TODAY



NEWS FOR ALUMNI, PARENTS & FRIENDS | SPRING/SUMMER 2024

SAINT JOSEPH
A COLLEGE PREPARATORY SCHOOL



















A Brothers of the Sacred Heart School Since 1961

TODAY

Spring/Summer 2024

TODAY Magazine is published for the alumni, parents and friends of Saint Joseph High School.

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Tim LeCras - Director of Communications and Marketing/Editor of TODAY
Dylan Hollender '17 - Communications and Marketing Coordinator/Designer of TODAY

Send us your comments and suggestions.
By mail to:
Today Magazine
Office of Advancement
145 Plainfield Avenue
Metuchen, NJ 08840

By email to:
tlecras@stjoes.org

By phone:
(732) 549-7600 x. 270

Cover, Photo by Lors Photography

Facing Page: Photos by Lors Photography

Co-Valedictorians, Photo by Dylan Hollender '17

A Beacon of Faith, Photo by Dylan Hollender '17

F.A.L.C.O.N., Photo provided by Arthur Suckow '00

Mothers Club, Photo by Lors Photography

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A Letter from the *President*

Dear Falcon Family,



I hope this message finds you happy, healthy and enjoying the start of summer.

A few weeks ago we celebrated the Class of 2024 with a Baccalaureate Mass and Graduation Ceremony. This class holds a special place in my heart because we started our Saint Joseph journey together back in the fall of 2020.

A lot has changed since those early days of Zoom classes and other pandemic-related accommodations. But, one thing that remains the same is their level of excitement.

Whether it is cheering on their classmates at basketball games and bowling matches or the championship round of the Saint Joe's AAU Blacktop Basketball League, our boys are passionate about the brotherhood they have formed over the past four years and we can't wait to see what life has in store for them.

Speaking of the bowling team, a special shoutout to Kai Strothers '26 and the rest of the squad for representing Saint Joe's extremely well in the U.S. High School Bowling National Championship tournament earlier this month. Strothers became the first Falcon to win a National Championship, while the team finished ninth in the country. This caps an amazing few months for the team that included second consecutive team and individual state titles.

I am also pleased to report that our volleyball team won their second straight state championship by defeating Garfield in the NJSIAA Group 2 title game. The Falcons were the only repeat champion in the entire state.

In the classroom, the Class of 2024 worked hard to earn over $30.5 million in scholarships, with the average claimed scholarship totaling $92,134. More than 70 percent of the class earned a scholarship in excess of their four-year Saint Joseph High School tuition.

Our co-valedictorians, Caeleb Chendorain and Aryan Jeena, delivered sincere and heartfelt messages during the graduation ceremony that will resonate with their classmates forever. I anticipate great achievements from them at Stevens Institute of Technology and the University of Pennsylvania.

I would like to congratulate Wayne Fischer, a longtime Partner in Mission, who retired at the end of this school year. Mr. Fischer's dedication to Saint Joseph High School and the Brothers of the Sacred Heart is unmatched. He gave 46 years of his life to Saint Joe's and will be greatly missed.

We are elated to welcome home Karl Towns, Sr. P'14 as our next head basketball coach. Following a long career on the sidelines at Piscataway Tech, Karl has spent the last decade watching his son, Karl-Anthony '14, develop into an NBA superstar for the Minnesota Timberwolves. We look forward to watching Coach Towns mentor the next great Saint Joseph basketball players this coming winter.

As you may have seen, Saint Joseph Giving Day 2024 was our most successful single-day fundraiser ever. Collectively your support raised over $272,000 from 826 gifts - both are Giving Day records. A special shout out to the Class of 1983 for contributing over $11,000 from 36 donors. Your support goes a long way towards the success of our school.

Finally, a special congratulations to our Mothers Club for raising over $100,000 during the 49th Annual Basket Raffle. Thank you to all of our moms who generously gave their time, talent and treasure to make the event a success.

While we are excited for the summer months and trips to the beach, we are already working on next school year's signature events, including the return of Friday Night Lights, the inaugural Hall of Distinction Induction Ceremony, the Fifth Annual Green Tie Gala and Pocketbook Bingo. Details for all of these events will be available soon.

Once again, thank you for your continued support of Saint Joe's. We are extremely grateful and our school wouldn't be the same without you.

Gratefully,

John G. Nolan, Jr. P'09
President

A Letter from the *Principal*



Dear Saint Joseph Community,

It's hard to believe that the school year has come to a close. 10 months ago we welcomed our largest student body in some time. Since that day in late August, we have watched our young men consistently raise the bar on what being a Saint Joseph Man really means.

As the Class of 2024 walked down the aisles and out of the church on Graduation Day, I couldn't help but think back to their first days on campus in the fall of 2020 and the uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. Four years later, this class continues to make us proud each and every day.

We are very excited to report that 80 percent of the class earned a college scholarship, averaging $92,134. This is not only a testament of our students' commitment to excelling inside and outside the classroom, but also displays the dedication of our esteemed Partners in Mission. Their hard work does not go unnoticed and I do not know where our students would be without them.

With the end of the school year comes a bittersweet feeling as we will soon say goodbye to one of our longest tenured Partners in Mission, Wayne Fischer. For the past 46 years, Wayne has served the Saint Joseph Community in many ways, including as a teacher, administrator, moderator and coach. But, most of all, Wayne has been a great mentor to many of our current and former students and faculty. He will surely be missed.

As we celebrate another successful school year, I'd like to call to your attention a few highlights from the last 10 months:

- Our German students continue to shine on the National German Exams. Thomas Ogrodnik '24 earned his fourth Gold medal in a row, a feat that has never been achieved before. Devon Kiessling '24 and Owen Smythe '24 scored Silver medals, while Christian Concepcion '24 earned a Bronze medal.
- Arthur Yuen '25, along with his sister, won the New Jersey State Science Day Competition for their research on photocatalytic technology for air purification. Arthur's commitment to solutions-oriented research is a shining example of what Saint Joseph students are capable of when passion and dedication cross paths.
- From volunteering at local food pantries and soup kitchens, to working with the needy and underprivileged, our students accumulated over 20,000 service hours during the 2023-2024 school year.

While the school year has come to a close, our team is already at work preparing for next year. We are expecting to welcome 160 members of the Class of 2028 to campus in August, along with Falcon Bridge Program students and an array of transfers, all looking to build their own path at Saint Joe's.

Your continued support of our school and the mission of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart allows us to continue the tradition of excellence that every one of you experienced in one way or another. We couldn't do it without you. I pray that you have a safe and enjoyable summer!

Ametur Cor Jesu!

Ametur Cor Mariae!

Saint Joseph Pray for Us!

Your Partner in Mission,

Anne Rivera

Anne Rivera
Principal



Celebrating Excellence: Meet the Class of 2024

Co-Valedictorians

By: Christopher Harring '05

Success is always a relative concept, even in the world of academics. An English teacher may prioritize a student's creativity over his ability to follow specific parameters, just as a Math teacher may look for detailed work and a consistent process over natural ability that can't be highlighted with pencil and paper. Deciding who the valedictorian should be falls in the same class. When you have two students like Caeleb Chendorain and Aryan Jeena, who both finished their academic work with perfect records, the decision becomes much clearer.

Chendorian and Jeena were named as Co-Valedictorians of the Saint Joseph High School Class of 2024. The two could not be separated thanks to equally outstanding and pristine records of their academic work, taking the most rigorous course of study available. Neither student even had so much as an A on a Semester grade, highlighting just how consistently excellent a student needs to be to achieve the highest honor that Saint Joe's can award.

