world.

In addition, there will also be a College and Military Service event which will give our students a look at what military opportunities are available for them.



FIRST QUARTER COLLEGE VISITS

1. University of Portland (4 students from CO 2025 currently attending)
2. Chaminade (3 students from CO 2025 currently attending)
3. Cal Poly
4. Notre Dame
5. UH Hilo (2 students from CO 2025 currently attending)
6. Loyola Marymount University (1 student from CO 2025 currently attending)
7. Portland State University
8. Oregon Tech
9. Willamette University
10. University of Oregon (1 student from CO 2025 currently attending)
11. Seattle University (4 students from CO 2025 currently attending)
12. Woodbury University
13. Saint Mary's College of California
14. Creighton University (1 student from CO 2025 currently attending)
15. Colorado Mesa University
16. Oregon State University (1 student from CO 2025 currently attending)
17. Gonzaga University (4 students from CO 2025 currently attending)
18. Linfield University
19. UH Mānoa College of Social Sciences
20. Washington State University
21. University of Northern Colorado
22. Pacific University (2 students from CO 2025 currently attending)
23. Saint Martin's University
24. Mount Saint Mary's University
25. Boston University
26. UH Mānoa (general admissions) (16 students from CO 2025 currently attending)
27. UNLV (1 student from CO 2025 currently attending)
28. University of San Francisco (1 student from CO 2025 currently attending)
29. Embry Riddle University (1 student from CO 2025 currently attending)

TWO GENERATIONS, ONE STORY

A Monarch Memory from '98

For Phil Higa '98, Damien Memorial has always been more than a school—it's where he was shaped as a student, where he returned to teach, and now, where he gets to watch his daughter Madi '26 make her own memories.

Phil still recalls one of his favorite moments from senior year baseball: "We beat Kamehameha at Ala Wai on my dad's birthday. One of the Kamehameha batters hit a foul ball that broke a window on my dad's truck. My dad said it was worth it. My brother Matty was also on the team, so the three of us got to share that awesome day."

Much has changed since then—including Damien becoming co-ed. Phil admits, "Because I had graduated from the men-only version of Damien and began my teaching career the same way, I initially had some apprehension about that change.

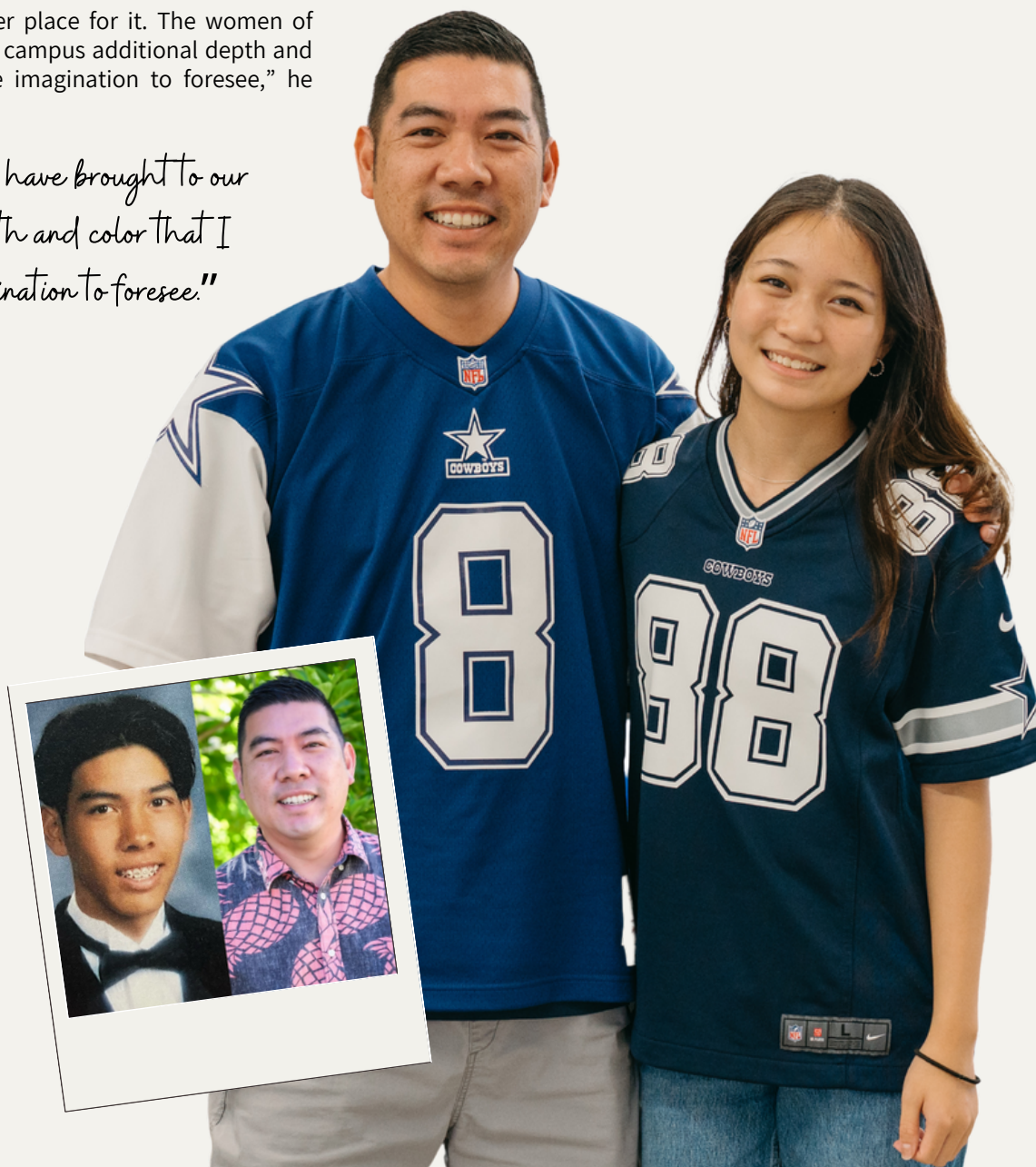
"But Damien is such a better place for it. The women of Damien have brought to our campus additional depth and color that I didn't have the imagination to foresee," he adds.

