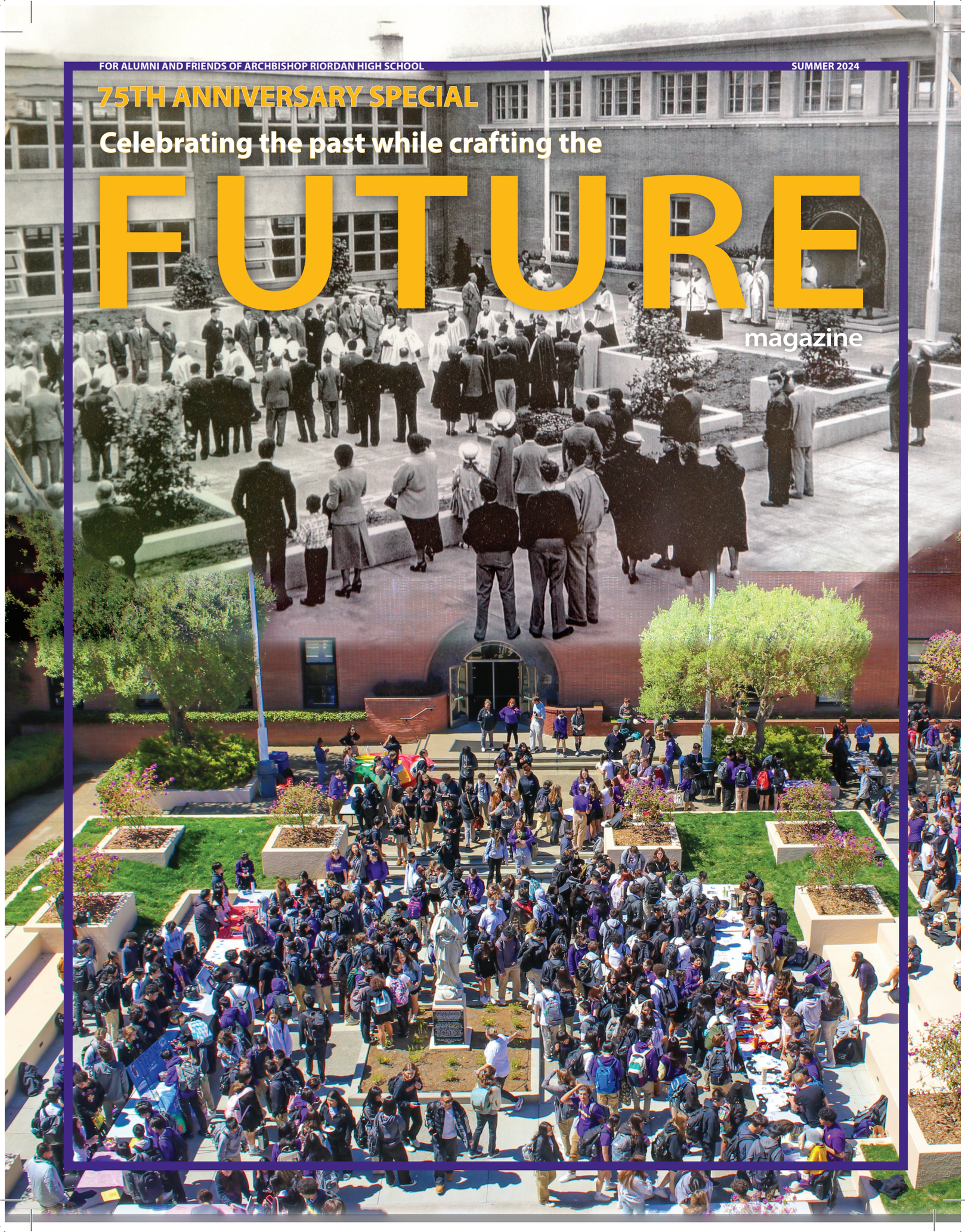
FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS OF ARCHBISHOP RIORDAN HIGH SCHOOL SUMMER 2024

75TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL

Celebrating the past while crafting the

FUTURE

magazine



Archbishop Riordan High School

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Timothy A. Reardon,
President

Dear Riordan Family,

As we celebrate a remarkable milestone, our 75th anniversary, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for the rich history and traditions that have shaped Archbishop Riordan High School. For more than seven decades, we have been dedicated to providing an outstanding education, fostering a community of compassion, and nurturing the talents of students from all over the Bay Area — in fact, with the addition of our boarding program, all over the world!

Since our founding, we have cultivated innovators and changemakers who have gone on to make significant impacts in their communities. This incredible legacy is a testament to the unwavering commitment of the faculty, staff, alumni, parents and students, all who have invested their hearts and minds into our growing Marianist family.

As we honor our past, we also look to the future with optimism and excitement. Our mission to provide a transformative education remains steadfast, and we are continually evolving to meet the needs of our students in an ever-changing world.

Our Engineering Program is designed to ignite curiosity and inspire creativity. Similarly, our Biomedical Program offers students the opportunity to delve into the world of medical science. And the new Business Program is further evidence of our commitment to prepare students for success in a global economy. With a focus on entrepreneurship, finance and management, this program equips students with the knowledge and skills to excel in the business world. We aim to cultivate the next generation of ethical capitalists who will drive innovation and create positive change.

As always, we will continue to educate in the Marianist family spirit as faith formation remains our guiding light. During the 2023–2024 school year, we had 27 students participate in our Sacraments Program, and all were baptized or confirmed upon completion. I don't know of many schools in the country that are finding this kind of renewed commitment to faith.

So, as we celebrate 75 years of excellence, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to each member of our Riordan community. Your support and dedication have been instrumental in our journey, and, together, we will continue to build on our legacy of excellence.

Here's to the next 75 years of inspiring minds, shaping futures and awakening the next generation of Catholic leaders.

Go Crusaders!

Tim Reardon
PRESIDENT

SUMMER 2024

CONTENTS

75 YEARS OF RIORDAN HISTORY

4 **Origin Story:** The beginnings of Riordan High School

5 **Paul Osborn '55** recalls start of a brand new city school

7 **Grads through the decades** reflect on their time at ARHS



SCHOOL NEWS

18 **International students** flock to Riordan

20 **House System & Parliament** help build community

21 Riordan's **first solo woman SBP** plans Cultural Nights

22 **The Crusader** cracks top 10 nationally for school papers

24 **Joseph Zuloaga '23** readies himself for a future in news

26 Riordan's band performs in Rome, **meets Pope Francis**

27 ***Clue* and *The Sound of Music*** set box office records

28 **Faith formation class** leads students to the sacraments

29 **RSP celebrates** decades of service to students

ACADEMIC NEWS

30 **Signature Programs** offer three schools within a school

SPORTS

34 Celebrating one of the best **Crusader sports seasons**



ADVANCEMENT & ALUMNI NEWS

37 Gala, Scholarship Brunch, Mimosa Morning & Crab Feed

38 **Brian Spiers '75** receives the Chaminade Award

39 **Brandon Ramsey** leaves after a dozen years of upgrades

40 Alumni reunions & library ribbon cutting

48 **Class Notes**

51 **Two Crusaders** inducted into SF Prep Hall of Fame

GRADUATION

42 Members of the **Class of 2024** say goodbye to Riordan

46 Celebrating **Senior Awards**



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Mission Statement

Founded in 1949, Archbishop Riordan High School — an Archdiocesan Catholic High School in the Ingleside Neighborhood of San Francisco, California — prepares young men and women for leadership and lifelong success by providing education imbued with Catholic Marianist values of faith, community, inclusivity, service and justice through its rigorous college preparatory curriculum, house system and co-curricular activities.

Origin Story: The beginnings of Archbishop Riordan High School

Archbishop Riordan High School was founded by Marianist priests and brothers — men in the order founded by Fr. William Joseph Chaminade (1761–1850) — who sought to restore Christianity in France in the wake of that country's revolution.

The Marianist spirit holds dearly the principle of the Golden Rule, where students become scholars who embrace diversity, embody mutual respect and lead by example. Marianist educators are entrusted to educate in five characteristics that guide the mission and philosophy of their schools: educate for formation in faith; provide an integral quality education; educate in family spirit; educate for service, justice and peace and the integrity of creation; and educate for adaptation and change.

After receiving good word of the Marianist Brothers serving at St. Mary's School in Stockton, Archbishop Patrick William Riordan (1884–1914) invited the brothers to teach in the city. Though the brothers were first asked to join St. James School in the Mission District in 1907, in the aftermath of the 1906 earthquake and fire, the Brothers began at St. James in temporary quarters.

By April 1907, St. James School (affectionately known as "The Brickpile") opened at 23rd and Fair Oaks Streets. In 1920, a high school program was added to the school one class year at a time. With increasing demands for a larger boys' high school in San Francisco, the Marianists closed the high school department at St. James in 1949 and moved to the newly constructed Riordan High School.

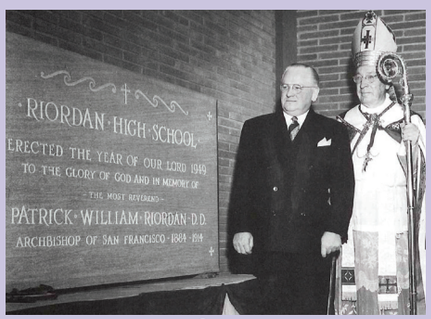
In the years since, Riordan has educated thousands of men and women who have grown to assume prominent roles in their communities, influencing the lives of many.

To celebrate our history, we asked grads from each of the decades since our founding to reflect on their time as Riordan Crusaders. We think you'll be impressed with the stories they tell and the exemplars they have become.

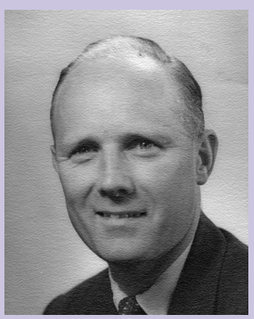


Paul Ryan served as architect for Archbishop Riordan High School, which the Archdiocese of San Francisco envisioned as its showcase school.

THE 1950s



1949: School opens in September with enrollment of 305 boys, 202 of whom were 9th graders. The rest were transfers from St. James High School. The architect modeled the entrance after the Doge's Palace in Venice and the Town Hall in Stockholm.



1949: Ed Fennelly, the founding father of Riordan athletics, begins 40 years of service at Riordan as teacher, coach and mentor. He served as Riordan's first football, baseball, basketball and cross country coach and the first commissioner of the WCAL. He passed away in 2009.



1953-55: Spring musical productions drew a total of 15,000 attendees, with original musicals *The San Francisco Story, The America Story* and *The International Story.*

Paul Osborn recalls the early days of a brand new city school

Several years ago, Paul Osborn '55, wrote an autobiography that included memories of his days at Riordan, starting in 1951, just two years after the school opened. Below is an excerpt from that work.



Paul Osborn's freshman 9D class in 1951. Paul is third row up, second from the left.

BY PAUL OSBORN '55

As the end of my final school year at St. Cecilia approached, I had to make a decision regarding what high school I would be attending. Monsignor Collins, the Pastor at St. Cecilia, basically gave us two choices. We could either go to St. Ignatius or Archbishop Riordan. We could absolutely not attend a public high school and he might reluctantly agree to let someone go to Sacred Heart.

My plan was to go to St. Ignatius, but the entrance exam for Riordan was a week before the SI exam, so I thought I would take it as a backup. When I got to Riordan for the exam, I was impressed with the way the school looked and their facilities. Riordan was only two years old and had a beautiful auditorium, gym and cafeteria. I made up my mind to attend Riordan and never even applied to SI.

Fortunately, my two best friends, Kevin Reidy and Joe Figone, also decided to attend Riordan. Our first year there was rather uneventful. There were five freshman classes, and Joe and I found ourselves in 9D. We had to take Latin, English, algebra, religion, history and perhaps a couple of other courses. As it turns out, the most useful class I took in my freshman year was typing. It's the one skill I've been able to use for the rest of my life, at least up to now.

Riordan was located at 175 Phelan Avenue across the street from San Francisco City College. We had several options regarding public transportation from where we lived. Each morning Joe, Kevin and I would meet and start off on either a bus or streetcar. Either option required a transfer to another bus or streetcar before getting to our destination. It was usually about a half hour to negotiate the route.

Because Riordan was only two years old, we were the third full class of 200, with only 24 seniors, 200 juniors and 200 sophomores. I always felt sort of sorry for the seniors; because their class was so small, they were generally ignored. The juniors were the big men on the campus.

I took a part-time job at the Bank of San Francisco on West Portal, which allowed me to buy all my books and pay my tuition, school fees and miscellaneous expenses from my salary. The tuition in those days was $120 a year paid over ten months, far less expensive than the 2023–2024 tuition of $24,500.

The tuition was relatively low because the school was run and taught by Marianists priests and brothers, who were also called the Brothers of Mary. While there were a few lay teachers, the brothers taught most of the classes. They were tough on us, but for the most part they were very good teachers. They believed in strict discipline, probably because there were 40 or so boys in each class. Several brothers had certain quirks. For example, one of the brothers hated whistling. If he heard someone whistling in the hall on the way to class, he would charge down the hall, pushing students aside until he caught the offender. He would grab him by the shirt color and slam him against the wall lockers in the hallway. While the boy was sliding to the floor, the brother would scream, "No whistling! No whistling!"

Chewing gum was another major offense that could cause the chewer bodily harm as could a number of other minor offenses such as daydreaming, talking in class and not knowing the answer to a question in class. Each teacher had his own unique torture ranging from finger bending and sideburn pulling, to loading an eraser with chalk and then hurling it at the alleged student offender. Any minor offense merited a "blue slip," which meant that you had to go to JUG (Justice Under God) after school let out, present your "blue slip" to the



1958: Riordan is the first high school in the Archdiocese of San Francisco to become accredited under the Western Catholic Education Association.

brother in charge and stay after school for an hour or two to work off the infraction. Depending on the severity of the offense, JUG could consist of one day or many, up to the entire school semester.

We also had a dress code prohibiting blue jeans, polo shirts and tee shirts. We had to wear shirts with buttons all the way down. We also had to look well groomed. In my sophomore year, one of my friends, Boots Stenaro, decided to paint his shoes silver and wear them to school. His homeroom teacher sent him home and told him not to come back unless he wore "decent looking" shoes. We were also not allowed to wear jackets with the name of any club on it.

At the beginning of my sophomore year, in September 1952, I was assigned to 10E because I decided to switch from Latin to Spanish. All the students taking second-year Latin were in 10A, 10B or 10C. The students in 10D and 10E were considered to be more of a problem than the other three classes, but they were a great bunch of guys; as a result, my sophomore year was one of my favorite years, and I made good friends with several of my classmates.

In January 1953, I bought my first car. Of course, I couldn't drive it because I wasn't going to turn 16 for another month and a half. It was a maroon 1941 Ford Coupe, and I paid $175 for it. I kept the car in the garage and began to customize it by lowering the rear end, adding fender skirts onto the rear fenders, molding the hood and trunk and painting it turquoise blue. I added Riordan decals on the windows, and Joe's sister, Annette, made a set of purple and gold miniature socks that I hung on the rearview mirror. Purple and gold were, of course, Riordan's colors.

That March, two of my classmates, Tom Lynch and Rich Nichols, started talking to me about going out for the track team. We had just competed in an intramural track meet between all the sophomore classes, and I had taken a second in the broad jump, now called the long jump, with a mighty leap of about 15 feet. I joined the team and was placed on the 130s, the equivalent to the JV squad.

At our first meet at Burlingame High, I jumped 15-feet, 8-inches, but it wasn't good enough to place in the top three. The varsity winner had jumped 19-feet, 2-inches. Two weeks later, in a meet at Kezar, I broke the JV school record with a jump of 17-feet, 4-inches, and felt proud that I had improved so dramatically so quickly.



Paul Osborn excelled in long jump competitions at Riordan.

In late April, the track coach promoted me to varsity shortly before our Catholic Athletic League Championship at Kezar. We won the meet easily and brought home to Riordan the very first varsity championship in any sport in the history of the school. Surprisingly, I took fourth place with a jump of 18-feet, 6-inches, earning me a varsity block, something rare for a sophomore to do.

Later, at a special assembly, we were called on stage one by one to the applause of the entire school. Years later, this team would be among the first teams inducted into Riordan's Sport Hall of Fame.

In September 1953, I began my junior year by becoming the only guy from 10E to move into 11A — the brightest class — because I was pursuing a college prep curriculum.