Chendorian started his time at Saint Joe's with just one other student from his graduating 8th grade class, but that never hindered his ability to get involved with the school in numerous ways. As a contributor both on and off the field for the soccer program and on the lanes with the two-time state champion bowling team, Chendorian showed the well rounded skills and positive attitude that has become a trademark of Saint Joe's finest. Chendorian's 11 AP courses, including three in Math where he has long excelled, include the most difficult classes that are available to high school students.

Jeena's success comes in a similar form, achieving high ranks in his studies as well as in his extracurricular work. During the 2023-2024 school year, Aryan was selected as a National Merit Finalist, an exclusive title he earned based on his academic prowess at Saint Joe's.

He rose to the rank of captain on the swim team thanks to his ability to relate well to others and willingness to guide younger peers in their own paths. Jeena was also a four year member of the Saint Joseph Theatre Company with "great comedic timing." Academically, his own slate of thirteen AP Courses over his time at Saint Joe's allowed him to challenge himself in ways that few others could. Of course, Jeena's creative and intuitive mind always allowed him to be up for the challenge.

"Aryan is a great mathematician because he had both the natural ability as well as a true desire and interest in problem solving," Math Department Chair David Arva '08 said. "Aryan wanted to know the 'why' of everything that he did, even if it wasn't at all necessary for the grading part of the equation. That natural curiosity will take him very far in his life and career."

This fall, Chendorian will be attending Stevens Institute of Technology and Jeena will be attending the University of Pennsylvania. The entire Saint Joseph Community wishes them well in the next steps of their academic careers!


SAINT JOSEPH
AMETUR COR JESU
METUCHEN N.J.



Students gather with campus chaplain Father Tom Lanza and senior leader Nereo Rossi to disucss the Gospel.

The Gospel of John Club: A Beacon of Faith and Community

By: Nereo Rossi III ‘24

In the rush of daily life, where constant deadlines and schedules overwhelm, many feel lost, unsure of where to turn or what to believe. Finding a sense of calm and direction can seem like an impossible task. However, John Risely ‘24, President of the Gospel of John Club, presents a calm assurance on a weekly basis that “Everything is going to be okay.”

Founded during the 2022-2023 school year by Robert Ilcyn ‘23 and Jeremiah Fairman ‘23, the Gospel of John Club started as a way to learn more about the Bible. This year, Risley has taken the group to a new level by sharing more with his peers, hoping to ignite a spark of hope and faith within the Saint Joe’s community.

“When I finally started to embrace my faith, I began to find the answers to those questions,” Risley, who will attend the University of Notre Dame in the fall, said. “Who am I? Why am I here? This gave me a new insight and I started to discover what the Bible really means and what it has to offer. It was natural for me to become the leader this year.”



Bishop James F. Checchio paid a visit to the club to study the Word with students.

Under Risley’s newfound leadership, students meet every week during lunch to not only read and study the Gospel of John, but to also encounter God’s love and explore their faith.

“God’s love is real, it exists,” Risley said. “You just have to say yes.”

More than just a place to discuss religious teachings, the Gospel of John Club is about forging a personal connection with Jesus and supporting one another on the journey of faith.

“It’s a great opportunity to begin a relationship with God, not just a transactional relationship with the Church,” Risley said. It’s this emphasis on relationship and community that sets this club apart.

For Jack Cummings ‘27, an avid member, the club offers both spiritual guidance and a sense of belonging.

"It's the best part of my day," he said. "It helps me realize that every single part of the Bible carries value and meaning."

During one of the weekly meetings, Bishop James Checchio visited the Saint Joe's campus to see what the Gospel of John Club is all about.

"It's so beautiful to see, all you young men coming here on your lunch break, to study the words of Saint John and read scripture," Bishop Checchio said.

Campus Chaplain Father Tom Lanza, a guiding figure within the club, notes the genuine desire for knowledge and growth among its members. But what struck him the most was how the club was completely run by students.

"You have student leaders that have gotten other students to think about where true joy and happiness comes from," Father Tom said.

Beyond knowledge and understanding, the Gospel of John Club also fosters the Saint Joe's Brotherhood.

"It's a judgment-free zone where students are free to ask questions," Father Tom said.

Director of Campus Ministry Tracey Coudriet notes the impact of the club on its members as they listen to the discussions and insights each week.

"You can see their openness to what they're hearing," she said.

As the Gospel of John Club continues to thrive, it welcomes any student who wants to strengthen their faith or just see what it's all about. Coudriet advises students to give the club a "shot."

"Once a student makes that leap of faith, they might be surprised and realize it's what they've been searching for all along," Coudriet said.

Nereo Rossi is a 2024 graduate of Saint Joseph High School. He will be attending Grand Canyon University in the fall with a focus on media.





Senior leader John Risley opens up a conversation with club members after the meeting's passage.



Meet Our Chaplain

By: Avery Stetz '25

Saint Joseph High School welcomed Father Tom Lanza as the newest chaplain for the 2023-2024 school year.

Ordained a priest for the Diocese of Metuchen in 2020, Fr. Tom has served in various capacities at Immaculata High School and Rutgers University. He currently serves as the Diocese's Vocations Director.

Prior to his formal appointment, Fr. Tom took part in several Saint Joe's formation activities, including Kairos retreats. His strong connection with Saint Joe's students led to Saint Joe's President John Nolan's formal request for a campus chaplain to Bishop James Checchio.

"We are thrilled to have Father Tom join the Saint Joe's community," Nolan said. "He is a great role model for our students and will add another layer of faith formation to our school."

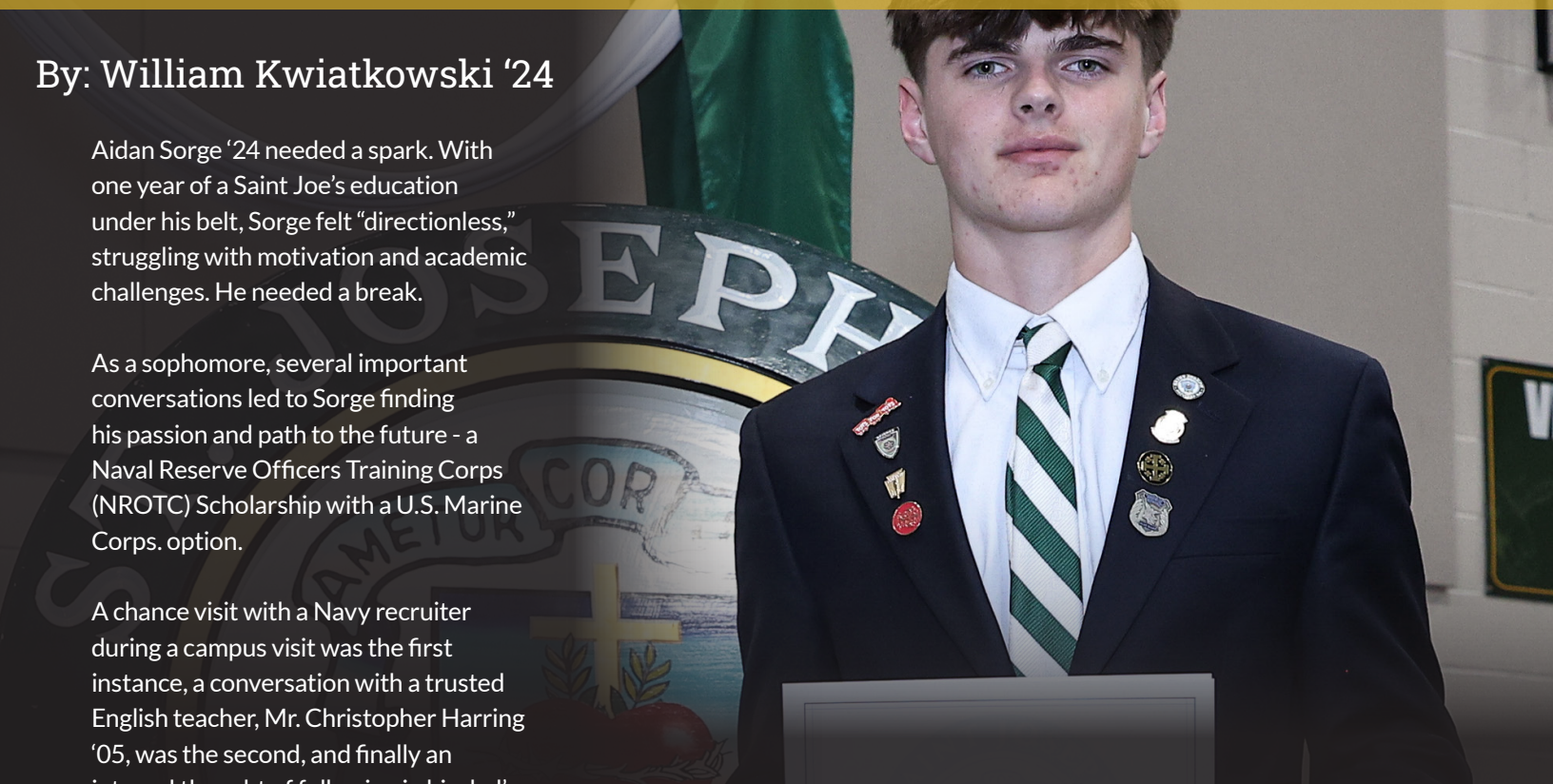
Father Tom aims to continue Saint Joseph's message by being an advocate for students to help find their purpose in the world.