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Then and Now at Damien

Still, the heart of Damien remains the same. Higa points to the tradition of teachers who invest deeply in their students. Teachers like Rudy Alejo, Steve Lewis, Ian Cooke, Sharaine Kim, Neil Nitta, and Br. Francis Popish laid that foundation in high school, but also when he became an educator himself. "My mentors went beyond the classroom," he said.

"Today, I see that same passion in my colleagues. They don't just love teaching. They love Damien."





One tradition, in particular, stands out for him: the bricklaying ceremony and walk across the Alumni Path. “The event signals the students’ transition from seniors to members of the alumni association,” Higa said. “It is an honor to be included in the group of faculty and staff alums to welcome the seniors into our family.”

A Family Tradition Continues

That feeling of tradition hit home when his daughter, Madi, entered high school. “When I saw her in her cheer uniform with MONARCHS across her chest, I cried,” Higa describes. “I didn’t know it would matter so much. But it did.”

Madi started her Monarch journey in middle school. Now a senior, Madi recalls riding to campus early with her dad. She shares that “throughout my time at Damien, many people have asked me how I’d feel when I have him as a teacher.” This year, she officially has her dad as her 12th grade English teacher.

Looking ahead, she hopes to pursue newscasting and continue leading in college and beyond. “Through Student Government, I found I love helping others,” she said. “I don’t like bossing people around, but I like guiding teamwork.”

Passing on Traditions and Values

Madi hopes to create a new tradition connecting with students who, like her, have parents working at Damien.

Reflecting on his journey, Higa ties it all back to the school’s motto: Viriliter Age. “Most of life is in small, daily responsibilities,” he said. “The most Viriliter Age thing I can do is take care of the ‘have to’ list before the ‘want to’ one.”

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT WHO'S NEXT?

Do you know a Damien graduate doing something amazing in their career, community, or family life? We’d love to feature them in our next Alumni Spotlight!

Send your nominations to our
Director of Marketing and
Communications,
Levanna Eugenio, at
communications@damien.edu

email us!



CLASS NOTES

Send us your milestones and keep your classmates up to date!

We love celebrating the achievements of our alumni! Whether it's a new job, a promotion, a degree earned, a marriage, a new addition to your family, or another exciting life update, we want to hear from you. Your story could be featured in our next newsletter.

[Email Us](#)



CAMPUS NEWS

Discover all the exciting things happening on our campus! Check out our weekly newsletter for updates, highlights, and stories that showcase our vibrant school community.

[Read More](#)



STAY UPDATED

Our website is your go-to hub for the latest news, upcoming events, important resources, and everything happening on campus. Visit often to stay informed and celebrate all the great things our Monarch community is achieving!

[Website](#)



MONARCH NEWS



More outdoor seating

Our middle school Student Government donated 2 new benches as part of their campus beautification project last May. They fundraised and worked with our facilities team to put in new benches so our students can have more places to eat, study, and socialize.

Aquaponics

One of our popular science classes is Aquaponics where our students learn how to take care of our fish but also how to create sustainable food systems. Just this quarter, they harvested kalo-- talk about hands-on learning!



DMTV

Our school broadcast class, DMTV, just finished their segment on KHON2 where two of our student reporters got first-hand experience being on the news. This class runs a daily live stream on campus and on YouTube.

Damien Memorial School presents

THE
BACKYARD
PĀ'INA

SATURDAY – NOVEMBER 1, 2025
De Veuster Field — 4 – 9 pm

TICKETS

PRE-SALE ADMISSION

\$40

AT THE DOOR

\$50

VIP

\$125

*INCLUDES LOUNGE
ACCESS, DRINKS AND
HEAVY PUPUS*