During football season, the student body instituted one of the shortest traditions in the school's history. Someone had the bright idea to take a rooters train to the Bellarmine game in Santa Clara. The train seats were sold out in short order, but the ride took so long that we arrived at halftime, and our team was already on its way to losing to this South Bay powerhouse. It took a dozen years before a Riordan squad would defeat the Bells.

Things started to come apart during the train ride home as a number of our students had brought along alcohol and started drinking. Soon, things were flying all over the passenger compartments with everyone having a great time. The brothers spent that train ride taking names and trying to keep us under control. By the time we arrived back in San Francisco, many of the students were in deep trouble and headed to JUG every Monday through Saturday for the rest of the year. This was the first and last rooters' train in the history of the school.

In the spring of 1954, we began track practice. As a varsity team member, I received a new uniform and warm-up sweats. Our first meet of the year was against Washington and Burlingame. Washington was a track powerhouse and had great athletes, including a senior high jumper by the name of Johnny Mathis, who, in a few years, would become a popular singer.

When I arrived at the meet, I discovered that I would be competing against the Burlingame athlete that had impressed me with the year before. I jumped 19-feet, 2.5 inches, and lost to him by half an inch. For the rest of the season, I won or placed in a good share of the meets,

and I scored enough points to get my second varsity block well before the CAL Championship meet in May, where I had my best jump of the year (19-feet, 6-inches) but not enough to score in the top four.

As I entered my senior year, I was still going steady with Annette, a girl I had started dating in my sophomore year, but otherwise, I felt lost. My grades suffered, and I stumbled through my classes barely getting good enough grades to get by. I did try to stay in shape by lifting weights with my friends Kevin and Joe. I didn't know this at the time, but this ended up hurting me in track when the season began in March 1955.

Our team was the two-time defending league champion, and I was geared up for a great season. Early on, I suffered from pain in my side whenever I jumped and couldn't seem to get the speed or power I had the year before. Although I did get my best ever jump at the CAL League Meet in May — 20 feet — it wasn't enough to place in the top four. Still, our team went on to win the championship and, a week later, to win Riordan's first ever Divisional Championship against teams from as far south as San Mateo and as far north as the Oregon border. Fifty-five years later, this team would also be inducted into Riordan's Sports Hall of Fame. Later that summer, I discovered that I had been competing with a hernia, and I required hospitalization. This obviously had a negative effect on my track performance during my senior year.

Also that spring, Riordan started auditioning for our annual musical. The school had developed a reputation for putting on original musical extravaganzas second to none in the city, and this year's production was *The International Story,* an original play written by some of the students and our school's director, James Lindland. While all the guys in the cast were from Riordan, we needed female singers and dancers from the girls' Catholic high schools to audition.

My girlfriend, Annette, tried out and won the role for one of the dancer's parts. After rehearsals started, I noticed our relationship was taking a strange turn. Finally, she told me that she wanted to start dating other guys as well as me. I was crushed as I couldn't see myself as just another one of her dates. She started dating one of the guys in the cast, and although I was invited to her Junior Prom, by the summer we had broken up.

Earlier, Joe and I had decided to join a military reserve unit, as we knew we would have to serve time in the military. We first tried the Air Force Reserve, but they lost our paperwork and never called us, leading us to try for the Navy Reserve. We went to the Navy Reserve Submarine Division at Hunter's Point Naval Shipyard where Joe found out he couldn't pass the eye test for submarines. He opted to serve in the surface division, while I stuck with submarines as it was an elite branch of the Navy. We were on the 8-year program,



Paul Osborn edits a newsletter for his class and organizes annual reunions.

which meant we had to serve two years of active duty and six years of inactive duty.

As my final year at Riordan came to a close, I started to think about how I might never see my fellow seniors — some of whom I had gone to school with since the third grade. I really liked Riordan and had mixed emotions about leaving. I had no idea that years later, many of us would renew our friendship at our reunions. The Class of 1955 was a very special class and continues to be to this day.

P.S. Annette and I did get back together. We married and have four children, five grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren. This year, we are celebrating our 67th wedding anniversary.



Will Mulcahy '59

What lessons learned at Riordan have resonated in your life?

The idea of brotherhood resonated strongly. We all came from different parts of the city, mainly a blend of Irish and Italian. We learned to be brother Crusaders and saw that there aren't a whole lot of differences among any of us. Any suspicions we may have had about one another disappeared. I also learned to love literature thanks to Mr. Lindland, who inspired me and taught me English. He was one of the most impactful teachers I've had and gave me an appreciation of literature and writing.

What does being a Riordan alumnus mean to you?

Simple. It means give back to your community. Riordan was a working-class, blue-collar student body, and we were, for the most part, coming from parents many of whom were lucky to have gotten through eighth grade. We were the hope of our families, who wanted us to strive to achieve more than they had. Riordan today still is somewhat like that. Immigrant parents still send their sons and daughters there for the same reason.

Bob O'Donnell '64

Describe one or two highlights of your time at Riordan.

First was my participation in 1960 in the play *Richard III* in my freshman year. I was encouraged to try out for the play and landed a small role as one of the ill-fated princes, the Duke of York, who met his demise in the Tower of London. But I was in a theater production for the first time, and looking back, I enjoyed it all — including the tryouts, the many rehearsals, the lead up to opening night, the costumes, the thrill and fear of the curtain opening on the first act and finally the cast party. I did not repeat the drama experience again, but I appreciated being a part of the stagecraft process and the introduction to Shakespeare that this play gave me.

Secondly, I recall the Cafeteria Boycott of 1963 when I was a junior. Riordan was pretty buttoned down back then, and rebellion was not an option. The quality of the food in the cafeteria was an issue with the students, and some upperclassmen instigated a whisper campaign that we should all boycott the food service on a certain day. The day came, the usual rush into the cafeteria ensued, but no one — not one student — got in line for the prepared hot food items.

There was quite a buzz in the room, and the food servers and cashier seemed shocked at the spectacle. One student did get up to go to the line amid shouts and hoots, only to get a napkin and show it with a flourish before sitting down. When the lunch period ended, we all filed back to classes where we heard an announcement of an impromptu student assembly in the auditorium. It was short and sweet as they say. Our principal, Brother Gerber, addressed the student body and came right to the point. He and the faculty took note of the student action and said that issues of food quality and service would be addressed with the food vendor. He also said that such a student action was both unprecedented and probably unnecessary and that if it were to occur again, all food service at the cafeteria would cease, and we could count on bag lunches from home for the rest of our time at Riordan.

In retrospect, I think it was a win-win for almost everyone. There was grudging respect shown for a "student movement" that wanted a problem addressed, but the limit of toleration and the consequences of a "repeat offense" also were very clear. The food and service did seem to improve, and everyone that was in the cafeteria that day still remembers it vividly.



What words come to mind when you think of Riordan High School?

Riordan taught us to balance the two opposites of tradition and adaptation. Tradition honors and treasures the past while adaptation embraces and encourages future endeavors and accomplishments. Riordan has made stunning advances in the last ten years in curriculum, coeducation, physical improvements, student population and international education. I graduated in Riordan's 15th year, 1964, and it is both incredible and gratifying for students of my era to see Riordan's current position as the school prepares to celebrate its 75th anniversary.

THE 1960s



1960s: Riordan introduces new technology: an IBM computer, for academic, disciplinary and financial record-keeping.



1960s: During a decade of dissent, Riordan students mix their innocent and adolescent antics with expressions of protest as school administrators offer a quality education in the midst of social change.



1966: Football team is crowned WCAL champions, highlighted by Riordan's first win against Bellarmine, which leads to exuberant students tearing down the wooden goal posts at Kezar Stadium.

Denis Fama ’64

What lessons learned at Riordan have stuck with you or shaped your life?

Riordan gave me my sense of morals and ethics and my desire to serve others. When I turned 18, I became a conscientious objector during the Vietnam War and served as an orderly at Mary’s Help Hospital — now Seton. I ended up working in the healthcare industry and later became an educator, teaching classes on the college level in conflict resolution, organizational behavior, human resources and the history of labor.

I also learned the value of tradition at Riordan. I even served on a volunteer basis as an alumni director. For our 50th reunion 10 years ago, I was looking for high school memorabilia in the school. Most of the photos and ephemera were kept in a storage closet in the

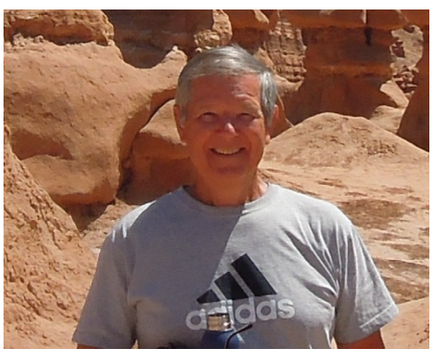


chapel where a flood damaged some items. I took away some things for the reunion, including the first edition of The Crusader, which, because it had been framed, had avoided damage. When I went to return those items, I was asked to hold onto them, as the school had no place to put them. When I found that newspaper a few months ago, I brought it to the paper's editor and moderator, who loved adding it to their collection.

What does being a Riordan alumnus mean to you?

I’m really proud of it. I felt I received a great education and made lifelong friends. Nearly 30 of our classmates gathered recently for our 60th reunion, which brought back a lot of memories. We became more philosophical with each other and spoke about our achievements. I felt part of something special that gave me both friends and a great education in a school that seemed more like a club. We were Riordan Crusaders, and I still am, as over the years I have continued to believe in Riordan’s values and the good that it does in the community. That’s why I continued to support the school.

Tom White ’64



Describe one or two highlights of your time at Riordan.

First, the development of lifelong friendships through shared experiences, a prime example being the first person I met at Riordan as an eighth grader taking the entrance exam. He became my travel partner to Europe for two months after college graduation and is now one of my Class of ’64 monthly hiking buddies. After we retired, two of my classmates and I decided to get together once a month to hike or bike ride. Since we began in 2009, we have completed 145 outings in the Bay Area and beyond, and our numbers have grown to more than 10 members. Despite growing up in the city, we largely were in places we had never been. We always end our outings with beers to celebrate our continued friendships.

What one or two adults at Riordan did you respect and trust?

Mr. Ferrara, my sophomore year English teacher, opened up the world of literature to me. His delving into themes, character development and nuances of novels was a welcome escape from just learning dates and plot lines.

Mr. Rubia provided me with my first exposure to lab work and the exciting world of biology. He sparked my interest in science, which would eventually play a large role in my career choices.

Brother De Long was a very approachable physics teacher who became a close friend to our senior group.

What does being a Riordan alumnus mean to you?

As an alumnus, I feel pride in and gratitude to a school that provided me a solid basis for success in life, both in college and along my career path. Riordan also gave me the environment to develop lifelong friendships with people of similar backgrounds and values.

Karl Essig ’69

What lessons learned at Riordan have stuck with you or shaped your life?



I’ve been lucky and can attribute that luck to Riordan. I’ve worked in Japan and London, and, from those bases, throughout Asia and Europe. Riordan formed in me the ability to work with people from all different cultures as I interacted with guys from all over the city. This proved key to my success in the roles I played later in life.

Riordan also offered me a strong ethical and moral perspective. Every person has worth and should be treated with politeness and kindness as everyone in need deserves help. Riordan also taught me never to grow angry or force my way to get things done. It’s easy to see the right course to take, and if you take it, your life will be better for having done so. Riordan also taught me that character is what will lead to success, satisfaction and joy in life. That foundation has always

continued on next page

Karl Essig, continued

been at the heart of the mission of the school. Perhaps it's because Mary is at the heart of thee Marianist charism. She is always the kindness at the heart of what Riordan is, and that also helped me throughout my life.

What does being a Riordan alumnus mean to you?

Because I live abroad, I don't see any of my classmates until I go back to the Bay Area. I went back for the 50th reunion, and it was wonderful seeing my old friends. It felt as if we were picking up a conversation that we had started after a morning class. It felt so familiar, so comfortable, so easy being with these guys.

What words come to mind when you think of Archbishop Riordan High School?

The school was a great social and ethnically mixed group of guys who came from a wide socio-economic spectrum. I don't know if it was true at SI and SHC, but there was something very special about the way we respected each other irrespective of our backgrounds. It felt just the same when I walked back in for our 50th. Riordan is a good solid place where students then and now have their heads screwed on right.



Steve Mayer '72

What lessons learned at Riordan have resonated in your life?

The key thing I took away from Riordan is the camaraderie of my class of '72. There are many of us who still hang out together, and our friendships have continued over the decades. We have a high percentage who attend reunions and other events.

I also learned so many lessons from playing sports and serving in student government. The need to collaborate as a team was one key lesson. The other is not to shortchange people who you may not know well. In high school, you may think you're infallible and smarter than everyone else. As you get older, you gain humility, and you wish you had been nicer to some people who you now learn are terrific guys. Had you spent more time with them, you would have realized it much earlier.

What one or two adults at Riordan did you respect and trust?

I was on the board at Riordan for many years and have been very involved with fundraising efforts. When we were redoing classrooms, I paid to get a room redone and a plaque placed on the wall to honor two of my teachers: Paul Arrigotti for math and Mike Lazzari for business. Mr. Lazzari taught me bookkeeping and how to read financial statements. I went to Cal hoping to become a doctor, but chemistry proved too tough, so I moved over to business. Thanks to my background with Mr. Lazzari, I sailed through. I've had a great career as founder of SD Mayers & Associates thanks to his class. Paul Arrigoti was also a great teacher whose math lessons also really helped me in my career. More importantly, they were both good men who cared about their students.

What does being a Riordan alumnus mean to you?

Riordan gave me a brotherhood and camaraderie that, I imagine, soldiers might feel. I was always proud to say I had graduated from Riordan even though some people put the school down. Now Riordan's on the rise, and when I mention the school, I hear such positive comments.

THE 1970s



1970s: Academic innovations include modular scheduling, a language lab, individualized instruction, educational television and the introduction of Advanced Placement classes.



1974: Riordan starts Camp Crusader, a summer camp for 4th–8th graders that is a boon to budding athletes and working parents. Participants received a camp polo shirt and a field trip to a San Francisco Giants game at Candlestick Park.

Gifts	$ 21,591	Pledge Payments	$15,698
Pledges	47,975	Grant Payments	$17,650
Grants	25,650	Pledges Completed	18
Contributed Services & Materials	+ 26,000	Pledges Active	98
		Pledges Delinquent	5
		Pledges Cancelled	1

TOTAL DEVELOPMENT FUND : $121,216

Total dollars raised	$114,052
Number of Donors	Up 60% from 441 last year to 703 this year
Alumni Support	Up 7%
Average Annual Fund Gift	$98

1974: Riordan establishes its first development office in 1974, helping to raise funds to support improved salaries, instructional costs and tuition assistance, becoming only the third high school in Northern California with such a team.



Brian Spiers ’75

Describe one or two highlights of your time at Riordan.

I loved being a member of the first WCAL Soccer championship team for Riordan in 1975.

What lessons learned at Riordan have resonated in your life?

If you don’t put the work in, you won’t get great results. I learned that the hard way.

What words come to mind when you think of Archbishop Riordan High School?

Riordan is a resilient institution that has gone through some challenging times and has emerged as an in-demand, vibrant and co-ed Catholic school.



1970s: Soccer soared in the ’70s, with the varsity teams winning four consecutive WCAL titles and the CCS Championship in 1976.

> ″My eldest brother, Steve, started as a freshman at Riordan in the fall of ’63, and then all six of his younger brothers followed his lead. So Riordan just became part of my family′s identity.″ — KH

Kevin Holl ’75

Describe one or two highlights of your time at Riordan.

Riordan has always had successful sports teams, and that was especially true between 1971 and 1975 when we won at least six championships in four different sports. To support the teams, we always had pre-game rallies, generally on Fridays, with great skits that were hilarious.

What lessons learned at Riordan have resonated in your life?

I learned the need for discipline and attention to detail. One of the school’s veteran English teachers, Len Heinz, taught us how to write a “term paper.” I utilize the skills learned in that class, including organization, use of headings and structure of an argument, in the legal briefs I write now as an attorney.

What one or two adults at Riordan did you respect and trust?

Our JV football coach, Tom McKenzie, insisted upon precision. We would practice the same play over and over again — so many times that whenever we ran that play, we would run it perfectly. And I was equally impressed by the teaching skills he displayed in his civics course. He was effective in both roles and showed that he cared about his job on the field and in the classroom. He also had a convincing opening line when he wanted to make a point: “I tell you something…”

What does being a Riordan alumnus mean to you?