"Saint Joe's has a tremendous amount of young men looking to find themselves," Lanza said. "They are working hard to figure out who they are, then go out into the world, our churches, and make it a better place. I want to be there for the guys that are going through life and walk with them on their journey."

We are happy and grateful for Father Tom's presence as he continues his work here at Saint Joseph High School to help build men of the future.

Avery Stetz is a rising senior at Saint Joseph High School and is a member of the Advanced Journalism class.

Finding Direction - Saint Joe's Graduate Awarded NROTC Scholarship to Tulane University



By: William Kwiatkowski '24

Aidan Sorge '24 needed a spark. With one year of a Saint Joe's education under his belt, Sorge felt "directionless," struggling with motivation and academic challenges. He needed a break.

As a sophomore, several important conversations led to Sorge finding his passion and path to the future - a Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC) Scholarship with a U.S. Marine Corps. option.

A chance visit with a Navy recruiter during a campus visit was the first instance, a conversation with a trusted English teacher, Mr. Christopher Harring '05, was the second, and finally an internal thought of following in his dad's footsteps, a Navy ROTC Scholarship recipient himself, was the final straw.

"When I heard about the Marines NROTC scholarship, I thought this is perfect for me," Sorge said. "The ability to get your regular college experience while also preparing myself for something I have always wanted to do was an opportunity I could not pass up."

The NROTC Scholarship, a program that provides full tuition stipends, summer training opportunities and more to an approved Navy ROTC college or university, was Sorge's golden ticket, and "ignited a fire" inside and outside the classroom.

"Everything happened at once," Sorge said. "I felt a new sense of direction in life and now I had the motivation to chase my new goal. After this, my mindset about how I went about school and life in general changed."

Sorge saw challenges as opportunities for growth. Whether it was his grades or physical fitness, Sorge remained focused on becoming the "best possible candidate."

By the end of his sophomore year, Sorge was experiencing much success. Aside from his improvement in the classroom, he had also become physically fit. His dedication extended to all aspects of life, including preparing for the physical tests required for the NROTC Scholarship.

"I began dedicating more time to my grades and physical wellbeing," Sorge said. "I worked harder in school, developed better study habits, and adopted a new work ethic in every aspect of life."

When Sorge faced adversity, he pushed through, often seeking help from his teachers.

"My teachers were instrumental in my success throughout high school and were big motivators for me," Sorge said. "When I came to Saint Joe's, I mentioned my lack of direction and the difficulties that came with it. I give a lot of credit to my teachers for helping me find a goal in life and doing all it takes to help me reach it."

Sorge's story is a powerful example of what it means to be a Saint Joe's man. His journey highlights the importance of setting goals, seeking support, and working tirelessly to achieve them. As he prepares for the next chapter of his life with an NROTC Scholarship to Tulane University, Sorge embodies the values and mission of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart. From a directionless freshman to a focused and driven future Marine, Sorge is a testament to the transformative power of Saint Joseph High School.

William Kwiatkowski is a 2024 graduate of Saint Joseph High School. He will be attending Indiana University in the fall with a focus on journalism.

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stjoes.org/store

School News

SAINT JOE'S SUPPORTS THE FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP FOOD BANK

Spearheaded by Enrique Mercado '25, the Saint Joseph High School community came together to sponsor a food drive that supported REPLENISH, a Middlesex County non-profit government agency with a goal to end hunger. 12 bins of food were donated to the REPLENISH network's 160 food pantries, soup kitchens, and social service agencies.



SAINT JOE'S JUNIOR EARNS PERFECT SCORE ON PSAT

The PSAT is a rigorous day of testing for high school students across America, but for Ronan Pell '25, it was an opportunity to demonstrate academic excellence. Pell earned a perfect score on the exam, taken at the end of his sophomore year. Outside of the classroom, he is also heavily involved in the Investment Club and is an award-winning Model United Nations delegate.



CLAYVILLE REACHES 1K CAREER POINTS MILESTONE

In the midst of an intense semifinal game in the Whitey Dukiet Holiday Classic, Jeremy Clayville '24 became the latest Falcon to reach the 1,000 point milestone. Jeremy will continue his athletic career at NCAA Division I Saint Francis University in the fall.



JUNIOR NAMED 'STATE WINNER' OF NJ SCIENCE DAY COMPETITION

Arthur Yuen '25 and his sister Amelia, a student at St. Thomas Aquinas High School, took home the top award at the NJ Science Day Competition for their research on "Photocatalytic Technology for Air Purification." The project explored the potential to use photocatalytic methods in addressing air pollution.



Edison Rotary Seniors of the Month

September
Giovanni Oliveti
Nereo Rossi III

October
Lucas Estela
Oluwaniademi Ogundana
Giuseppe Spagnuolo

November
Thomas DeAmorin
Ryan Xavier
Michael Dylan Lee

December
Michael-Tristan Almonte
Zachary Kovacs
Aedan Small

January
Kyle Giuliano
Lorenz Matanguihan

February
Colin Brockman
Georgi Manianchira

March
Aidan Sorge
Devon Kiessling

April
Aryan Jeena
Andrew Kojima

May
William Kwiatkowski
John Risley

June
Evan Chin
Kaiden Thomas



The Falcons & Friends Club hosts monthly activity nights for our Friends with special needs and disabilities, including an annual prom.



Michael Dylan Lee earned recognition as the Edison Rotary Senior of the Year.



Jake Drumm '24



Golf coach Ryan Lechner



Hunter Mabee '25

A NIGHT FOR FALCONS & FRIENDS ALIKE

On a beautiful April night, the Catanzaro Cafeteria transformed into a ballroom full of Falcons dancing and singing the night away with our Friends with special needs and disabilities thanks to the Falcons & Friends Club. This year marked the second annual prom event, with many more to be held in the coming years.

MICHAEL DYLAN LEE: SENIOR OF THE YEAR

Michael Dylan Lee '24 was named the 2024 Edison Rotary Senior of the Year. Michael is an active member of the Saint Joe's community, being involved in Campus Ministry Council and founding the ImmiGREAT Club, which educates and raises awareneess of the plight of hardworking immigrants. Outside of school he has served on Congressman Frank Pallone's Youth Advisory Council.