It means that you know guys from all the different parishes throughout the city, from the Sunset, Richmond and Noe Valley districts to the Mission, Visitacion Valley and Excelsior districts. We all came from similar, but not identical, middle-class homes. We’re a close-knit group of classmates. Even though most guys from our class don’t live in the city anymore, we’ve made it a point to have reunions for the past three years in a row. And for all the classes, there’s nothing better than the Downtown Luncheon and the post-luncheon bar scene.



What words come to mind when you think of Archbishop Riordan High School?

When I think of Riordan, I think of my own brothers. My eldest brother Steve started as a freshman at Riordan in the fall of ’63, and then all six of his younger brothers followed his lead and went to Riordan. We were there from 1963 through 1979. Two Holl nephews went here as well. We were all involved in many activities including sports, school government and cheerleading. So Riordan just became part of my family’s identity.

Tony Sanchez-Corea '80



Describe one or two highlights of your time at Riordan.

The first time when I came back from a JV football game in a school bus, we took the turn into the driveway, and then all 30 of us in the bus sang the alma mater at the top of our lungs. It was so loud and inspirational and filled with school and team spirit. I think we woke up the brothers in the rectory. Riordan is a place that is together. The pride that we all had in the school really showed me that this was the school for me.

What lessons learned at Riordan have resonated in your life?

We are required to put in hard work and to be a leader not by screaming but through our actions. I also learned that relationships that started at Riordan are still with me today thanks to the respect we show each other.



Tony Rodoni '82

What were one or more highlights of your time at Riordan?

Being in the Bicycling Club. This was a club that a math teacher, Paul Arigotti, ran. He would organize about 10 Saturday rides during the school year ranging from 25 to 100 miles; one weekend ride where we would ride to Samuel P. Taylor State Park in Marin, camp the night and return the following day; and one 7-to-10-day cycle and camping tour every June. In my four years on the Bike Club, we did tours to Los Angeles, Lake Tahoe, Yosemite and San Diego.

We had 8 to 12 riders each time we went out that included students from every year. It wasn't like homeroom, class or sports where we were mostly segregated by year. As a typical uncomfortable 13-year-old freshman, I found it a wonderful way to see the upperclassmen welcome and include the younger riders. And yes, we took some grief along the way, but all in good spirit. By the time we were back in the halls of Riordan, there were juniors and seniors high-fiving me, the lowly freshman walking to class!

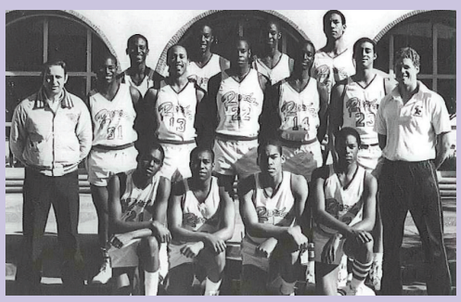
Looking back, I can't believe we just left home for a week at 13 or 14 on our bikes with one teacher and pretty much no other adult contact or supervision. At most, we'd make one collect phone call home during the week to tell our parents we were still alive. I can't imagine that happening any more with mobile devices and a general lack of independence given to young people.

In elementary school, I also loved attending Camp Crusader, a sports summer camp for grade-school students. It ran from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. every day, and every hour we would rotate between playing basketball, baseball, football, running track and any other sport they could come up with. I attended camp every summer from 1974 to 1977 with

THE 1980s



1980s: The Fine Arts sees a revival in the '80s, led by classes in music theory and practice and with the marching and pep bands performing at Riordan and throughout the Bay Area.



1980s: Riordan wins six straight basketball league championships starting in 1980, and the wrestling team produces 10 league champions and six who place in the CCS. The track team wins the WCAL in 1987 and 1989.



1980s: Campus Ministry continues a program of retreats, liturgies and service projects, with students attending Kairos retreats and the Marianist LIFE leadership program.

many of my classmates from St. Finn Barr. It was an early indoctrination to Riordan, where we would meet the teachers and coaches that worked at camp, like Ron Parodi, Ron Isola and others. The camp participants were from many other elementary schools, so by the time you started at Riordan, you already knew a lot of new classmates from camp.

Thirdly, I loved donkey basketball. Some guy would travel around the state with a bunch of donkeys, and one night a year they would be at Riordan. I'm not even sure who exactly played — students mostly — and we would get divided up somehow. Players sat on the donkeys and rode them up and down the court while playing basketball or trying to play basketball. They didn't have to dribble, but they had to ride the donkey down the court, pass or defend and shoot the ball from the saddle. It was pure ridiculousness and mayhem. The gym would be full, and the place would just go nuts. You'd think it was the CCS basketball finals until you heard the laughter from the stands.

What lessons learned at Riordan have stuck with you or shaped your life?

Working in the cafeteria at lunchtime in exchange for financial aid at Riordan, I was required to put in a modest amount of on-campus service hours. Years ago, I would not have put this as a highlight at all. It wasn't fun as a freshman or sophomore to be cleaning tables for my classmates and getting some grief and hazing while doing it. It was just a case of getting comfortable with it. That helped me learn how to give back not only with financial donations but also with time as well.

While at Riordan, I was a volunteer math tutor. I used to go to the home of another student weekly and help him complete his homework. It helped me learn how to teach. And while I was never a teacher at a school, in my professional career, I had to learn how to explain and teach. This tutoring job was just many of the roles I had that prepared me for the teaching components of my career.



Vitus Leung '83

What were one or more highlights of your time at Riordan?

I have to give credit to the faculty and staff, as they are the fondest memories of my four years there. They embraced me and so many others. They cared about their students and created a good community rooted in the Marianist traditions of kindness, respect and compassion. I'm an immigrant kid from Hong Kong who didn't have a good experience in grade school. Riordan gave me a scholarship, and choosing to go there was one of the best decisions of my life.

In 1983, we were asked by the brothers to participate in the inaugural Kairos retreat. Even though I had spent four years getting to know my classmates as well as the faculty and staff, I found this to be a deeper dive in terms of my relationship with God, with Marianist tradition and with the students who participated. We shared our personal histories and our relationship with God and why we chose Riordan — topics we hadn't discussed in our years at the school.

What lessons learned at Riordan have stuck with you or shaped your life?

Riordan has always been true to its mission and core beliefs by accepting a broad range of students from all over the city. That created the ideal environment for learning and growing. I still carry that experience, and because of Riordan, I have a deeper sense of empathy. I understand where people come from, how I should treat them and how they should treat me.



Mario Peregrino '85

Describe one or two highlights of your time at Riordan.

My senior night for the wrestling team still stands out as a highlight during my time at Riordan. My mother and father had never attended any of my sporting events while I was growing up as they were busy working to take care of their five kids. But this time they came, along with my siblings and friends, to watch me wrestle. I was so nervous that I almost threw up. Before the match, we presented our moms with a single rose on the center mat. To this day, that picture of me giving my mom the rose still hangs in my home. It always conjures up great memories. And yes, I did win the match.

What does being a Riordan alumnus mean to you?

Being a Riordan grad to me means pride in being part of a school that helped me grow as a person. The school also gave me a place where I could send both my boys to help them grow and excel in academics as they prepare for college. Riordan is a place where I could set up a scholarship fund in the name of my late wife, Elizabeth Peregrino, to help kids who want to attend Riordan but who need a little financial help.

What words come to mind when you think of Archbishop Riordan High School?

Pride. Honor. Respect. More importantly: acceptance and tolerance.



David Frias ’91

Describe one or two highlights of your time at Riordan.

One highlight was my Kairos retreat in my senior year. I had no clue what to expect. After the retreat, I was more deeply in tune with myself and had made so many new friends with some of my classmates that I had never met before. That retreat helped me to discover my faith and helped me see what circumstances some people had overcome in their lives. Every couple of years, I’ll run into folks I befriended on that retreat, including Rodney Glover, our football team’s quarterback.

The Riordan dances were also great. Riordan was an all-boys’ school, and we had girls from Presentation, Mercy and St. Rose come to attend our dances. That made it easier to meet girls.

What lessons learned at Riordan have resonated in your life?

The importance of diversity. It’s important that students from different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds get a quality education. My education helped me later in life as I began my career in law enforcement with the SFPD.

What one or two adults at Riordan did you respect and trust?

Ron Isola was such a good mentor. He wore many hats and genuinely cared about the school and its students. He shined on the court as a basketball coach and in the classroom as teacher. He also helped behind the scenes with the snack bar and in so many other ways. I remember one day he asked me to help with the snack bar, and I said yes. I always said yes if he asked for my help. It meant that he trusted me enough to keep stats or collect money. The other influence in my life was Leonard Hines, a teacher and the dean of students. If you were late, you would get detention, but you learned that actions have consequences. He was always fair in the way he practiced discipline just like an old-school dean.



Curtis Moore ’93

Describe one or two highlights of your time at Riordan.

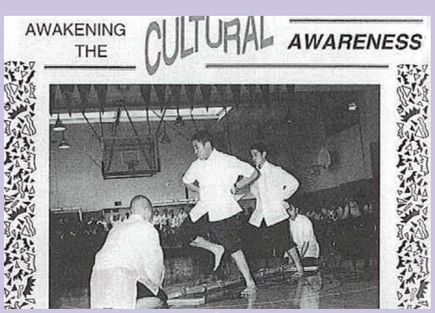
One of my highlights, if not the top, of my time at Riordan was the Kairos retreat. As an upperclassman, we all thought we knew each other, but we got to know each other and ourselves in different ways during that retreat. It was enlightening for me as a young man to allow myself to be vulnerable. In turn, this instilled a level of comfort and confidence in myself that I still carry today. The experience was impactful in ways that are difficult to describe to those who didn’t experience it themselves.

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THE 1990s – 2000s



1999: Riordan celebrates its 50th anniversary with the theme “Times Change, The Dream Remains the Same” and launches a $3.5M capital campaign to modernize science facilities, renovate facilities and build a scholarship endowment.



1999: Riordan is a showcase of multiculturalism and inclusion, with a student population that mirrors the diversity of the City and a community that celebrates this through student clubs, Cultural Week activities and assemblies.



2002: The Men’s Basketball team wins the Northern California Championship and goes on to win the Division III State Championship.

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What lessons learned at Riordan have resonated in your life?

Based on time on the football team, I learned to value teamwork, and this carried through to the classroom and to the other teams I played on. In all these areas, individuals worked together to accomplish the same goal. Everyone played his role and any one person not doing so could negatively impact the others. I apply these same lessons every day in my work in cybersecurity. Someone has to develop the technology, someone has to do the marketing, someone has to sell our product, and someone has to support the technology.

What one or two adults at Riordan did you respect and trust?

I respected and trusted a number of administrators during my time at Riordan but one in particular stands out: Liam Watters. Coach Watters kept my best interest in mind, and I appreciate everything he did for me.

What does being a Riordan alumnus mean to you?

I enjoyed my time at Riordan, and I'm thankful for all of the good times and good memories. I still keep in touch with a number of former classmates who have become lifelong friends.

Jamieson Fong '00

Describe one or two highlights of your time at Riordan.

In my senior year, I went on a Kairos retreat. Earlier, I had attended a Marianist retreat, but not many of my Crusader brothers attended it. The Kairos retreat was led by some teachers and alumni, and it proved to be the last step to transition us from high school to the real world. I look forward to when my son, class of '26, and my daughter, class of '27 attend their Kairos retreats and receive the same formative experience that Riordan offered me. Riordan does such a great job knowing where we are as students and giving us experiences to allow us to take our first steps into adulthood.

I also found the Frosh Olympics were a great way to bond with classmates and get to know upperclassmen, but Kairos was a way of letting us know that our high school career was coming to an end. It helped us redefine our relationships with our peers.

In my junior year, I was in a play — *The Impossible Years.* I had to learn lots of lines and spend long nights putting in many hours to understand what everyone was doing to put the play together, including the stage crew, lighting team and the sound crew. Watching every actor helped me understand that I was a small piece going into something much bigger. Everyone had to do his part. We sold out every performance, with 2,000 people watching this play each night.



What lessons learned at Riordan have resonated in your life?

Riordan taught me to keep the core of who I am front and center and to pursue my mission to serve others. That has been essential in helping me move forward while preserving my core values. In short, it's all about adaptation and change. Riordan taught me to learn how to learn, something that came in handy in law school, in practicing law and in becoming a parent. I'm not expected to know everything, but Riordan gave me the skills to learn. I became a student of life thanks to my teachers, who also taught me to stick with the mission of doing good. When I practice law, I keep to my core beliefs by choosing to do things in a way that maintains my integrity.

THE 2000s



2011: Riordan opens the international boarding program, eventually welcoming students from more than 20 countries to study and live on campus.



2016: Beginning with the renovation of the Kevin Restani Court, Riordan invests nearly $20M over the next eight years to improve building infrastucture, such as the library, classrooms, & student life enhancements, such as the courtyard.



2019: Mayer Family Field opens in 2019, continuing a new era of Riordan athletic facility improvements.

Bobby Vardakastanis ’01



Describe one or two highlights of your time at Riordan.

The teachers were great and always tried to make classes fun and engaging. I never felt bored in any of my classes. I played football for two years, and it did create the camaraderie you’ll find on any team — on the field, in the weight room and during lunch. Even if you weren’t on a team, students were always open and engaging and invited you into their circle of friends.

What one or two adults at Riordan did you respect and trust?

Ron Isola was my history teacher. He made the class fun and was always easy to talk to. His jokes were so bad that they were funny.

What does being a Riordan alumnus mean to you?

It means that you are part of a community that is growing and evolving over time. There have been so many changes since I was there. Riordan is now one of the most sought-after schools in the city, and I’m proud that my daughter, Giorgia, is there as a freshman.

Omar Mousa ’07



What lessons learned at Riordan have stuck with you or shaped your life?

Many in the faculty taught me that I really have to throw my full effort into everything I do even after high school into my university studies and into my career. They also stressed the need just to be good to one another and to treat our neighbors with kindness following a Christian set of principles.

What does being a Riordan alumnus mean to you?

It’s a special bond. I can see someone wearing a Crusader logo at SFO, throughout the city and even in other states, and I’ll find an automatic connection that transcends time and generations. That great sense of brotherhood is growing in new ways now that Riordan is coed, and the school can build on the foundation that the students, faculty and staff have crafted over the years.

What words come to mind when you think of Archbishop Riordan High School?

Brotherhood. Excellent sports. Strong academics. Safe. Accepting. Wholesome. Diverse.

Jeno Wilkinson ’09



Describe one or two highlights of your time at Riordan.

I have many highlights from my time at Riordan but the ones that stand out the most are the various trips we had the opportunity to go on and the times before and in between classes. I had the chance to go to Italy my sophomore year with my Italian class and to Washington, DC, my senior year. Both trips were amazing and really brought us closer together as brothers. Those trips also took the classroom lessons to another level by teaching me new skills that I would apply to my life.

What lessons learned at Riordan have resonated in your life?

Riordan taught me to be flexible, as life tosses a lot at us all the time. Simply being flexible and rolling with punches goes a long way. The school also taught me that there is always someone to talk to. Since graduation, we have experienced the loss of a classmate and some men in the classes around us. In those times, it’s easy to forget that you always have people to reach out to. Even if it has been years since we last spoke to someone, it really doesn’t matter; when a brother is reaching out for help, there is always a brother willing to listen.

THE 2000s



2020: Riordan transitions to a coed model in the fall, welcoming young women to our school community.



2020s: New women’s athletics programs, such as volleyball, wrestling and flag football, join the WCAL and WBAL.



2020s: Innovative new programs and classes are added, including biomedicine, engineering, business and dance.

Chris Trigueiro ’12



Describe one or two highlights of your time at Riordan.

My time at Riordan provided me with so many highlights that it is difficult to pick just one or two. I could choose the time the Class of 2012 each donated $1 to the school, which, as a result of a deal we made with Mr. Bethel — one of our favorite teachers — meant that he had to grow his hair out until graduation. He was always bald, except for those few months! I could also choose the time that I wrote, directed and shot a music video with Mr. Marcaida to celebrate our upcoming football game against SI. The game didn’t go so well, but the music video was a hit. I could select my morning news show on Riordan TV’s “Migs and Trigs in The Morning” with Miguel Guerrero. However, there is one highlight that rises to the top. In fact, it’s a part of my high school experience that others would be lucky to have too — my friendships. The boys I met at Riordan are now successful, upstanding and thoughtful men. I am so grateful to have had them in my life then, just as I am now.

Coral Shafer ’21



What were one or two highlights of your time at Riordan?

Being the first female student in Riordan’s history to speak at a graduation event came with a lot of pressure. I felt as if I was representing all of the women at Riordan then and all of the women to come. Being the first at anything comes with a lot of unspoken tension, but this stress drove me to write something I am still incredibly proud of. The standing ovation I received after my speech pushed me to embody those words every single day. That speech shaped me, has led me to find myself and has reminded me that I’m on the right path. As some of the first women alums of Riordan, we are all trailblazers in our own right, and we did something incredibly brave by attending a school that hadn’t previously been open to women.

Daniel Etter ’17



What lessons learned at Riordan have resonated in your life?

Riordan taught me that if we challenged ourselves on a high level, we could end up being great. I’m grateful for our teachers and coaches for showing us that.

What does being a Riordan alumnus mean to you?

I feel proud that I am a graduate of a school led by an administration that has steered Riordan in the right direction. What they have done since my time there is spectacular. I talk to folks from all over the Bay Area, and they want to send their sons and daughters to Riordan. That makes me proud, and it means that the school is doing something right.

What words come to mind when you think of Riordan High School?

Riordan was pivotal in my success in life.

Gianna DiGiulio ’21



What lessons learned at Riordan have stuck with you or shaped your life?

As one of the first women to attend Riordan, I was eager to get involved and found myself frequently stepping out of my comfort zone during my time as a Crusader. Going in, I knew I wanted to make the most of my senior year, and, starting at a new school, I feared it would be too difficult. Thankfully, I was welcomed with open arms by so many, including the most encouraging administration. That encouragement allowed me to successfully optimize the time I had at Riordan. The school taught me that in order to grow as a person, I had to find and make the most out of every opportunity I was given.

Patrick O’Brien ’19



What lessons learned at Riordan have resonated in your life?

Riordan taught me how to have thick skin and chose my own path by following the path my heart takes me. The respect of peers comes easy when you stay true to yourself and follow those ambitions with an unwavering passion. It was hard to do at first. I was scared of being judged and rejected, which I did face at times, but I learned how to deal with all that until I reached my goal.

What one or two adults at Riordan did you respect and trust?

Mr. Rassam taught (and still teaches) the video arts classes where I learned how to be a filmmaker. He inspired me and gave me the tools to express my creativity, and he mentored me and taught me so much about work ethic and navigating life.

India Bowles ’23



What were one or more highlights of your time at Riordan?

Playing on the varsity soccer team with my younger sister, Ava. On my senior night, I scored a beautiful goal. To be able to celebrate with my sister was incredible. Another favorite memory is winning the senior gauntlet for Pilar — my house — after a competitive obstacle course race. The house system brought the Riordan community together and pushed me to try something new and meet new people.

What does being a Riordan alumna mean to you?

It means being a part of a vast network of hard-working individuals who value excellence and who are willing to support one another.



From left: David Lin, director of the Boarding Program, and Danny Curtin, Riordan's vice principal of Enrollment and Strategy, stand with boarding students and some of the adults who care for them in their dormitory.

International students flock to Riordan for a world-class education

If you want to know just how much Riordan has grown over the years, look no further than the Boarding Program, which has expanded to 84 students in the 2024–25 academic year, up from 63 students the previous year.

This past summer, Riordan added even more rooms to accommodate these students by converting into dorms the counseling offices, which will move into the newly designed Sally and Mike Mayer '71 Counseling and Wellness Center. These new dorms add to the first ones that were built in the brothers' residence, helping the school become the first high school boarding program in the city in 2011.

For Danny Curtin, Riordan's vice president of Enrollment and Strategy, and David Lin, director of the Boarding Program, these numbers reveal just how respected Riordan is around the world.

Other numbers, they add, illustrate just how successful the program has been, with boarders averaging a 3.8 GPA and with every graduate from the program attending a top-50 college.

"We've seen not only a growth in the quantity of boarding students," said Lin, "but also an increase in the quality of our boarders. They exemplify all the characteristics of our highest performing students. They excel in academics and extracurriculars, and they embrace the family and community spirit that makes Riordan so special.

The Riordan community is coming to understand, added Curtin, "just how well our international students know and love the school as they represent it to others. Last year, we held a Crusader for the Day shadow visit for eighth graders and their parents. I handed the microphone to Jimena, a sophomore from Spain. When she spoke about her Riordan experience, parents couldn't believe that her time at Riordan had started just a few months earlier. She articulated so well what makes Riordan special that you would have thought she was a legacy student."

After acceptance letters went out to eighth graders in March, "we had a few top students who wanted to visit us one more time," added Curtin. "Of all our 1,150 students, I picked Jimena to speak with those students, and both ended up registering at Riordan. I trusted her to represent us well, and she did just that."

Lin attributes the success of the Boarding Program to the "unprecedented amount of growth we've seen here at Riordan that is showcased by the energy and vibe here as well as by our school culture and our location in a great city. In the 2020–21 school year, due to COVID, we had only 24 students in our boarding program. We knew the only way to grow our network was by being deliberate in our messaging to folks abroad, as we try to help people from Asia, Europe and Africa understand who we are and what the U.S. school system is like."

Both Curtin and Lin do this by flying around the world — this year alone to Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Spain, Italy, Portugal, Germany and England. "Our program is so successful because we have worked hard to increase our presence abroad to build relationships," said Lin.

Because boarding programs in many countries run through the end of ninth grade, boarding students typically start at Riordan in their sophomore year, with around 25 students each in 10th, 11th and 12th grades. The countries they come from have included China, South Korea, Japan, Vietnam, Taiwan, Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, Austria, Germany, Finland, Hungary, Ukraine, Montenegro, Armenia, the Czech Republic, Turkey, Brazil and Cameroon.





Photos left and below by Ryan Garcia

Students, such as Cameroon's Andrew Hilman '26 (left), come to Riordan from all over the world to enjoy what the school has to offer.

Andrew Hilman (pictured above), who came to Riordan from Cameroon in August 2023 as a sophomore, is just one of many success stories. A star basketball player, he has also maintained a 4.0 GPA. "He doesn't get to see his family very often," said Lin. "But he understands the opportunities he has at Riordan. He didn't come here just to play basketball but to make friends with students from around the world. Every morning he reminds his classmates that they are lucky to be here. He sees the Boarding Program as an open door to a bright future."

Curtin also highlighted the maturity of students, including Nayra Jimenez '22 who noted in a Chronicle story, that she started her academic career at Riordan after flying 17 hours from Spain for her first day of school in 2021.

"I crossed the ocean completely alone to come here," she said after her first morning of classes. "I was so nervous but also excited."

Just as students in the Boarding Program have taken to Riordan, so too has the Riordan community taken to the boarders. "They made such an impression on city students that three local families invited boarders to their homes," said Lin. "Those parents asked many questions of the students and came to appreciate these international students even more. In this way, the Riordan family grows not only across the world, but also in ways only the future will tell."

FOUR BOARDING ALUMNI

Four alumni of the Boarding Program represent just a handful of the success stories we have seen over the years.

Henry Liu '14 first learned about Riordan at a school fair in Beijing. At Riordan, he founded the Heal Our World Club, which grew and sold vegetables to the Riordan community to raise money for charities.

He earned his bachelor's degree in finance from NYU's Stern School of Business and later worked as an analyst for UBS's Shanghai office.

Meidyn Nguyen '21, Riordan's first female boarding student, dove head-first into her new school by taking part in student government, the Wellness Club, the Dance Club and the yearbook, all while earning a 4.0 GPA when she graduated. She earned a business degree at San Diego Mesa College, where she also served on student government, before transferring to San Diego State University.

Stephen Zhu '14, one of Riordan's first boarding students, came to Riordan from Suzhou, in China's Jiangsu Province. He fell in love with Riordan, where he joined the school's marching band. That program gave him "a great sense of community and was a lot of fun," he noted. He marched in the 2012 Giants World Series Parade and eventually joined the Cal Marching band, when he attended UC Berkeley.

There, he majored in environmental economics and policy and volunteered at the International Office where he mentored students from other countries. He spent an extra semester as a student to take part in UCDC, a program that sends UC students to the nation's capital for internships and courses. That internship took him to the National Regulatory Research Institute to advance the nation's electric vehicle infrastructure.

Domonkos Kiss '24, who spent two years studying as a Riordan boarder before going on to Arizona State University, found in Lin both "invaluable support and guidance."

He praised Lin, too, for his "dedication to ensuring the success and well-being of dorm students. Your thoughtful advice, constant encouragement and unwavering support significantly contributed to my personal and academic development."



Domonkos Kiss '24

House system & Parliament help Crusaders build community



Georgia Davey, Benny Willers and Brian Kelly.

High school students over time have had a built-in method to identify themselves and to find community by bonding with their fellow freshmen, sophomores, juniors or seniors.

Seven years ago, Riordan began a program to give Crusaders yet another way to identify themselves and a new way to create community.

The House System gathers the student body into four houses: Cana, which draws its name from the wedding feast recounted in the Gospel of John; Pilar, named for Our Lady of the Pilar; Russi, named for Father Jack Russi, who spent many years at Riordan; and Bolts, named for Brother Bill Bolts, another longtime Riordan exemplar.

Each house includes a mix of freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors as a way to boost school spirit and pride in the school. "It's a way, too, that allows older students to mentor younger ones and not just stick with their own year, and it gives younger students older students to emulate," noted Benny Willers '08, who directs the program.

"At the start, students compared this to the houses in the Harry Potter novels and movies," added Willers. "We even had a sorting hat. However, we ran into a few roadblocks. In the year it rolled out, everyone was confused, because they had no background in what this was. This was the first house system in the Bay Area and one of the first in the state."

Brian Kelly, assistant principal for student affairs, echoed Willers. "When we first created the House System, the seniors didn't buy into it. Over the years, however, the system has grown bigger and bigger. Last year was the first year the program received more student buy-in and faculty support than ever before. Also, because many other Marianist schools use the house system, this connects us better with our sister schools around the world."

The best thing about the program, Willers added, "is that it creates micro-communities in home rooms, where students gather for 20 minutes four times each week. It gives students a chance to be a part of something bigger than themselves while also creating healthy competition, as students take part in House Games four times each year. Games can include tug of war, dodgeball, basketball shootouts, musical chairs, pickleball and playing video games. It's a cheat code to generate school spirit and create a built-in support system that gives students an identity beyond being a Crusader. Students gain points at these games, and through spirit dress days that contribute to their chance to win the Chaminade Cup."

Georgia Davey, associate house director and PE teacher, was drawn to the house system the day she started her Riordan career. "Students who aren't involved in clubs or athletics can be involved as members of their house during school days, and when they graduate, they can say they were a part of this dynamic system."

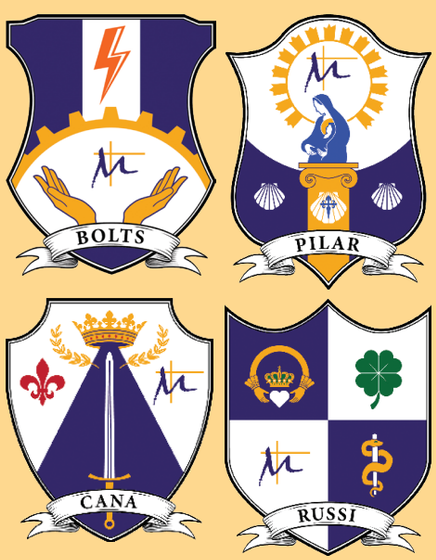
In her role as a PE teacher, she has heard students in the weight room discuss the games they had played earlier that day. "Older kids talk to younger ones and girls talk with boys about who won that day," she noted. "Even if they talk about losing, they discuss competition in a way that builds connections, and they learn how to lose graciously. It brings into conversation kids who might never talk to each other."

When Riordan went coed, Davey added, "it gave the young women who came here something to grab onto to help them find a home within the Riordan community."

The House System is tied to another multi-class organization — the Student Parliament, which comprises more than 40 students, including a 15-member executive board — new as of last year — and the student body president.

"We design most things at Riordan to be student-led," added Willers. "We want to give everyone an equal opportunity to lead, and we try to share responsibilities through a rotation among the executive board. We think it's important for all to learn a variety of skills and have a chance and platform to lead."

Last year, he added, "was a breakthrough for the executive board thanks to a retreat we did. These are 15 students who wouldn't normally hang out together every day. Thanks to the retreat, the chemistry of that group gelled, and now they are engaged on any topic we discuss.



The four house system flags of Bolts, Pilar, Cana and Russi.

Riordan's first solo woman SBP plans to launch Cultural Nights

Caroline O'Connell '25 enjoys forging her own path. This year, she is doing so as Riordan's first female student body president.

In the past few years, two students shared the title — one boy and one girl. By wearing the crown alone, she makes Riordan history. She is also no stranger to student government.

Soon after starting at Riordan, she became part of the freshmen parliament — a part of the school's parliament. She knew what she was getting herself into as she had served on the student council at St. Gabriel School in the outer Sunset.

She enrolled at Riordan during its second year of coeducation, and unlike the first class of coed students, she was able to sidestep remote learning. She also stayed with student government, serving in the parliament with each new year.

"I love planning school activities as I enjoy having a say in what goes on for myself and for my friends, including planning the House Games, rallies, our spirit dress days and all events outside of school," she noted. "We help manage our open houses and throw a big ceremony for our applicants."

To gauge what her fellow Crusaders want, she organizes surveys and meets with other members of parliament twice each week.

She takes pride in seeing her school community grow "and watching it unfold as students enjoy everything we plan."

A part of Riordan's Signature Biomed Program, O'Connell is also a member of the Riordan Chapter of the National Honor Society.

This year, she hopes to organize nighttime events, including a Cultural Night to celebrate the many facets that make the Riordan community so great, including the Boarding Program. "Those students impress me so much. I was nervous enough entering high school, and I am from the city. Imagine what it's like coming from Africa, Europe or Asia and having to navigate a strange school without any family support."

O'Connell first considered attending Sacred Heart Cathedral Prep, which her grandfather and sister had attended. "But when Riordan went coed, it was as if a brand-new school had opened, and I took the opportunity to follow my own path and the path of my father, who graduated from Riordan in 1984. I value growing up as an independent person, and am proud to be the first woman to serve as a solo student body president."



Caroline O'Connell '25 also plans to join Riordan's inaugural flag football team this year.

A third-generation San Franciscan, O'Connell's schedule will also be filled by playing soccer, by competing on the school's first female flag football team, by working with the Wellness Club, by serving as a Riordan ambassador with the Knights Club leading tours and by competing in Irish dance through the Boyle Irish Dance Academy.

"I love planning school activities, as I enjoy having a say in what goes on for myself and for my friends, including planning the House Games." — O'Connell







Top left: Naomi Lin '24, The Crusader's editor-in-chief last year, holds Volume 1, Issue 1 of The Crusader. Last year's Managing Editor Talia Bumanglag '24 holds Volume 1, Issue 2, and this year's editor-in-chief, Angela Jia '25, and managing editor, Aiden Pavon '25, hold Volume 1, Issue 4. The Crusader staff is looking for Volume 1, Issue 3, to complete the set. Photo by Susan Sutton, who is pictured below left with one of her newspaper staffers from last year.

Above: Lin and Bumanglag with Denis Fama '64, who gave the school Volume 1, Issue 1, of The Crusader from November 1949.

Photo by Aiden Pavon '25.

The Crusader cracks top 10 nationally for high school newspapers

Anyone opening a copy of Riordan's student newspaper, The Crusader, would be impressed just by looking at it. Dig deeper, and you'll be even more impressed reading the professional copy, seeing the clean layout and admiring the quality photos.

You wouldn't be the only ones.

Last year alone, the paper earned more than 60 awards, including ninth in the nation from the National Scholastic Press Association for "Best of Show" for schools with enrollment under 1,800.

Susan Sutton, who moderates the paper, also served as chair of the English Department for the past three years. She took 15 students to the awards ceremony at the JEA/NSPA National High School Journalism Convention in Kansas City, Mo., last April along with two chaperones.