HOCKEY STARS DOMINATE THE ICE

The Falcons Ice Hockey team saw tremendous success this season, with Jake Drumm '24 and Hunter Mabee '25 both reaching their 100th career point. Mabee was named as the NJ Devils Player of the Month in January.

GOLF COACH EARNS 250 CAREER WINS

Director of Operations Ryan Lechner earned his 250th win as head golf coach during a match against Old Bridge on April 10. He has been coaching the team since the Spring season of 2004.

The **Dynasty** Continues

By: Tim LeCras

Kai Strothers '26 stood in the lanes at Bowlero in North Brunswick with a calm, collected look on his face. There was no smile. His eyes pierced on the pins in front of him like they have been thousands of times prior.
As he approached the lane and lifted his left arm, there was nothing but determination on his mind.

The bowl slid down the lane, into the pocket and exploded the pins into the backdrop. A strike, his ninth of the game and the deciding mark in Strothers' run to his second straight NJSIAA Individual Bowling Championship.

"My first thought was 'Wow, all the hard work paid off,'" Strothers said. "This hasn't really been my season, but I'm glad it ended with a bang."

For the second straight year, it was a Saint Joe's 1-2 finish on the podium, as Strothers outlasted his teammate and best friend Will Cunningham '26 in the championship match. Newcomer Josh Lamoreaux '27 finished No. 5.

"They've come here and taken the program to new heights," head coach Rusty Thomsen said. "Its the place to be, everyone wants to come here. They laid the foundation and you see what is coming here."

Cunningham carried the Falcons through much of the season, including a perfect game in the team's Group 2 semifinal match earlier in the week.

"As the year went on, Will carried the load," Thomsen said. "He wanted the ball in his hands. He deserved the win as much as anyone else. Will did everything in his power to earn it but ran into someone that was just locked in. It's not like he lost to some nobody, he lost to the best."

Saint Joe's had all six of the starting varsity bowlers participate in the NJSIAA Individual Bowling Tournament, which invites the Top 100 bowlers from across the state.

The previouus year's runner-up Devon Kiessling '24 finished No. 20, EJ Chin '24 placed No. 26 and Joey Lamoreaux '27 was No. 87.

Strothers' back-to-back individual state title capped an amazing week for the team. The Falcons captured their second consecutive NJSIAA Group 2 Team Championship, marking the first athletic program to win back-to-back titles since the basketball program a decade ago.

"They're the most competitive team I've ever met, the most competitive kids I've ever met," Thomsen said. "It's contagious. They just feed off each other in a positive way. It makes my life easier. Everyone thinks it's smooth sailing, but they work hard. They put the work in and they do everything right. They're humble, and that's the best part. They're all good humble kids."

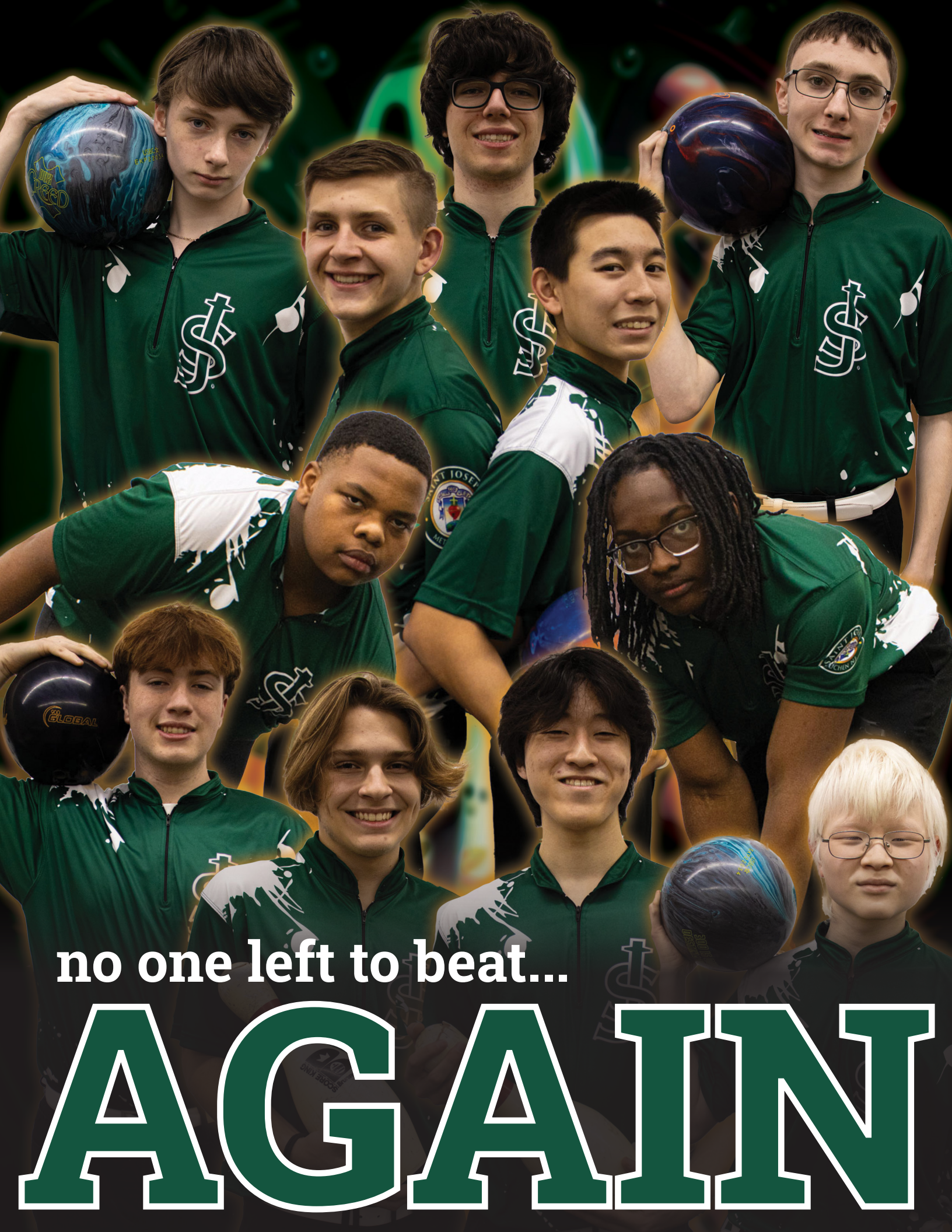
The dynamic group of bowlers, including Chin, Kiessling, Cunningham, Strothers, Joey Lamoreaux '27 and Josh Lamoreaux '27, dominated the lanes, combining to score over 1,000 pins in each of the four games they bowled in the semifinal and state championship match, 2-0 shutouts over Jefferson and Overbrook.

"It took a lot of teamwork and a lot of hard work," Chin said. "This team is talented, but works extra hard. That's why we get the job done. If talent is giving, it has to be capitalized on. The team itself works very hard."

Cunningham threw his third perfect game of the year in the semifinal match against Jefferson. He finished with a 569 two-game series.

In the state championship match, four of the five starters bowled over 400, with Cunningham throwing a 439, Lamoreaux a 430, Kiessling a 425 and Strothers a 420.

As a team, Saint Joe's finished the season with a perfect 25-0 record in dual matches for the second straight year, leaving no one left to beat…again.


no one left to beat...
AGAIN



Brian Christie
Appalachain State
Wrestling



Jeremy Clayville
Saint Francis
Basketball



Elias Scott
Bates College
Football



Jason Ridges
Morehouse College
Football



Devon Kiessling
Indiana Wesleyan
Bowling

Taking It to the **Next Level**

By: Giacomo Imperiale '25

Through pure hardwork and determination, 11 Saint Joseph Class of 2024 student-athletes will continue their athletics career in college.