"The students were thrilled with the award," said Sutton, a nine-year veteran at Riordan. "More than 4,000 students from across the country were gathered in a ballroom as the awards were announced in two dozen categories. The students saw their name on a screen even before the award was announced and began embracing each other. Their joy made me so happy. It was the same joy I experienced working on my high school paper. You could see the spark in their eyes, and it reassured me that I had chosen the right path."

Also reassuring Sutton were the nine other awards they had received that day, including eight individual awards. "On top of that, our Quiz Bowl team placed third in the nation."

Over the years, The Crusader has received awards from The Journalism Education Association of Northern California, the National Federation of Press Women, The California News Publishers Association and School Newspapers Online.

While studying journalism at SFSU, Sutton worked as the Datebook Editor for Bay City News Service and later earned her master's degree in journalism education from Kent State.

In addition to teaching English, she has created two journalism courses at Riordan, where she has a chance to







Top left: Pavon, Bumanglag, Lin and Jia. Photo by Sean Reyes '25. Above: The Shield editors Nick Nye '25 and Alana Radoc Manrique '24 stand with last year's editor-in-chief Addison Hwang '24 and this year's editor-in-chief Aliana Urdaneta-Rodas '25. Photo by Sean Reyes '25. Left: Members of the 2023–2024 newspaper staff.

& The Shield, a multimedia magazine, celebrates its second year

discuss current events with her students as well as the mechanics of how to write a compelling lede.

"Every day, one student will bring in a story that we discuss, noting why it is significant, and we study how it was written. For example, one student brought in a story about Caitlin Clark, and we took a look at how the reporter had crossed a line with her. Sports journalism is still dominated by men, and women in athletics and journalism have to remind people what is and isn't appropriate."

The Crusader also celebrated its first female editor-in-chief last year, Naomi Lin '24. "This historic moment was not lost on students, who are embracing a new generation of student journalists."

The previous year, The Shield magazine debuted. Its first editor-in-chief, Angelina Ning '23, presented Sutton with the idea, and, with the support of President Tim Reardon, the multimedia feature magazine was born.

Ning is majoring in history on the pre-law track at UCLA with a minor in entrepreneurship, and Lin is studying at Cal, where she is majoring in legal studies and minoring in English.

In her role as moderator, Sutton lets students "make their own decisions. I'm here to advise them. Over the years, they have demonstrated insight, wisdom and courage on a daily basis. It's not easy to publish five issues of 20 or 24 pages every year, but our journalists do just that."

Sutton has also improved upon the school's newspaper archive. "The paper began the year Riordan started, in 1949. Last year, Denis Fama '64 brought in the first edition ever printed — something missing from our archives."

Last year The Crusader also published an obituary honoring the paper's first editor, Bernie Cotter '50, who died in December 2023. "That piece included an interview with his wife and his classmates," said Lin. "Even though the piece was about a death, that story revealed the joy in journalism and how we can grow closer to those in the past through the people we interview today. We find consolation and connection through the stories we tell."

Joseph Zuloaga ’23 readies himself at Columbia for a future in news

Joseph Zuloaga ’23, who served as editor-in-chief of The Crusader his senior year and was valedictorian, is now entering his second year at Columbia University, where he is a deputy news editor at the Columbia Spectator, the second oldest college newspaper in the country.

Q. What did working on The Crusader teach you about journalism?

Put plainly, The Crusader taught me everything.

It taught me the essential basics of journalism, allowing me to cover a wide range of stories affecting diverse communities.

Founded in 1949, the same year that Riordan opened, The Crusader has grown in tandem with the school as an integral part of documenting Riordan’s history and various current events.

I also learned the importance of asking relevant questions and maintaining an unbiased perspective to accurately cover news stories.

Being editor-in-chief also taught me that journalists need to be confident. Leading The Crusader staff allowed me to delve into journalism at Columbia head on and to manage the added pressures that come with the backdrop of a larger news ecosystem in New York City. I have channeled that confidence into being proactive and assertive when asking to cover stories, and this further cemented my love for journalism along with a work ethic honed at Riordan.

When Erin McLaughlin asked to interview me in April for an NBC Nightly News story on the protests at Columbia, I had the confidence to say yes. Although nervous at first, I was able to handle the interview because The Crusader taught me to be proud of my talents as a journalist.



Joseph Zuloaga covered the Gaza protests at Columbia along with other student reporters.

Q. What story or stories at Riordan were you most proud of writing?

The “End of an Era – Riordan Brotherhood” story in the May 2023 edition (my final as editor-in-chief), honored the Class of 2023 as having the last group of boys to experience the Riordan brotherhood. It summarized the dozens of experiences I shared with my peers as we navigated four unconventional years of high school: entering an all-boys school, surviving through the pandemic and graduating as a coed class with the honor of being the last group of guys carrying the “Strength in Brotherhood” motto with us.

In March 2023, NBC Bay Area’s Raj Mathai interviewed Riordan alumni on campus, including actor Rich Ting ’98. I wrote the story of the visit and was starstruck meeting Raj. Watching his broadcasts was formative in crafting my love for journalism, so I fully geeked out when we got a picture together because it felt like meeting a celebrity.

In 2021, I also wrote about the 20th anniversary of the September 11 attack, which became my way of honoring people who experienced the tragedy and how Americans today fulfill the promise of never forgetting.

Q. What do you do now at Columbia that expands upon what you did at Riordan or continues that trajectory?

As part of Spectator’s University News section, I cover the Columbia administration, student activism, academics and campus events. I was a staff writer last year, and now I am a deputy news editor.

When tasked with covering stories last year, especially when Columbia became a microcosm for the national pro-Palestinian protests on college campuses, I found that because of my journalism background from Riordan, I could craft well-constructed articles.

If it wasn’t for what I learned on The Crusader, I don’t think I would have had the guts to wait to interview two sitting members of Congress after an event or push forward in a press gaggle to hear House Speaker Mike Johnson deliver remarks at a press conference on Columbia’s campus.

Q. Any reflections on the campus protests?

As a student, it's been shocking to see the climate on campus change over the course of a few months and heartbreaking to hear the stories of how many of my peers' lives have been affected by the horrors of the war. As a journalist, I know that "journalism is the first rough draft of history," and that it is our duty to document defining moments in Columbia's history.

The administration limited campus access to outside media in the days following the start of the "Gaza Solidarity Encampment." As students living on campus, we had almost unlimited access to cover the ongoing developments. Having national media outlets cite our coverage underscored the importance that student journalists have in informing audiences about events, coupled with the correct complexities, nuances and intricacies that define the Columbia community instead of superficial, overgeneralizing claims from figures who do not fully understand the campus community.

Q. What do you hope to do in the coming years, both at Columbia and beyond?

I hope to keep climbing up the ranks of the editorial board and become editor-in-chief of the Columbia Spectator while also familiarizing myself more with the makeup of the Columbia community and the surrounding communities of Morningside Heights and West Harlem. I also landed an internship with NBC News and, later on, I hope they hire me and promote me to anchor the NBC Nightly News.

Q. How has New York City complemented your journalistic goals?

At events across the city covered by national media outlets, I have met dozens of journalists. After taking a selfie with them, I have asked for advice on how to prepare for a future career in the field. Their dedication inspires me to try to emulate their style of reporting and their commitment to the craft of journalism.



Joseph Zuloaga, front row, third from right, with his Spectator colleagues.

Q. What is the power of journalism? How can it be a force for good?

Journalism is an essential pillar in pursuing the facts. It has the unique power of bridging the gap between high-ranking people in society and common citizens. Throughout our country's history, trailblazing journalists like Walter Cronkite, Bob Woodward, Carl Bernstein and so many more have reported on historic events, asking the tough questions that have held the powerful accountable.

In May 2023, in light of Don Lemon and Tucker Carlson being fired from CNN and Fox News, I wrote an editorial emphasizing how honest journalism is the cornerstone of democracy. I also noted how journalism has become an inflammatory tool. Just like our country, the media landscape is divided. The days of investigative journalism are fading away; instead, we see conservative and liberal-leaning networks defending their own sides without being self-critical. In the end, Americans are caught in the crossfire of this war of words.

Journalism can be a force for good when it exposes injustices without bias, and there are still journalists today who report the news with courage, tenacity and integrity.

Q. Who from the newspaper do you have to thank for where you are today?

Steven Rissotto '20 and Antonio Maffei '20 were the leaders of The Crusader my freshman year. They made me feel welcomed and created a supportive environment to help me succeed. Jordan Tyler Maralit '21, Grayson Solomon '22 and John McQuaid '22 always welcomed my ideas and helped me rise through the ranks to hold several editor positions.

During my tenure as editor-in-chief, my editors and staff writers were the funniest and kindest people. Along the way, they taught me how to be a good leader. I knew I could count on them to produce five stellar issues, and the record number of awards we won proves their talent. They forever have a special place in my heart.

Ms. Sutton, The Crusader's adviser, is the wisest and kindest mentor I have had throughout my entire life. I will never be able to express how thankful I am to her for taking a chance on me. She has been supportive, candid and patient, and even though I am now a Riordan alum, I know she will always have my back. I will always give her credit for whatever future successes life may bring me.

Riordan's band performs in Rome and meets Pope Francis



Riordan's marching band performed in several cities in Italy, including Rome.

Lance Ohnmeiss, Riordan's director of bands for the past four years, enjoyed the same highlights as his students during their trip to Italy last winter. All except one.

"On our final day in Rome, my students were within 15 feet of Pope Francis during their audience with the holy father," he noted. "I had to wait outside, as the audience was meant just for the students."

In all, 75 parents and 105 members of the various bands and music ensembles attended the performance tour in Italy from Dec. 28, 2023, to Jan. 6, 2024, a trip that took them to Rome, Frascati and Florence.



Ohnmeiss managed to arrange the audience with the Pope by working through his personal connections. "The students thought it was very cool to be in the same room as the pontiff and to be so close to him. He blessed some of those who had gathered during Pope Francis' weekly prayer service, where he mentioned Riordan by name."

At the start of their journey, students did a walking tour of the archeological sites of Rome, including the San Callixtus Catacombs, before playing a concert in Chiesa di Santa Maria in Portico in Campitelli. They also played at the Frascati Festival on Dec. 30 and on the steps of the Cattedrale di San Pietro.

At a New Year's Eve party, Riordan's musicians made friends with other U.S. students taking part in the tour. The next day, students marched for three hours in Rome's New Year's Parade. "It's the largest parade in the city, featuring 30 other American and Italian marching bands as well as cheerleaders and performers from around the U.S. and Europe," said Ohnmeiss.

The following day, students toured the Sistine Chapel. "Someone there saw the purple jackets our students wore and asked if they were 'that band from California,'" said Ohnmeiss. "That person then told the students they were the best band in the parade."

Winter in Rome can be cold, "but the climate is similar to San Francisco, and our musicians were used to the moist weather."

They weren't used to, however, the quality of art they saw in Florence. After admiring Michelangelo's David at the Academia, students toured other museums and churches accompanied by their chaperones.

The success of the trip convinced Ohnmeiss to take his students on more musical tours, including to Southern California this year and Hawaii next year.



Above: Tommy Galvin '24 and Lance Ohnmeiss waiting at an airport.

Talented actors set box office records with Clue & The Sound of Music



Left: The cast of* Clue*, directed by Greg Callaghan along with musical director Greg Stephens. Below: The cast of The* Sound of Music *sold more tickets than any show in the past quarter century.

From March 20 to 24, more than 2,500 people visited the Lindland Theatre, making *The Sound of Music* Riordan's best attended musical in the last 25 years. More than 60 students shared their gifts with the community onstage as actors, backstage on the stage crew, and in the pit as musicians. The show was directed by Greg Callaghan with Greg Stephens as music director and Jessica Angeles providing choreography.



Left: Miss Scarlet, Marina Viray '24 and Professor Plum, Jeremy Ormbrek '28 enter Boddy Manor.

Riordan's fall production of *Clue* broke box office records during its run from Nov 15–18. Led by Aiden Jantz '24 as Wadsworth, the butler, the cast brought the hilarious "who done it" mystery of the classic board game to life on the Lindland Stage. The show was directed by Greg Callaghan, who was assisted by Jack Reardon. Riordan alums Fred Erias '84 and Nolan Miranda '06 provided the impressive set and costume design. The cast also worked with Bay Area theatre professionals including fight director Dani O'Dea, dialect coach Ariana Khan and scenic artist Electra Georgiades.



***Above: Captain Von Trapp, (played by Aiden Jantz '24) introduces his children to their new governess, Maria, played by Fiona Mulderrig '25. The Von Trapp children were played by Flora Denardo '25, Dylan Dubriwny '26, Jaecee Cantiller '24, Dylan Garcia '27, Julia O'Neill '26, Emma O'Neill (St. Cecilia class of '25) and Lucy Galvin '28. Below: The cast and crew of* The Sound of Music.



Photos by Ryan Garcia

Faith formation class leads students to receive the sacraments



Danielle Jow (left) and Joshua Keeney have created a course designed to help deepen the faith of their students and prepare them for baptism, confirmation and communion.

When students become teenagers, they generally question everything, including Church teachings as well as their own faith.

Both Religious Studies Chair Danielle Jow and Religious Studies teacher Joshua Keeney welcome those questions in a before-school Sacraments Preparation course that started August 2023.

The class, which will continue this year, took place twice each week for 45 minutes with oversight from Fr. Gregory Heidenblut, OSA, director of Ongoing Formation and Continuing Education for Priests for the archdiocese.

Last year alone, 28 students took part in this accredited course, with everyone receiving the sacrament of Confirmation. Of those, seven also received the sacraments of Baptism and First Holy Communion while another two received First Holy Communion and Confirmation.

"We love taking time to answer the questions our students have," said Jow. "We encourage them not to shy away from hard questions. That way, they form their own opinions and engage in their faith in a real way by being witnesses to others in how they live their lives."

"One junior girl approached us with so many questions," added Keeney. "She was searching for answers and truth and wanting to know the Lord more deeply. We explained to her the Church's teachings regardless of how difficult those lessons might be. She grew immensely in her understanding, knowledge and love. I've seen her on her own in the chapel reading her Bible, even though not everyone in her family is Catholic. Danielle served as her godmother, and even her mother affirmed to me that she was taking her faith seriously."

To help students ask their questions, both Jow and Keeney installed a question box. "Our students want to know how we can prove God exists," said Jow. "They were looking for a template to respond to their peers, and they also wondered what sacraments do and why they are necessary. We show them that the sacraments have both a visible and invisible reality. The invisible part is how God's grace moves in our hearts and souls. The visible aspects are the elements of oil, water, rings, bread and wine."

Keeney added that "even more students wanted to join the class, but they couldn't work it out given their busy schedules. So many young people want to respond to the call of the Holy Spirit. We have seen that students prefer to listen to witnesses of the faith — people who really live the faith and embrace it in every aspect of their lives — rather than listen to those who simply are the 'religion teacher.' Despite our many personal imperfections, we do not apologize for our faith and morals but embrace them knowing they have endured the test of time and cultural fads."

"We love seeing these young people come to life through their faith," added Jow. "They embrace something greater than themselves, which helps them become lamps in the darkness, revealing to them that they have a purpose and mission. So many young people don't know where to find either of those. The course also helps them know and love Jesus in a deeper way than they ever have."

Jow finds great satisfaction when "we call them to the Church and form them well. We are lucky to be able to send them into the world with a firm faith and conviction."

Both educators are in the process of finalizing their curriculum so it can receive the stamp of imprimatur from Archbishop Cordileone. "Fr. Heidenblut and the Archbishop have responded so well to the course," added Jow.

RSP story

Signature Academic Programs offer three schools within a school

Students at Riordan have the opportunity to dive deeper into their academic passions by taking part in one of three Academic Signature Programs.

Think of them as schools within a school.

Students with a passion for biomed or business or engineering can take one course in each of their four years that will help them in college and beyond.



Brian Davis, after a successful career in business, joined Riordan's faculty.

BUSINESS PROGRAM

The Business Program is new this year and is the brainchild of Christopher Fern, who first joined Riordan in 2008. Now serving as Dean of Academics, he oversees the program, which includes Freshmen Algebra for Business, taught by Alexei Angelides.

Brian Davis, who runs the school's Business Club, teaches two higher-level business courses for juniors and seniors. One other teacher will be chosen this year to teach Business Basics in 2025–26.

"Similar to biomed and engineering, we hope to help students find jobs locally," said Fern. "We want our freshmen to think about what part of the business world they might want to focus on, from marketing and investment to entrepreneurship and beyond."

The goal of the program, Fern added, "isn't merely to help students become high income earners. When Tim Reardon asked me to take this on, I was excited to bring Marianist values to the program. More consumers than ever before are interested in business leaders who make ethical decisions and give back to their communities. Those who are the most ethical gain more buy-in from their employees and more loyalty from their customers. People who doubt the ethics of a company's leader have doubts about the company."

The program will also incorporate guest speakers with current and past business experience, "who will offer valuable insights and foster connections for the future," added Fern.

Freshmen now in the program had to apply last May by creating a short video "which included a self-introduction and a creative idea or sales pitch for a business product," said Fern. "They also had the option of submitting a marketing campaign for an existing product."

"The bottom line is that our school prides itself in being innovative not just for the sake of innovating but also to empower our students to achieve the success that is already in themselves by giving them the tools and opportunities to unlock it."

Key to the success of the program is Brian Davis, who teaches juniors and seniors. A veteran of the business world, he started at Riordan in 2019 after retiring from a career in investment banking doing institutional fixed-income sales and trading. He also served as a managing director looking for potential insider trading and money laundering.

At Riordan, he has taught Math Analysis, Statistics and a new business math course — Quantitative Methods for Business and Economics — which is UC eligible for college admissions as it fulfills an advanced math requirement.

"In our new program, we are applying algebra and trigonometry to business finance, where we deal with the future value of money and with how to diversify a portfolio. In this way, students see how math applies to the real world as they learn how to do horizon analysis by forecasting price movements."

Over their four years in the program, students will learn about marketing, human resources, ethics, accounting and finance to help them discover their passions.

"Students will also learn how to find efficient ways to do good and still make a profit," Davis added. "If you do things the right way, you are both efficient and profitable. I also want students to take risks, as long as those risks are informed ones."

Parents, he added, “have offered plenty of feedback, telling us how appreciative they are that Riordan is bringing real-world experience to classes.”

Other programs add to this four-year curriculum. Eighth graders over the summer can enroll in a Personal Money Management class, which athletic co-director Jay’Sen Morris created in 2020 when he invited Davis to teach students about personal finance. “Several of those eighth graders from that class over the years matriculated to Riordan,” Davis added.

Last spring, the school launched a Business Club thanks to a collaboration with Vice Principal of Student Affairs Brian Kelly that included students joining the Future Business Leaders of America.

“We joined other students from around the Bay Area to create a plan to help businesses in Chinatown,” added Davis. “Our students did an outstanding job under major time constraints. They brought in their Marianist principles as they made common-sense decisions.”

Upon graduation, students will receive a Business Program completion certificate, “which will be great for both college and career,” added Fern.

ENGINEERING PROGRAM

Frank Torrano and Kurt Osmer teach courses in the Engineering Program that are among the most hands-on classes Riordan offers.

Freshmen enroll in Engineering Essentials while sophomores study Introduction Engineering and Design. Juniors go on to Civil Engineering and Architecture, while seniors work on a capstone project by using the engineering design process to work in teams to define a problem, explore possible solutions, and then design and build their project.

"In short, engineering is part of everything we do," said Torrano. "It helps provide solutions to problems that confront us in our everyday lives. From conception to design, engineering guides this progression until we reach that final project or goal. And, even when we reach that goal, nothing is complete as there are always new techniques and technologies that will influence even the most modern of outcomes.”

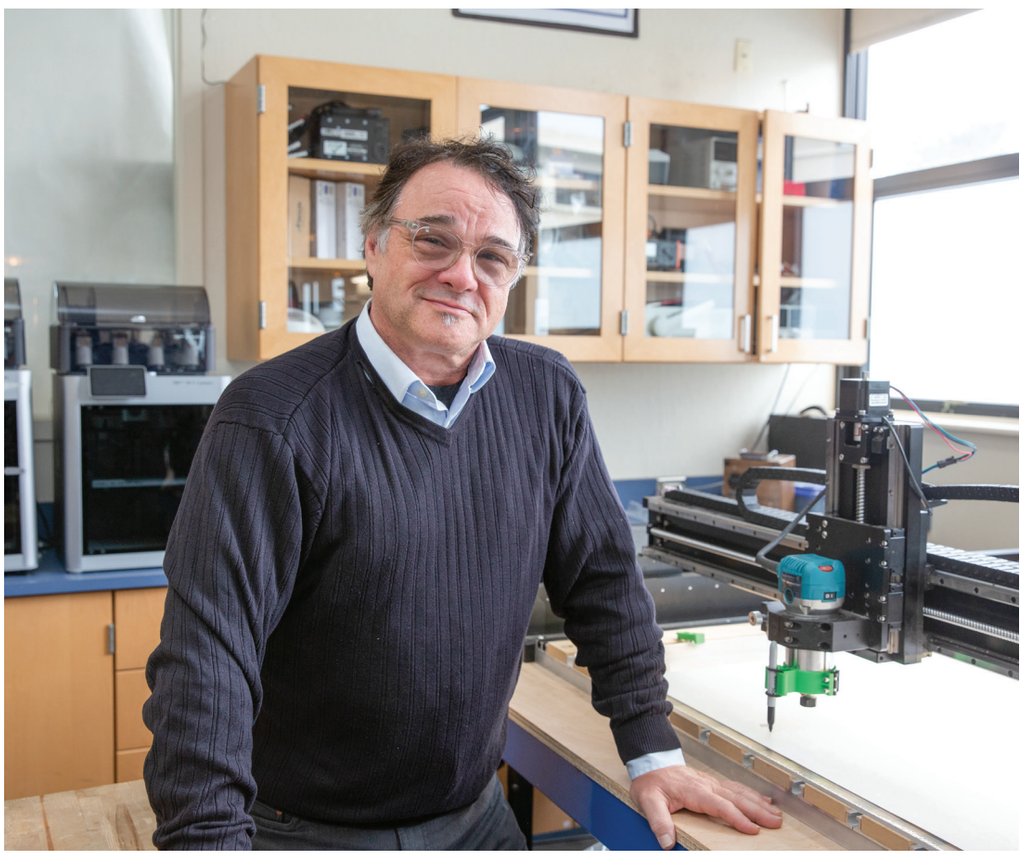
Torrano, the director of the program, came to Riordan the year it went coed. Before that, he was among the founding faculty at the City Arts and Technology High School and served as the director of technology at the Cathedral School for Boys.

He gives the 150 Crusaders in the program “an overview of who engineers are and what they do, as students learn about a variety of engineering disciplines. We also show why physics and math are important, how they apply to engineering and how a growing understanding expands their creativity within the subject.”

Given Riordan’s Bay Area location near major engineering and technology companies, “our students have a natural exposure to many career opportunities,” Torrano added. “Their interest, plus Riordan’s math and science curriculum, led us to create a four-year honors engineering program with a focus on computer engineering, fabrication and design.”

Both Torrano and Osmer use curriculum from Project Lead the Way, and they add their own touches. “We first give our students the skills needed to design for and operate sophisticated 3D printers, laser-cutters and CNC routers before we move on to the Project Based Learning goals focusing on computer





Above: The Business Program was the brainchild of Dean of Academics Chris Fern. Right: Frank Torrano teaches students the tools they need to be creative and to solve problems.



One student created a glue gun holster to avoid messy wires.

engineering, fabrication and design," said Torrano. "First and foremost, we want students to problem-solve. Most come to us not knowing how to use a screwdriver, and by the end of two semesters, they are able to design remarkable dye-cut light boxes and sophisticated robots while gaining a deep understanding of a city's infrastructure."

His ultimate goal, he added, "is to help our students make the world a better place. Luckily, they are wired for it. It's in their DNA. I think the greatest satisfaction our students get from the program is an understanding of how things work."

For example, one of his students, Karen Ngan '27, used Fusion 360, a 3D modeling program, to create a sophisticated glue gun holster. "When she saw the glue guns used to assemble various pieces of a project, she noted how messy they were in their drawers with their power cords in disarray. She took it upon herself to design and create a holster for each gun with a place to wrap its cord. "It's brilliant. It showed her that what she was doing wasn't just theoretical. It was pretty amazing to see the look on her face when we printed the device and she saw that it worked. It also answered the question, 'What will I ever do with math?'"

Another student, Reese Lu '24, used her math skills and Adobe Illustrator to design her lamp. "She then created the sections on our laser cutter. She had the same look of wonder Karen had when she saw her 2D design materialize into our 3D world."

Many of the graduates of the program now study engineering on the university level. "This gives me such joy to help students learn to make and create while I get to inspire. I learn from them every day."

This year, students also get to work on engineering outside the classroom through the new Innovation Studio, a combination of Rocketry and individual projects, and the Robotics program.

"This combination of robotics, rocketry and other disciplines offer more students exposure to what engineering has to offer," added Torrano. "Our robotics program is a member of the First Robotics Competition, and our student team — Riordan Robotics — builds industrial-size robots that compete in a series of games and events with other high school teams from all over the state."

This, he added "is a natural addition to our engineering program, as each facet informs all the components, from engineering essentials to creative engineering and robotics. I have one student who wants to build a robotic tee-shirt-cannon with six chambers that can be used at rallies. This is just one small example that tells me we're at the start of a renaissance of creativity and technology combined."

BIOMED

The Biomed program had its birth in the 2021–22 school year, the same year Julia Stricker-Balistreri became head of the Science Department.

"We started in chaos but evolved it into a fantastic program thanks in large measure to Colleen O'Rourke, who heads the program," she noted. "We were still dealing with COVID as well as transitioning to coeducation. Now we are running on all cylinders."

Freshmen in the program study honors biology, while sophomores learn the principles of biomed along with honors chemistry. Juniors enroll in the Human Body Systems class and study either AP chemistry, AP biology or physics, and seniors take a capstone class. In addition to O'Rourke, Brian Tuel and Karen McDermott teach some of these classes.

"We hope to give students a hands-on experience that prepares them to study biomedical sciences in college," said Stricker-Balistreri.

"It's that balance between physical and life sciences, as well as the connection with chemistry and physics, that excites them and inspires them to want to become professionals who do research," she added. "Medicine sparks their interest like few other classes do. They see how cancer attacks the body when cells multiply, and they are reminded of family members who suffer from cancer. That hits close to home for many students."

Perhaps the most powerful gut-punch students experience in the program is during sophomore year, when they walk into a manufactured crime scene and see blood splattered on the floor and on classroom walls.

Taught by Karen McDermott, who came to San Francisco from Ireland in July 2023, her course starts with a medical investigation unit. "Students have to sketch the crime scene and analyze the evidence," said McDermott. "This hands-on approach inspires them to be curious. They put so much effort into solving the case, and they eventually create a TV news story about the crime, which also teaches them video-editing skills and



Karen McDermott teaches science to students by having them analyze a crime scene.

how to write a script. Their creativity was fantastic, and we saw all the films at a fun movie night."

This first unit gives them an introduction into some healthcare careers. "They start as forensic scientists and study how to analyze blood splatter, DNA, histology — the study of cells and tissues — and what working in a morgue might look like."

In the second unit, students learn clinical care, including how to check in someone seeing a doctor. "They learn the importance of empathy and the ethics of what doctors can and cannot share. They learn to take vitals and, using arm simulators, how to draw blood."

In the third unit, students learn how to deal with outbreaks and emergencies, including working as an emergency responder "who needs to control bleeding with a tourniquet. They study real-world scenarios with viral outbreaks and learn how to trace a disease back to patient zero."

In the final unit, students use Tinkercad to design their own medical devices that might be used in the future. "They also study ways to create a medical unit for a specific town or for a space colony on Mars. In this way, I hope they become pioneers for the future of healthcare."

Ponette Chen '26, who hopes to work as a nurse practitioner in labor and delivery after studying at Gonzaga University, loved McDermott's course.

"It introduced me to chromosomal disorders and even how to speak with patients. We dissected sheep hearts to learn about human hearts."

This year, the Biomed Program will invite professionals to Riordan, who will connect Riordan's students with companies on the front-lines of research and healthcare, as Crusaders explore ways they, too, can promote a healthy society.





Above: Science Chair Julia Stricker-Balistreri along with Ponette Chen '26, one of her students.

Right: Colleen O'Rourke, who heads the Biomed program, has helped the Biomed program run "on all cylinders."

Celebrating one of the best Crusader seasons in the school's history

For Jay'Sen Morris '07 and Bob Greene, co-athletic directors, 2023–24 was one of standout years for Crusader athletes.

"Beyond winning and losing, our kids had a lot of fun and grew as people," said Greene. "We keep finding ways to maintain the essence of what it means to be a Crusader. This speaks so well of our coaches and the adults in support roles, including Counselor David Lin who helps with a program that promotes team building and leadership skills."

Last year's success, he added, "had such a great effect on our school. After all, winning is more fun than losing, and sports can serve as the front door to a school. Our alumni and parents gain as much as our athletes."



Jay'Sen Morris '07

THE SUCCESS OF RIORDAN ATHLETICS

The varsity boys' basketball team won the WCAL crown after finishing 14–0 in league play before taking first in the CCS open division. They were stopped in the NorCal finals when Salesian kept them from competing in the state finals.

The girls' basketball team finished third in the league and qualified for CCS open division playoffs before moving on to NorCal play. Two members of the team signed on the college level with Ashanti Dias '24, now playing at Cal State Los Angeles, and Nadia Brown '24, playing at Menlo College. The girls' JV team also finished second in the league.

The cross country team finished as CCS DIV champs on Nov. 11 at Crystal Springs, racing against 10 other schools. In addition, out of 95 runners, Eva Abbott '24 finished seventh, helping the team to qualify for the state finals.

The football team turned in a 7–4 season, finished third in the league and competed in the playoffs for the first time since 2015. The team sent three players to compete on the college level: Lol Ta'aga '24 is now playing at USC, Tyron Jackson '24 is at Boise State and Toby Weydemuller '24 is playing at Cal. In addition, Chris Lawson '25 received league Wide Receiver of the Year honors.

Bob Greene with students in the weight room.



The girls' volleyball team, in its first year competing in the WCAL, qualified for the CCS playoffs, where it saw its first playoff win in the first year the team was eligible for CCS play.

The girls' wrestling team had another great season after finishing second in the league in 2022–23, and the boys' soccer team delivered wins over both SI and SHC.

Riordan once had a swim team that went away when students lost interest. With the onset of coeducation, the team now has grown to include 50 students.

This year, add boys' volleyball and girls' flag football to the sporting calendar.

"We are excited at how quickly the girls' athletic program has grown," said Morris. "In a few short years, our girls have been able to do so well in one of the most competitive leagues in the state. For example, wrestling is a new sport to almost all the girls, and they have been able to hold their own. Also, the girls' basketball teams are seen as among the best in the Bay Area. Going coed has created even more opportunities than ever before for the students, and we are seeing even more sold-out games where we have had to turn fans away.

This new reality, added Greene, "has helped us promote gender equity after 70 years as an all-male school. Some folks thought that Riordan would be a boys' school with a few girls attending. Now we are very much a coeducational school, and athletics helped us get there. In short, we are ecstatic with where we are and where we're going. We are experiencing a real renaissance."

BOYS' BASKETBALL

Varsity Basketball Head Coach Joey Curtin '01 had a great final season in his senior year on Riordan's basketball team. But for this 17–year veteran coach, nothing quite compares with the Crusaders' showing last year, when they turned in a 25–0 overall record, 14–0 in season play and 4–0 in CCS Open Division play only to lose 49–44 to Salesian in the NorCal finals. Along the way, the team set a league scoring record of 1,013 points as well as a record for dunks.

Curtin knew the season would be a successful one after he took his team



Basketball coach Joey Curtin '01

to Crypto.Com Arena, the home of the LA Lakers, for a showcase event on Jan. 6 that featured the best teams from California and Nevada. "We beat Bishop Gorman 82–81 in overtime. That was a big turning point, as it gave us confidence and helped the team bond."

That bonding was essential, as five of the 13 members of the team are international boarding students who come from a variety of cultures and backgrounds. Those five include two players from Cameroon, and one each from Serbia, New Zealand and The Democratic Republic of Congo.

"For many, English is their third language, and we have to explain to them what a UCLA Cut is and other expressions familiar to U.S.-born players," added Curtin.