Every athlete had a unique journey, filled with countless challenges which has prepared them to play at the next level. The common denominator is the belief that Saint Joe's helped shape them into the best version of themselves and prepared them for college athletics.

A captain of Saint Joe's Top 20 wrestling program, Brian Christie '24 recently signed with NCAA Division I Appalachian State. He credits a lot of his success to head coach Mike Carbone and his teammates.

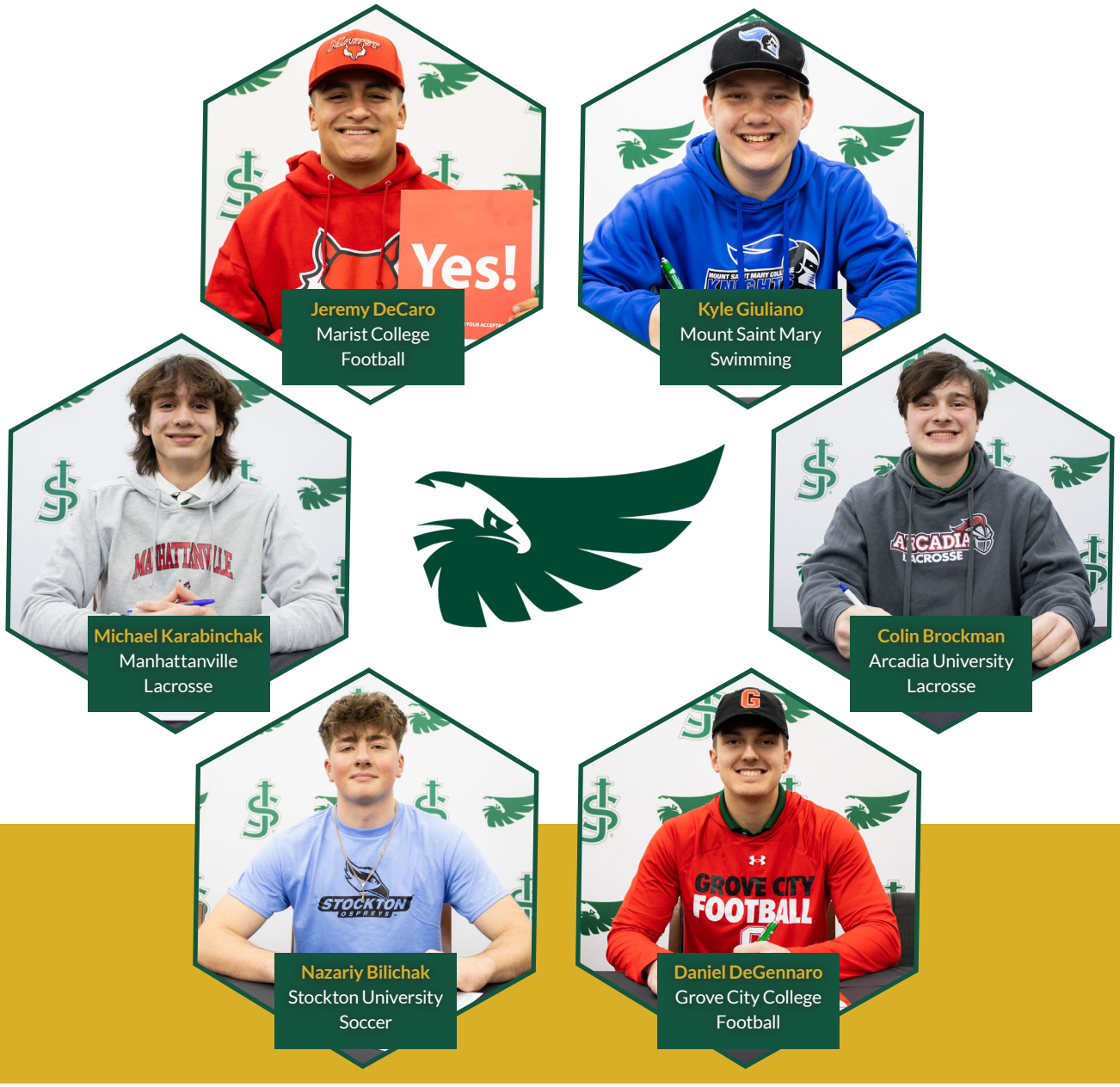
"Honestly, there are not even words to express all they did for me," Christie said. "Coach Carbone and my teammates were there every step of the way through every injury, every win, every loss, and all of the highs and lows."

Christie is looking forward to competing everyday on the mat for Appalachian State next winter.

"Just being on the big stage and having thousands of people looking at you and being able to give my all is awesome and I can't wait for it," Christie said.

Football linebacker and captain Elias Scott has a strong belief that Saint Joe's helped propel him into the best situation to succeed at the next level.

"The Saint Joe's football program had a terrific impact on my career especially when Coach Tracy came in, he changed the culture to help build everyone up" Scott said. "The team really is a brotherhood, I know it may be overused, but it's definitely a true thing. We give each other 100 percent of ourselves all of the time."



Scott signed with Bates College and is getting ramped up to head to Lewsiton, Maine for what he hopes to be a successful freshman campaign.

"I'm looking forward to the football season, meeting new teammates, and trying to start as a freshman," Scott said. "I just want to get off to a good start and make the freshman All-American team."

For two-time state champion and bowling leader Devon Kiessling, his goal to bowl in college wasn't always clear until Saint Joe's head bowling coach Rusty Thomsen saw his potential.

"I never really expected to go to college for bowling early in my Saint Joe's career," Kiessling said. "During the summer of my sophomore year, my coach said I could possibly get a scholarship to bowl in college. After that we just pushed the pedal to the metal and I think it all worked out in the end."

The constant drive from Kiessling proved to be successful as the senior signed with Indiana Wesleyan (NAIA). One thing always remained certain for Kiessling and that was his strong belief that the Saint Joe's bowling team and coaches have shaped him into the athlete he is today.

"Coach Thomsen is the type of person to fix something immediately when he sees something wrong, which I love," Kiessling said. "On top of that my teammates have taught me what a real team player is, to be more of a leader and to guide the team."

A commonality with each of these three senior athletes is hard work and dedication. The perserverance of these students exemplifies the Saint Joe's difference in action.

Giacomo Imperiale is a rising senior at Saint Joseph High School and is a member of the Advanced Journalism class.

Living a 27 Year-Long Dream

By: Jack Kemler '24

December 5, 2023 started as an ordinary day for Marc Johnstone '15, a right wing for the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins, the American Hockey League affiliate of the Pittsburgh Penguins. The day ended as one of the most memorable of his life when he received news decades in the making - THE call to the National Hockey League.

It came as an impromptu meeting in head coach J.D. Forrest's office.

During the conversation, Johnstone was told he had "some video to do," but then the real news broke.

"Getting the call from the coaches was special," Johnstone said. "The feeling was just unbelievable. I had to breathe on manual for what felt like the next 72 hours before game time."

Johnstone made his Pittsburgh Penguins debut on the road against the Florida Panthers on December 8, 2023. His close family and friends watched with not a single dry eye among them, including Saint Joe's head ice hockey coach Ryan Carter.

"I cried," Carter said. "I cried, it's as simple as that."

The call to the NHL was 27 years in the making for the Cranford, New Jersey native. Johnstone first put on ice skates at 5 years old and never really looked back.

While his brother Richie '12 was a senior, the younger Johnstone enrolled at Saint Joseph High School in 2011. As Falcons, the brothers won the Greater Middlesex Conference Ice Hockey Championship together. Johnstone said being able to share that joy with his older brother was "an incredible feeling."