Two standout moments included one game against Bellarmine, where Zion Sensley '24 — more about him later — scored 29 points. The other was a sell-out game against Mitty. "We had to turn people away from the door," said Curtin. "In all my years coaching at Riordan, the first half was the best half of high school basketball I've ever seen. At the end of the first quarter against this perennial powerhouse, we were up 24–4. By halftime, we led 46–19. We won 76–56, with Zion scoring 30 points with six rebounds. We played out of our minds, hitting eight 3-pointers in the first half. Had we lost, we would have been tied in the league with Mitty. Zion is so good that he has a chance to play in the NBA."

Three seniors who graduated last year are now playing on the college level: Jordy McKenzie '24 is at Eastern Washington University, Kaia Berridge '24 is at the University of Evansville in Indiana and Sensley is at UCSB.

Curtin also praised his team for "uplifting the whole school as well as each other. In a typical high school team, you have one star and everyone else plays in a support role. This year wasn't like that because of the talent and character of all the players. Everyone helped each other, including the international students. We have a network of people who care for them as individuals beyond their success in athletics — people who take them to the dentist or to an optician because their parents aren't here to do that."

Curtin praised his team for having "a high level of success in the most competitive sport in the most competitive state. Texas is known for football. For California, it's basketball. Riordan can have one of the best programs in the state, and thus in the country. It's possible to do that here."

ZION SENSLEY '24

Even though Zion Sensley began his high school basketball career at Riordan, he transferred to a prep school specializing in basketball before his sophomore year.

"That's when COVID hit," he noted. "I returned to Riordan in my senior year as I wanted to have a real high school experience and a chance to win a state title."

His time playing varsity at Riordan as a freshman helped him grow quickly in his basketball sense. "I tried to learn as much as I could. Then, in my senior year, that flipped, and I took on a leadership role helping the young guys."

Just one small sign of that growth is the versatility of this 195–pound, 6-foot, 8-inch player, who served both as a



Zion Sensley '24. Photo by Ryan Garcia.

forward and a shooting guard. He finished his season at Riordan as part of the 50/40/90 Club, after making 50 percent of his 2–point shots, 40 percent of his 3–point shots and 90 percent from the free throw line, all while averaging eight rebounds a game.

Helping him in both his years as a Crusader was Coach Curtin. "He is a great coach and a big part of my growth in high school. He put me in different positions so I could learn about all sides of basketball."

Sensley loves playing on a diverse team, as "players in Cameroon and Serbia have a different style of play than athletes in the U.S. I loved learning about the way they think."

He first committed to St. Mary's but decommitted after learning about changes to the coaching staff there. Ranked 11th in the state, Sensley eventually committed to play at The University of California, Santa Barbara.



Photo by Ryan Garcia.

The varsity football team beat St. Ignatius to win the Gil Haskell trophy, named for the man who coached at both schools.

FOOTBALL

Coach Adhir Ravipati came to Riordan in 2022 after coaching football at Menlo-Atherton High School and the College of San Mateo. He's already looking down the road — not to coach elsewhere, but at what this and future seasons hold for the Crusaders. "Last year, when we made the playoffs, it had been eight years since we achieved that goal," he noted. "In the course of doing this, we set the stage for something special by establishing a strong foundation — even off the field."

Ravipati noted that nearly 80 percent of his athletes have a 3.0 GPA or higher, and partly because of that, 16 players hold offers from division 1 colleges to play on the next level. "In the past two seasons, we've had seven kids go on to play at the college level. Now we feel as if we are about to make a big jump and become one of the premiere programs in the state."

Among last season's highlights was beating SI. "There was a lot of emotion leading into that game. We had a couple of turnovers, but our kids fought back and put the game away in a stadium filled with excited fans."

Valley Christian was undefeated when they faced Riordan, "and we beat them by more than 30 points. We also handily beat Bellarmine at their home — a school we hadn't defeated in 20 years. That felt like getting a giant monkey off our back."

In 2022, in his first year at Riordan, "our athletes played to empty stands. Now we have great student turnout. It's awesome to see our community — including administrators, faculty and parents — rally around the kids."

He praised all the players from the Class of 2024, "as they went through a lot, starting with remote learning when they entered as freshmen. There was no junior varsity team for them to play on in their sophomore year. It was hard for them not having a consistent program, but those who stayed helped establish a strong culture and a firm foundation."

LEAGUE AWARDS

Football: All League First Team: Losipini Tupou, Chris Lawson, Peter Langi, Tommy Tofi, Michael Mitchell Jr., Mikatoa Scanlan
Cross Country: All League Second Team: Gianluca Carboni
Volleyball: All League Second Team: Analee Ronas; HM: Elizabeth Saavedra
Boys' Basketball: All League First Team: Zion Sensley, Jasir Rencher, Andrew Hilman; HM: Jordy McKenzie, Nes Emeneke
Girls' Basketball: All League First Team: Ashanti Dias; Second Team: Maxine Sutisna, Teagan Radcliffe, Zion McGuire; HM: Tallyah Nasol
Boys' Soccer: All-League Second Team: Braxton Nemes; HM: Ryan Mates
Baseball: All-League HM: Nathan Zuromski, Rhys Appleby, Colson Parenti, Mason Cohn
Boys' Golf: All-League HM: Alden Thai
Boys' Tennis: All-League HM: Ethan Chiang, Miles Witte, Raphael Stioui



Purple and Gold Gala

Left: A full house gathered March 8 for The Purple and Gold Gala at Bimbo's 365 Club. Bill Nasser '70, Susie Marciano and Tony Pantaleoni '70 were among the guests.

Scholarship Brunch

Center left: On May 8, Riordan celebrated donors to the school's scholarship fund at a brunch at Lake Merced Golf Club. In attendance were Elizabeth Savage '25 and Armando Calderon '76.







Gala, Mimosa Morning & Crab Feed photos by Luci Valentine. Scholarship Brunch by Lifetouch Photography.

Mimosa Morning

Above: Riordan held its annual Mimosa Morning April 27. Pictured here is Michele Martinez-Reese selling raffle tickets.

Crab Feed

Left: On January 20, more than 400 attendees enjoyed a sold-out crab feed in the school's gym.



All photos by Luci Valentine.

Board chairman Brian Spiers ’75 receives Riordan's top honor

Brian Spiers ’75 received the Blessed William Chaminade Award Jan. 22 during the Blessed Chaminade Mass to honor him for his “unwavering dedication” to Archbishop Riordan High School.

Mr. Spiers, now serving his fourth term as chairman of the school’s Board of Trustees and his ninth term on the board, “has served Riordan with exceptional leadership and commitment,” according to Alumni Director Paul Cronin.

The award recognizes those within the Riordan family who embody the spirit of service and loyalty, contributing significantly to the school’s mission. This award, the highest honor at Riordan, has been bestowed upon alumni, faculty, staff, parents and benefactors since 1975, the year Spiers graduated.

Mr. Spiers played soccer in his four years at Riordan and helped lead his team to the league championship in his senior year. At SFSU, he played soccer as a freshman along with three of his fellow Crusaders.

He began his professional life as a carpenter before becoming a general contractor and the owner of his own business in 1988, creating custom homes, additions and other stellar projects. In 1996, he began a new chapter of his professional life by investing in real estate and developing his own projects, including condominiums, apartments, commercial spaces and custom homes. His visionary leadership continues to shape the real estate landscape.



For the past three decades, he has also owned restaurants and bars in the city on top of managing a 28-acre vineyard in the Alexander Valley.

Mr. Spiers also marked another milestone at Riordan, inaugurating the Student Learning Center and classrooms in November 2023, a testament to his enduring commitment to Riordan and the future of its students. The Boys’ Team Room and the hallway of classrooms leading to the Learning Center are named the Debi and Brian Spiers ‘75 Academic Wing in gratitude for his generosity and vision.

“Mr. Spiers embodies the very essence of the Marianist spirit of service and loyalty," added Cronin. "He has advanced the mission of the school and is a shining example of dedication and determination as well as a reminder that we all can achieve greatness.”

Brandon Ramsey heads north after a dozen years of school upgrades



Brandon Ramsey oversaw work this past summer before he and his family moved to a home near Sacramento.

No one at Riordan in 2012 could predict that a pot-holed baseball field would lead to so many good things.

Brandon Ramsey, the school's director of Plant and Facilities, just stepped down from years of leading major campus improvements — ones that have transformed Riordan— to move with his family to the Sacramento area.

"In his years here, Brandon oversaw some of the largest building projects in the history of the school," noted President Tim Reardon. "His fingerprints can be seen on the football field, the roof, the courtyard, the classroom remodels and the new library space as well as this past summer's work on the dormitory expansion, the Counseling and Wellness Center and the parking lot renovation. His sense of design and his calm demeanor with contractors made him the ideal person to manage these massive projects."

Ramsey had his start at Riordan a dozen years ago, when he was hired to coach the varsity baseball team. Even before his season was scheduled to begin in the spring of 2013, he visited the campus and, seeing the field in need of repair, began reseeding it.

When Riordan's plant and facilities director saw what a great job he was doing, he asked Ramsey to serve as the school's landscaper and, in 2015, as his assistant.

When his boss left Riordan, Ramsey applied for the job and got it, just as Riordan was embarking on major remodeling projects. For the big jobs, Ramsey supervised outside contractors. The smaller jobs he handled himself along with his crew.

In 2020, he also began teaching an auto shop course, and he coached baseball up until 2022.

Born in San Francisco, Ramsey attended Serra High School, where he played both baseball and football along with his brothers. Four generations of his family were in the ironworks business, and he helped out during the summers. After studies and baseball at Skyline College and at Louis-Clark State College in Idaho, he worked for a construction company and on ferry boats in the bay while also coaching at Skyline and El Camino High School.

This background gave him some construction experience, but along the way he also found that he had an aptitude in design. "There's always the easy and cheap way to get things done, but attention to detail is important to me, and I spend a lot of time thinking about what solutions will offer an aesthetically-pleasing outcome for many years. It just involves more thought to make that happen."

During COVID, for example, Riordan had to overhaul its technology infrastructure to allow teachers to use hybrid teaching to accommodate students in the classrooms and at home. "In coordination with John Wu, our director of technology, I created new pathways throughout the campus to incorporate his needs. That took time to plan and complete in a way that looked natural. This all goes back to the baseball field, as attention to detail is important to me."

Ramsey applied the same eye for detail to the work needed for the switch to coeducation and to the Student Life Enhancement Project, which included remodeling the courtyard, cafeteria and library to allow for collaborative work and community gathering.

He also redid most of the roof and heating system and updated every classroom.

"During my time at Riordan, I've touched just about every part of this campus," Ramsey added. "I've made decisions to spend a little more to ensure the work was done correctly and with a minimalistic aesthetic. I learned a lot on the job, and I leaned into the work ethic I gained at home and while playing on my teams. All I hope is that my work looks right and clean and will last for years."



Library Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

After the library remodel, Riordan celebrated with a ribbon-cutting ceremony that included Tony Sanchez-Corea III ’80 with wife Karen, Debi and Brian ’75 Spiers (cutting the ribbon), Jim Petersohn ’64, Dr. Juon-Kin Fong, Dr. Michael Harper, Dr. Heather Nye, Phil Cazahous ’70, Dan Donovan ’70 and President Tim Reardon. Photo by Lifetouch Photography.



Golden Grad Lunch

At left, from left: Bob Darling ’67, Richard Fraher ’67, John O’Neill ’61 and George O’Neill ’69. Photo by Luci Valentine.

Class of 63 Reunion:

Below, from left: Larry Nibbi ’63, Hon. Walter Carpeneti ’63 and Michael Aherns ’63.





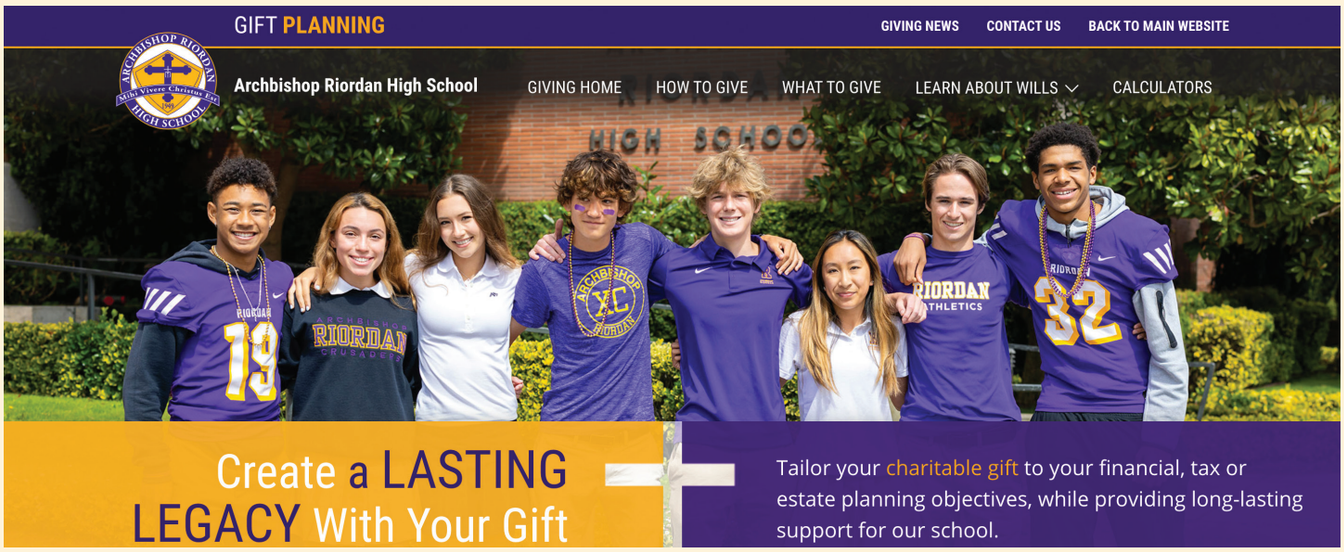
A Riordan Legend: Ed Fennelly

Riordan's planned giving society honors the memory of Ed Fennelly, a man who demonstrated exceptional vision, organization and dedication throughout his 40 years of service at the school. Fennelly joined the faculty at Riordan upon its opening in 1949 and influenced the lives of hundreds of students, athletes and fellow educators and coaches.

LEARN MORE AT www.riordanhs.org/fennelly
OR SCAN THIS QR CODE

FENNELLY SOCIETY MEMBERS

The Carmen S. Aguilar Family Trust
Mr. William Ardizoia '62
Mr. Walter Bankovitch '56
Capt. William E. Best, USNR (Ret.)
Mr. Maurice Carney '42
Mr. Loyd Casteel
Mr. Philip Cazahous '70
Mr. Albert Ceresa '54
Mr. Thomas Cotter '55
Mr. Robert Cutone '58
Mr. Charles Dowling '54
Mr. Joe Eckberg '54
Mr. James Estillore & Mrs. Cristy Estillore
Mr. Richard Fisher '59
Mr. John Fitzgerald '62
Mr. Richard Fraher '67
Hon. Jeffrey P. Holl Esq. '72
Mr. Frank Jordan '74
Mr. Robert Leet '55
Mr. Vincent M. Leveroni '65
Maria and Rodney Marquez
Mr. Stephen Mayer '72 & Mrs. Patricia Mayer
Mr. Jack F. McCloskey Jr '55 & Mrs. Janice McCloskey
Mr. Edmund Morrissey '55
Dr. Charles Murillo '55
Msgr. John O'Connor '52
Mr. Richard F. Olmedo '63
Mr. Paul Osborn '55
Mr. Jim Petersohn '64
Mr. Bob Roper '56
Mr. Ronald Rosa '60
Mrs. Elizabeth Ryan
Capt. Rick Saber '56
Anonymous '64
Mr. Louis Signer '55
Mr. Charles Syme '53
Mr. Martin Tierney '62
Dr. Louis Tricerri '77
Mr. George Washburn '64
Mr. Robert White '54
Mr. George Wielen '55



Leave your legacy to Riordan through Planned Giving

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Members of the Class of 2024 say goodbye to Riordan



Valedictorian: Breanna Marie Dizon
Breanna, (pictured next page, bottom left), who came to Riordan from St. Thomas More school, is attending UC San Diego next year. She was active in the PAC and Knights clubs. Her brother, a member of the class of 2027, is following in her footsteps.

Salutatorian: William Parker
Will is a proud member of the Class of 2024. He earned a cumulative GPA of 4.35, and his list of accomplishments include participating on the CCS championship cross country team and the student parliament and serving as the president of the National Honor Society. He will be attending UCLA in the fall to study international development.