Johnstone tallied 140 points and won the GMC championship all four years during his Saint Joe's career. Carter realized early that something special was brewing.

"He always stood out as someone who always tried to do the right thing," Carter said. "Marc was a phenomenal leader. A player that was willing to score a goal, make an assist, make a great hit, block a shot, and he was fearless on the ice…that makes him the ultimate team player."

After graduating from Saint Joe's in 2015, Johnstone played two seasons of Junior Hockey with the Chicago Steele, before earning a scholarship to Sacred Heart University. During his time in Connecticut, he tallied 95 points, including 33 goals, and was named captain for his junior and senior campaigns.

Following the end of his senior collegiate season in 2021, Johnstone appeared in five games for the South Carolina Stingrays, of the East Coast Hockey League. He was cut by the Stingrays after just five games, but the Newfoundland Growlers came calling during the offseason, allowing Johnstone to refocus on his dream of playing in the NHL.

A 21-point season and deep playoff run with the Growlers during the 2021-2022 season gave Johnstone new life and a chance to make the jump to the American Hockey League. He was loaned out to the Toronto Marlies, the AHL affiliate of the Toronto Maple Leafs, for four games during the season, and left a big enough impression to earn a full-time AHL contract for the 2022-2023 season.

"You just gotta keep going to work every day, and it's possible for anyone, it doesn't matter where you start," Johnstone said in an article by NHL.com. "You just gotta keep pushing towards your goal."

Johnstone was determined and steadfast during his first full season in the AHL, putting up 22 points on 9 goals and 13 assists for the Marlies. Then, the next big step towards the NHL happened last summer when Johnston signed his first NHL contract, a two-year, two-way deal with the Pittsburgh Penguins.

Assigned to the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins to start the year, Johnstone impressed organization leadership enough to earn his first call to the big club in December. The calls and text came pouring in, but one group of fans watched at a distance, excited to see one of their own dress on the game's biggest stage.

Nine years after his time as a Saint Joe's captain, Johnstone is still inspiring current and future Falcons with his

play. Hunter Mabee '25, Johnstone's cousin and the Saint Joe's current leading scorer, watched in awe when the Falcon alum took his rookie lap and played in the NHL for the first time.

"It's really cool to see Marc, who is someone I've looked up to ever since I started playing hockey, accomplish what he did," Mabee said. "Just seeing him sign his first NHL contract, I'm just really proud to see my cousin and someone from Saint Joe's be able to do that."

Despite playing just one game for Pittsburgh, Johnstone finished out the season playing 20 more games for the Wilkes-Barre/ Scranton Penguins. He is under contract for the 2024-25 season and will be patiently waiting for his next chance to be in the NHL.

"You're never out of the fight, it took me 27 years," Johnstone said, "You just have to enjoy every step and take nothing for granted."

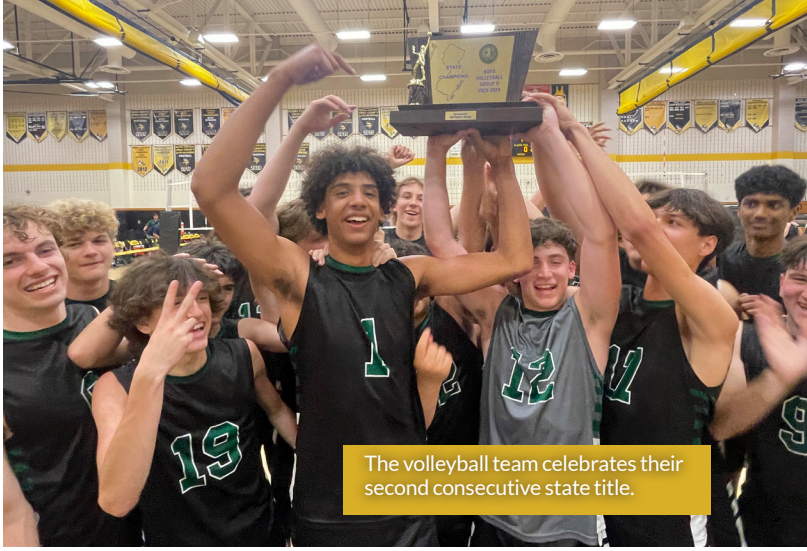
Jack Kemler is a 2024 graduate of Saint Joseph High School. He will be attending Arizone State University in the fall with a focus on broadcasting.



Photo provided by: NHL/Pittsburgh Penguins.

Return of the **Champions**

By: Tim LeCras



The volleyball team celebrates their second consecutive state title.

Gian Gomez '25 had an intense look in his eyes from the moment the Saint Joseph Volleyball team took the court for warmups before the NJSIAA Group 2 championship match.

It was a look of someone focused, energized and looking to prove the rest of the volleyball world in New Jersey wrong for the second consecutive year.

Almost one year to the day when Scott Schmidt '23 entered Saint Joe's lore with an ace to win the 2023 title, Gomez delivered the knockout punch with an almost unreturnable service point to lead the Falcons to their second straight state title, a 2-0 domination over Garfield.

"Last year I was the energy guy on the bench and this year, I became that guy on the court," Gomez said. "I love how we were down at the beginning of the year, but turned it on in the states and never lost a set. We got together and made a great team, a state championship team."

The Falcons controlled the match from start to finish, with the offense setting up Gomez (12 kills) and Dominic Nycz '26 (seven kills) throughout the championship sweep. Noah Stout '24 led the defensive effort with 12 digs, while Sam Contursi '25 and Sean Martinez '25 each had 10 assists.

During his postgame talk with the team, head coach Miguel Cabrita '91 already set the championship expectation for next year's squad. With the Falcons graduating just five players, including Stout, Shlok Patel '24, Jason Nawrocki '24, Johan Vaidyan, and JP Farrelly '24, Saint Joe's is primed for continued success in the future with Gomez, Contursi, Martinez and Nycz in the driver's seat.

"The boys know what they're signing up for," Cabrita said. "They know it's not an easy task because everybody walks into a gym to play us and is like 'They're a state champion' and 'If they beat Saint Joe's there are bragging rights. Teams go all out on us. These guys just get tougher and tougher the more we put them through that pressure."

VS. NAVY

CELEBRATING OUR NOTRE DAME & NAVY ALUMNI

Join us for a pre-game tailgate at Metlife Stadium's
Notre Dame vs. Navy Football Game on October 26

Details to follow, RSVP online in August



The Model UN and Youth & Government delegations present their work and research at their annual conference.

What Makes an **Outstanding Delegation**

By: Tyler Quesnel '24

Choosing what to get involved in at Saint Joseph High School is a difficult decision, but from Giovanni Oliveti '24's experience, that choice was made clear when speaking with the students involved in Model United Nations (MUN) at Open House on a Fall afternoon in 2019. This moment would lead him and other future delegates of the club to new heights.

Mirroring the real United Nations, each delegate in Model UN is given a country to represent and debates real world issues within committees. Students then prepare for an annual conference hosted by the Philadelphia YMCA in Hershey, PA.

Consisting of nearly 50 students, members work together on required research and debate topics. For club moderator Collin Dougherty, the success of the conferences is fueled by the passion of student leaders like Oliveti, who has been an active member all four years.

"All credit is due to the students," Dougherty said. "This is a student-run club. We have our leaders who give direction and support our underclassmen."

Oliveti, like many others who came before him, invested countless hours into the success of the program, which has led to newly opened doors and accolades. One such honor is an invitation to the exclusive Conference on National Affairs (CONA), a nation-wide assembly in North Carolina.

"For me, CONA is like a right of passage," Oliveti said. "A lot of my friends who have also gone through MUN that I've always looked up to have gone on to CONA. They've said nothing but great things about it."

Success continued for Saint Joe's at Hershey. The team earned the prestigious title of "Outstanding Delegation" for their preparation and performance in their debates. Additionally, the conference gave individual awards to Marcus Justiniani '25, Ronan Pell '25, Stephen Horan '25, Aiden DaSilva '25, William Stephen '27, and AJ Varley '26 for their accomplishments in their research papers, committee work, and country representations.

"It's our student core that helps prepare all of our delegates," Oliveti said. "It was all of these things behind the scenes that were a big part of our success."

Even after the Model UN season is over and conferences have wrapped up, the work is not quite finished. When spring comes, Saint Joe's Youth & Government prepares for a local conference that focuses on student ideas pertaining to issues and solutions at the state level.

Where Saint Joe's goes, excellence follows. After Oliveti's CONA invitation at Model UN, two more Falcons from Youth & Government, Gurkeerat Singh '25 and Saahir Vazirani '26, joined him when they received an invitation to attend.

"CONA puts Model UN and Youth & Government on a larger scale," Oliveti said. "I'm looking forward to meeting people from all over the country who participate."

Since that impactful Open House in 2019, Oliveti was one of many students at Saint Joseph High School whose life was changed by extracurricular opportunities. As he will soon stand at CONA in North Carolina alongside Singh and Vazirani, there is no doubt that the Saint Joe's Model UN and Youth & Government teams will continue this legacy of success for years to come.

Tyler Quesnel is a 2024 graduate of Saint Joseph High School. He will be attending Rutgers University in the fall with a focus on advertising.

Introducing F.A.L.C.O.N.

By: Tim LeCras

Arthur Suckow '00 was standing in front of a whiteboard with his team at DTx, a preclinical biotechnology company, working on the name of their latest product.

Various letters and acronyms were being thrown on the board for words associated with their newest technology, a product that could reduce or eliminate diseased genes, including "LCFA" (long chain fatty acid) and "AN" (allego nucelatide).

Suckow looked at the board and the name just clicked, F.A.L.C.O.N. - a connection to his high school alma mater that set him on the path towards success.

"You'll see me on the news and on podcasts explaining how this was named after my high school mascot," Suckow said. "I didn't go into it thinking I needed to name the technology after my high school mascot, I kind of backed into it. But, I do think that we named it FALCON because it speaks to the pride I have of going to Saint Joe's and the experience of Saint Joe's."

The East Brunswick native is the first to admit he wasn't the best student. In fact, he believes his parents sent him to Saint Joe's in the late 1990s to alter his education trajectory, as they weren't sure if college was even in his future.

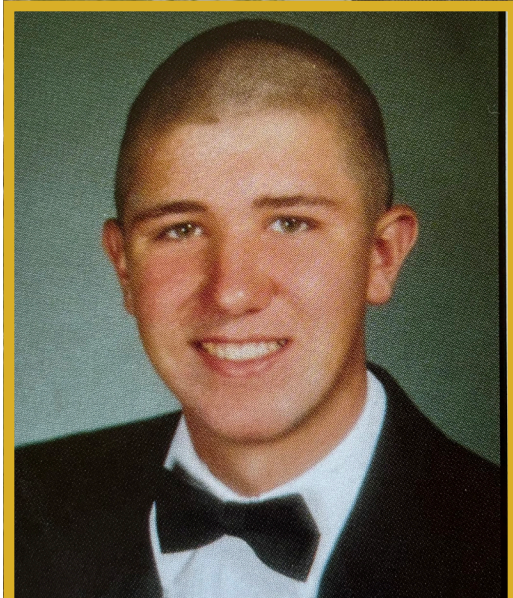
Once he arrived on campus, he flourished in math and science courses. Today, he credits the Partners in Mission, specifically Linda Muratore (Math), Gary Trojanowski (Biology) and Anthony Pugliese (Chemistry/Biology) for his success.

"There was an intimate environment where at my previous schools I got lost in the shuffle," Suckow said. "At Saint Joe's I got that intimate attention that helped me to find my way. There was a real connection between the teachers and the students. For example, Mrs. Muratore saw potential in me, sought me out and allowed me to come in afterschool to work on more advanced math. The teachers kept me on a path forward and set me up for success."

When it came time for college, Suckow attended the University of Delaware and earned a Bachelors of Science degree in Genetics, Molecular & Cell Biology, with the intention of continuing on to medical school and a career as an orthopedic surgeon. However, memories of research projects and experiments during high school science classes led him down a completely different path towards therapeutic development.

" I really wanted to help the maximum number of people. Researching and developing a drug to treat a difficult illness can impact millions, even 10s







Arthur Suckow '00 has dedicated his time and resources in the lab to the creation of therapetuic drugs that can assist millions.



of millions of patients" and "Saint Joe's really set the foundation for me to be successful in college and beyond... it helped me discover my passion for research and science."

Most of Suckow's time and energy is focused on developing therapeutics for diseases in which there are few, if any, alternatives. He's developed two so far, including Synervate, a cell therapy focused on a treatment for Alzheimer's Disease, and FALCON, an RNA-interference therapy targeting Charco-Marie-Tooth Disease Type 1A, a genetic disorder that can result in progressive loss of muscle function.

"DTx was a fantastic experience, we were the first ones to bring hope to Charco-Marie-Tooth patients and a potential therapeutic that led to game changing activity," Suckow said. "I want to continue starting and building companies that work to find solutions to the most challenging and neglected medical issues...this work can make a difference to these patients, potentially end or reduce their suffering, restore their hope, and improve their quality of life."

While its been over 20 years since he was on campus, Suckow still credits a lot of his success to his time at Saint Joe's, comparing his professional career to the experience he had as a Falcon.

"When you develop a drug, hundreds of people touch it in different ways," Suckow said. "There is a model around you of what a great support system looks like. That was my Saint Joe's experience. Teachers are willing to mentor you, talk you through challenges and help you better understand the work you are doing. Alumni are there to open doors to opportunities that otherwise would not have existed. I wouldn't be on the path I am on today without Saint Joe's."

FALCONS FLOCK TOGETHER

Green Tie Gala









Boston Social

Thanksgiving Social





Reunions

No matter how many years have passed since graduation day, the bonds that Falcons share are unbreakable over time. The following classes celebrated milestone reunions:

Class of 1968 - 55th
Class of 1973 - 50th
Class of 1983 - 40th
Class of 2003 - 20th





NYC Social











Basketball
Alumni Night





Falcon
Golf Classic







Washington DC
Social











Planning for **Future Generations**

If you were to ask any member of the Saint Joseph alumni network why they donate to their high school alma mater, you would find one constant theme: the desire to offer future students the same educational opportunities that they received on campus. Robert Foley '65 is no different.

During his time at Saint Joe's, Foley found joy in various facets of campus life, particularly involving sports, Math Club and Science Club.

"I enjoyed watching all of our sports teams - as a spectator - although I did play a little soccer," Foley said. "The Saint Joe's teams represented themselves well, especially considering they were all fledgling teams."

Foley thrived academically, with a keen interest in math and science, which laid the groundwork for his future endeavors, including his pursuit of Civil Engineering at the University of Dayton.

"Although I could not appreciate it at the time; the incredibly broad base of challenging subjects I suffered through, prepared me for success throughout my career and, indeed, my life," Foley said. The vivid memories of his time on campus has led Foley to support Saint Joseph High School in a new way, as Foley has included his alma mater in his future estate plans.

"I give back so that other young men can experience the challenges and rewards of a Saint Joe's education," Foley said. "The value of an education, the courage to take risks and a love of travel and life are just a few of the things I learned during my time at Saint Joe's and I hope my gift can provide the same opportunity."

As Foley gears up for the 60th reunion for the Class of 1965, he encourages fellow alumni to reflect on their Saint Joe's experience and consider the impact of their contributions.

"Be assured your gift will be of great value to a worthy student and a great institution," Foley said. "Our continued support will uphold the legacy of excellence and provide a meaningful impact for future generations of Falcons."



Bob Foley '65 with his wife Paula and grandchildren.

Make a Meaningful Personal Plan now with an Impact for Generations to Come.

We are excited to announce a new addition to our Planned Giving Program. Coming in July 2024 **create your legally valid will - for free!**

In as little as twenty minutes you can create a will to protect you and your family.

Nancy Alfano
Director of Advancement
732-549-7600 x 208
nalfano@stjoes.org
stjoes.plannedgiving.org

SAINT JOSEPH GIVING DAY

By the Numbers

826 Donors
(798 in 2023)

Total Raised:
$272,315.75
($227,896.00 in 2023)

20% Increase
from Giving Day 2023

CLASS LEADERBOARD:
THE CLASS OF 1983
LED THE WAY, RAISING
$11,035.00 WITH
36 GENEROUS DONORS

EACH DONATION SUPPORTS THE SAINT JOSEPH ANNUAL FUND

Mothers Club **Success Soars**

By: Tim LeCras

Loud cheers rang from the rafters inside Maglio Gymnasium in early March.

The celebratory screams weren't from the Falcon Flock cheering on the Saint Joe's basketball team or the student body playing dodgeball.

Instead, the gym was filled with excitement for the Saint Joseph Mothers Club's 49th Annual Basket Raffle.

A staple event on the Saint Joe's calendar, over 600 people attended the Basket Raffle, with guests traveling from as far as Bergen County, Staten Island and Pennsylvania.

According to Saint Joseph Mothers Club moderator Danielle DiVincent, the reputation of the basket raffle still holds strong after 49 years of success.

"Following the pandemic, people were so excited to be able to get together and continue this tradition," DiVincent said. "The Saint Joseph High School Mothers Club Basket Raffle has an extraordinary reputation from years past; it took minimal advertising to fill the seats. The last two years, the Mothers Club committed to maintaining the traditions and quality of raffle merchandise established by those before us."

Once guests arrived in the gym, they were greeted with rows of tables filled with the night's prized possessions - over 200 gift baskets.

Over 50 percent of the prizes were generously donated by members of the Saint Joseph community.

DiVincent said the event would not be successful without the support of the families of past, current and future Saint Joseph Falcons.

"As the tradition approaches its 50th year, we wanted to show our appreciation to those who put in the work before us, those that made this event a possibility this year, and those that will continue the tradition," DiVincent said. "This year's Mothers Club contributed almost $10,000 of in-kind donations to support the Basket Raffle! An event like this truly takes a tremendous amount of support and aid from our generous community!"

The basket raffle has grown considerably in the two years since the Basket Raffle's in-person return following digital events in 2021 and 2022.

In 2024, the event raised over $105,000 net for the Saint Joseph Annual Fund, a significant increase from last year's event. Between the two events organized by the Mothers Club this school year, including Pocketbook Bingo in the Fall, the club has raised over $150,000 during Fiscal Year 2023-2024.

"An event of this magnitude is truly a labor of love, and all the hours and hard work put in are worth it when you know it positively impacts multiple lives for the better in the near future," DiVincent said. "We are passionate about our school and this cause, and to us, there's no better way to give back and serve a community that serves so many so well."



The 49th Annual Basket Raffle presented by the Mothers Club raised over $105,000 for the Saint Joseph Annual Fund.



The Fathers Club is hard at work in the kitchen during their Annual Lenten Fish Fry.

Men You **Can Count On**

If you have been to the Saint Joseph High School campus for a special event in recent years, you have undoubtedly seen the commitment and dedication from the Saint Joseph Fathers Club.

Whether operating the concession stands for athletic events, donating and cooking food for the monthly Falcons & Friends program or raising money at the popular Lenten Fish Fry, the Fathers Club's continued support for the mission of Saint Joseph High School has never been stronger.

A special thank you to Vince Sollecito P'08/11 and the rest of the alumni and current dads for continuing the tradition of excellence.

The Falcons

Will Be at

SOMERSET PATRIOTS

on July 26th for

Saint Joe's Night

- Saint Joe's performing National Anthem
- A Falcon throwing the first pitch
- Fathers Club run concessions stand

GAME BEGINS: 7PM

TICKETS: $20

SCAN FOR TICKETS

SAINT JOE'S CAREER DAY







One of the many formation-based educational opportunities available at Saint Joe's, Career Day 2024 provided students with the ability to look ahead to their futures. With over 65 alumni returning to the Nest to share their professional lives, students were able to choose presentations from a myriad of career paths, ranging from entrepreneurship, to law enforcement, to medicine, and more.









Share Your News

A Career of Success

David J. Blythe '69, an Associate Professor of Business Law at Norwich University, finished a seven year role as Director of the Norwich School of Business, where he was also elected Chair of the Board of Directors of Green Mountain Credit Union.



Clinical Excellence

Class of 1983 graduate Osman Sayan was inducted into Columbia University's Academy of Clinical Excellence of the Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons, a group of full-time faculty who exhibit exceptional patient care with a focus on clinical science and compassionate humanism.

Pro Bono Service

John Falzone '96, was honored and received the 2023 Pro Bono Publico Award for his hard work in pro bono service with the clients and staff of the Legal Aid Society of New York.

Principal-in-Charge

Antonio Ribeira '10 was chosen to be named Principal-in-Charge of the HBK CPAs & Consultants office in Holmdel, New Jersey. He has been a Principal in HBK Holmdel office, a Top 50 US accounting firm, since 2014.



From a Dance to the Altar

Anthony Battaglia '12 married Meghan Weaver on October 7, 2023. Meghan is a graduate of Mother Seton and they met at a Saint Joe's dance in 2009.



Robot Rumble

Since his time as captain of Falcon Robotics, Ryan Hollender '14 has kept up with competitive STEM through the Garden State Combat Robotics League. Two of his robots, Shin Kicker and Tokyo Drisk, have placed multiple times, earning a trip to the National US Championships.

Tap to the Top

Recent graduate Connor Spinelli '23 earned 3rd place in the National Tap Dance Competition in the Summer of 2023.

Do YOU have news?

Please email your story to alumni@stjoes.org and you might be featured in the next edition of the TODAY Magazine!



Are you organizing an alumni get together or looking to share your Saint Joe's pride while on vacation?

Scan the QR to request a Falcon Pride bandana and send a picture to alumni@stjoes.org

SAINT JOSEPH
A COLLEGE PREPARATORY SCHOOL
BROTHERS OF THE SACRED HEART IN METUCHEN, NJ SINCE 1901

145 Plainfield Avenue
Metuchen, NJ 08840

Return Service Requested

Saint Joe's Parents

If your son no longer lives at home, please send us his new address. Thank you!

alumni@stjoes.org

Oct. 4

Friday



Friday Night Lights Game

Homecoming is returning to Saint Joe's with our second-ever Friday Night Lights football game! There will be a pre-game tailgate before the lights go on. All are welcome to join.

Oct. 5

Saturday

SAINT JOSEPH HALL OF DISTINCTION

Hall of Distinction

Join Saint Joseph High School as we induct our inaugural class into the Hall of Distinction, a new way of recognizing excellence in our alumni, Partners in Mission, and friends.

Nov. 15

Friday



Fifth Annual Green Tie Gala

Our signature evening of dinner and dancing in support of the Saint Joseph Annual Fund is coming to the Liberty House in Jersey City with a new Friday night date!