Class of 2024 College Matriculation

In addition to attending the colleges listed below, students in the Class of 2024 also plan to join AmeriCorps, return to their home countries, join the workforce, and take gap years.

University of Alaska, Fairbanks
American University of Paris
University of Arizona (4)
Arizona State University (6)
University of Arkansas
Azusa Pacific University
Berkeley City College
Boise State University (6)
University of California,
- Berkeley (11)
- Davis (10)
- Irvine (5)
- Los Angeles (6)
- Riverside (7)
- San Diego (2)
- Santa Barbara
- Santa Cruz (3)

Cal Poly State U,
- Humboldt Pomona (4)
- San Luis Obispo (8)

California Institute of the Arts
Cañada College (2)
California State University,
- Chico (4)
- Dominguez Hills
- Fresno
- Fullerton
- Long Beach
- Los Angeles
- Sacramento (2)
- San Diego (5)
- San Francisco (23)
- San Jose (20)
- San Marcos
- Sonoma (7)

City College of San Francisco (15)
CUNY John Jay College of Criminal Justice
University of the Cumberlands
Davidson College
DePaul University
Dominican University of California (2)
Duke Kunshan University
Eastern Washington University
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University of Evansville
George Washington University
University of Hawaii at Manoa (2)
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
Indiana University (Bloomington)
Lasell University
Marquette University
Menlo College
The University of Montana
University of Oregon (3)
Oregon State University (3)
Otis College of Art and Design
University of the Pacific (2)
Penn State University (2)
University of Portland
University of Puget Sound
University of Rochester
Rochester Institute of Technology
Saint Mary's College of California (2)
St. Olaf College
University of San Diego (3)
University of San Francisco (16)
College of San Mateo (6)
Santa Clara University (3)
Santa Rosa Junior College
Skyline College (3)
University of Southern California (2)
Southern Oregon University
University of Utah
Utah Tech University
University of Victoria
Virginia Polytechnic Institute
University of Washington (2)
Wentworth Institute of Technology
Willamette University

Notable Scholarships:

- Air Force ROTC: Space Force: Full Tuition Scholarship to attend the University of Southern California
- Posse Scholarship: Full Tuition
- Scholarships to the University of Puget Sound and St. Olaf College
- University of the Pacific, Music Conservatory Scholarship: $46,000 a year renewable scholarship









All grad photos by Ryan Garcia






Archbishop Riordan High School
Diploma of Graduation
San Francisco, California















All photos by Ryan Garcia



Blessed Jakob Gapp Award: Exemplifying the Betterment of Society in the Marianist Family Spirit:
Sayana Seidakhmetova & Jan David Ella.



Bill Blanchard Award:
Exemplifying Marianist Family Spirit as Riordan Crusader through their Association with Athletics:
Zackary Yip & Ceejae Minell de Lumen



Jesse Cortez Award: Exemplifying Commitment and Loyalty to the Archbishop Riordan Community:
Gabriela Ramirez & Xavier Rauls.



James Sabolboro Award:
Exemplifying Excellence in the Arts:
Marina Viray & Tommy Galvin



Edward Fennelly Award: Exemplifying Athletic Excellence as a Riordan Crusader:
Ashanti Dias & Zion Sensley



Joe Dominguez School Spirit Award:
Exemplifying the True Spirit of a Riordan Crusader:
Will Parker & Diane Lai



House of Russi St. Brigid House Saint Award:
Angelo Coletti



House of Cana St. Joan of Arc House Saint Award:
Aiden Jantz



House of Pilar St. James House Saint Award:
Alana Radoc Manrique



House of Bolts St. Francis of Assisi House Saint Award:
Ezekiel Pfeffer



Achieve Program:
We thank the Achieve Program for its steadfast dedication to supporting Crusaders each year with scholarship opportunities.
Alex Rivera '88, Mario Perez de Leon, Marcus Lajom Campbell and Kyle Huang. All photos by The Crusader staff.



Tyrone McGraw Award:
Exemplifying the Archbishop Riordan Crusader, Spirit of Excellence, lived by Tyrone McGraw:
Zeke Natorilla & Elizabeth Saavedra

1957 Mike Haughton passed away on Jan. 11, 2024, at the age of 85. A former track star, he ran several marathons later in his life. His career was in human resources working for Lipton's, Crocker Bank, Yellow Freight and Macy's Midwest, which he served as vice president. In 1961, he married Doreen Marcucci, and they had five children, 10 grandchildren and two great-granddaughters. He loved traveling to many countries including Australia, Ireland, New Zealand and Italy. He was also active in his parish church and the Sierra Club.

1964 The Class of '64 Hiking Group has not slowed down since its inception in January 2009 when **Bob O'Donnell, Jim Service** and **Tom White** thought it would be a great idea to take monthly outings around the Bay Area after they retired. The small group grew as word got out and eventually included both classmates and friends and peaked at 15 for their 100th hike across the Golden Gate Bridge in 2018. They recently completed their 146th hike and hope to hit the 150-mark by the end of 2024. Although growing up in the city, they were unaware of the varied places they had missed until recently. They have hiked all the Bay Area peaks (Tamalpais, Diablo, Montara, San Bruno, Twin Peaks, Umunhum, Barnabe); the redwood forests (Butano, Redwood Regional, Purisima Creek, Sam McDonald, Portola, Muir Woods); the coast (Año Nuevo, Point Reyes, Wilder Ranch, Pirates and Kirby Coves); urban treks (historic SF from the "Home of the Hippies" and The Mission to the nabobs of Nob Hill); regional



parks (Tilden, Joaquin Miller, Sunol, Briones); and the waterfalls (Carson, Cataract, Little Yosemite, Berry Creek). They have also done their share of bike riding along much of the Bay Trail, though the Livermore and Napa wine regions and through regional parks. They have taken Segways through Golden Gate Park, canoed on the Russian River and ferried to Angel Island. They have also gone further afield to stays in the Geysers area, Yosemite, Calaveras Big Trees and Pinnacles National Park. At the end of each adventure, they relax with a cool beer either at historic city establishments, local pubs or at picnic tables at trail's end. They enjoy meeting up each month, exercising and socializing, and they are constantly amazed at the wide variety of scenic places and the strong bonds they have that stem from their days at Riordan.

1964 Doug Falco, a retired electrical engineer, taught a 90-minute class last May for freshmen who are part of the Signature Academic Program that focuses on engineering. With the help of Riordan faculty Frank Torrano and Kurt Osmer, he presented a basic course on Ohm's Law and its effect on car starters, high voltage transmission lines and lightning. They finished with "how to use a multimeter" and made some measurements on Light Emitting Diodes. "I enjoyed the experience, and I think the students found it fun, too," he noted. The class led him to become involved with creating an engineering endowment at Riordan.

1969 Mike Cuff and his wife, Pamela, are now Florida residents and Minnesota snowbirds.

1979 William Mannone retired last July 2023 and moved to Texas where he is closer to his six grandchildren.

1989 Chris Moreno retired from the Oakland Police Department in December 2021 after serving the city of Oakland and its citizens for 23.5 years. Chris is currently working as an inspector for the Alameda County district attorney's office. Chris has been married to his wife, Sharla, since 2009, and their son, Christopher Jr., is a seventh grader at St. Cecilia School. In addition to supporting his son's athletic endeavors, Chris enjoys open water swimming and has completed the Alcatraz swim six times. Chris continues to live



Have you recently been married? Ha
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Please email Paul Cronin, Direct
alumni@riordar

in the city with his wife and son, and their support for Riordan remains strong. Hopefully, Christopher Jr. will one day don the purple and gold.

1994 Jamal Baugh married Brianne Canepa on April 15, 2023, at Sts. Peter & Paul Church. The reception followed at Bimbos in North Beach. His sister-in-law is Cara Garcia, who is the director of operations at Riordan. In attendance from the class of '94 were **Rashan McKern, Mike Sabia, Francisco Anderson, Daren Smith, Lonnie Heard** and **Steve Byers.**







1996 Steve Besozzi is a captain with the Central County Fire Department, serving the cities of Burlingame, Hillsborough and Millbrae. Steve has been with the department since 2001, previously working as a firefighter, paramedic and inspector. He currently supervises a station with an engine company and the Urban Search and Rescue Unit. Over the past few years, he has trained many probationary firefighters and fire interns. Steve recently attended a training drill with fire intern **Philip Kaulave '17.** Philip has been a fire intern with the Central County Fire Department since 2023 and has also been working as an emergency medical technician with American Medical Response since 2021. Philip's goal is to become a full-time professional firefighter. Philip and Steve instantly had the bond of being Crusaders and both agree that Riordan instilled in them the importance of community service that led them to their careers in the fire service.

1997 Jose Calvo-Perez owns and operates Fresca Restaurant in Noe Valley, Puerto 27 in Pacifica and Lomo Libre Cantina in the Sunset District in San Francisco. He also oversees the Lomo Libre Food truck that operates throughout the entire Bay Area. He has been in the food industry since 1999 and hopes to expand the Fresca franchise to Marin County in 2025. He currently resides in Novato with his wife and two children.



2002 Paulo Giusti, after high school, moved to the small town of Medicina in Pistoia, Tuscany, to spend time with his grandmother, Nonna Maria, and figure out what his next steps would to be. He spent six months cooking, making wine and olive oil, chopping wood and hunting. He had always embraced his Italian culture, but this trip helped him fall in love with Italian cuisine. He found his passion for food by cooking every day with his Nonna. "She was traditional and stern," he noted. "Her recipes didn't come from a book; they came from feeling and love. She didn't cook for praise or anything other than the joy she would get just from looking at her family sitting around the table enjoying a meal together. My favorite thing to cook with her was a wild boar that I had shot and carried out of the woods. I would have been content living out my days there, but my life would take a different



d? Had a child or big career move?
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path." After six months in Italy, he returned to San Francisco to help his father run the family business, Ristorante Firenze by Night, in North Beach. In 2012, his sister, Nadia, introduced him to the most beautiful girl he had ever seen, his future wife, Alissa. They married in 2016 and had their first daughter, Mila, in 2018, followed by Sofia in 2021. "I love to cook with my girls and have a photo of Nonna Maria looking down on us in our kitchen. It always makes me feel as if she is still with us and proud. I've dedicated my life to the culinary arts and service for the last 22 years. There is never a dull moment and the work is very demanding at times. However, I do get the same joy my Nonna got from seeing her family sitting around the table. It is the same feeling I get from our customers who are like family. I will never forget the good times I had at Riordan and the life lessons I learned, mainly that anything you put your mind to is possible if you stay strong and don't give up."

2003 Raymon Busto (whose stepfather is Francisco Salguero '77) has been the assistant director of safety and security at The Westin St. Francis Hotel in Union Square for the past five years. He began there in 2019 as a supervisor and most recently was promoted to assistant director. He also served more than four years of active-duty in the military from 2013 to 2017 and is now four years into his contract with the state's National Guard Infantry.

2005 Adrian Lavitoria, who has worked for the San Francisco Sheriff's Office since 2007, is currently a lieutenant. He attended City College of San Francisco and San Francisco State University, graduating with an associate's degree in Administration of Justice and a bachelor's degree in Criminal



Justice. He currently resides in the Excelsior with his wife and two boys, and he is grateful to have the opportunity to raise his family in a wonderful city. Adrian has been active in sharing his Filipino-American heritage, representing the Sheriff's Office in a number of community events, such as the Pistahan Festival, AAPI Heritage Month celebrations, the Bataan Death March Legacy Commemoration and the Filipino American History Month events.



2010 Carey Stynes offered a tribute to a family's legacy of craftsmanship. "At a young age, I was always playing with my grandfather's tools, and my curiosity led me to ask countless questions. Among all his tools, my favorite was his gigantic wrench. Those early years ignited a passion in me that eventually led to a career in the trades." Four years ago, after several years working in the field, he began his own company. "When I shared this news with my dad, **Jerry Stynes '76**, he asked me about the company's name. I proudly told him, it would be Crusader Plumbing. His response was, 'Go Riordan!' My time at Riordan, though it flew by, made a significant difference in my life. Naming my company is a way to honor and thank the older family members who walked the path before me in the classes of '70, '72, '76, '85, '06 and '10. I look forward to the future, hoping that Alex will be in the class of '37 and Maddie in the class of '39. Every day, my grandfather's big wrench rides up front in the cab with me, a constant reminder of the legacy and values passed down through generations."

Making a quilt from scratch



In a chemistry class taught by Dr. Caroline Gochoco-Tsuyuki, students applied principles of stoichiometry, moles, reactions in aqueous solutions, net ionic equations, limiting reactants and molarity into the making of paint. They made calcium carbonate, the principal binder for water-based paint, by reacting aqueous solutions of calcium chloride and sodium carbonate in calculated volumes to create the precise binding quality they needed. Finally, students used pigment and water to make their own painted quilt tile, with each tile representing one moment in time in their lives at Riordan.

CELEBRATING PREP HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Two Crusaders inducted into San Francisco Prep Hall of Fame

Mike Carey ’73 and Phil Ferrigno ’80 were inducted into the San Francisco Prep Hall of Fame last spring, Carrey for his prowess playing football and Ferrigno for his skill as a coach.

The inductees were surrounded by 150 family, friends and teammates as well as Riordan Alumni Director Paul Cronin ’93 and Hall of Fame director George Noceti ’67.

Joining Carey and Ferrigno into the Hall of Fame were Kevin Adams of Galileo, Yonathan Asmeron of McAteer and David Henderson of Lincoln High.

Established in 1982, the San Francisco Prep Hall of Fame seeks to honor athletes, coaches, officials and others who have distinguished themselves in athletic competition or who have supported San Francisco Prep athletics. Fourteen Riordan greats have entered the SFPHOF since 1982.

Carey played quarterback in his time at Riordan under the mentorship of Coach Bob Toledo. His prowess led Riordan to consecutive WCAL co-championships in 1971 and 1972, showcasing his leadership, skill and unmatched athleticism with some unforgettable come-from-behind victories.

In his days at Riordan, he racked up 24 rushing touchdowns in 1972 (28 total), 11 passing touchdowns and 19 wins out of 23 games over those WCAL championship seasons.

In 1972, he was named WCAL’s Player of the Year and Back of the Year and selected to the All-Central Coast Section team. He also played QB and DB for the North Shrine Football Team, which beat the South in the summer of 1973.

Carey also excelled in academics, winning the Thom McAn Award for San Francisco's Most Outstanding Scholar/Athlete. He was appointed San Francisco City Assessor for Youth in Government Day and was chosen to attend California Boys State. He graduated from Riordan 13th out of a class of 224.

At USC, he continued playing football while studying engineering and business. In 1976, he was diagnosed with Hodkin’s lymphoma, and he turned his winning spirit into fighting cancer.

In 1977, he joined the USC coaching staff as a graduate assistant for more than two years, working among John Robinson’s staff alongside two of San Francisco’s greats — Coach Gil Haskell and Coach Bob Toledo.

In 1980, Carey was a first vote inductee into the Riordan Hall of Fame.

Phil Ferrigno ’80 joined Carey at the induction ceremony in part for his work as head football coach at Mission High School in 2001, where he worked to resurrect a once great program. His success there led him to be recruited by Lincoln a year later as its head coach.

In the Sunset District, Ferrigno racked up 149 wins, 18 playoff appearances, 10 AAA championships (the most by any AAA coach), three NorCal championships and three state championships (in 2018, 2019 and 2022).

His success there led him to be named Coach of the Year by his AAA peers as well as Metro Coach of the Year.

In his time at Lincoln, 100 percent of his players graduated and six earned Scholar-Athlete honors.

In 2022, the 49ers selected Ferrigno as its regional Coach of the Year.



Ferrigno praised his coaches at Riordan, including Frank Oross ’69 and Dan Hayes ’71. “They both saved me many times and taught me great lessons,” he noted.

If you want to nominate a Riordan grad for membership in the San Francisco Prep Hall of Fame, send an email to the organization’s director, George Noceti ’67 at gmnoceti@gmail.com. George can send you the application and coach you on how to get it ready for submission.

Noceti, incidentally, played center on Riordan’s ’66 championship football team — the first team to beat Bellarmine before 10,000 people at Kezar Stadium — and he coached at Riordan as well.

Ferrigno and Carey weren't the only Riordan athletes honored last spring. Several Crusaders, one former coach and an entire team were honored at the Eighth Annual San Francisco High School Awards Banquet May 13 at the Italian Athletic Club in North Beach.

The Kevin Restani Trophy, honoring excellence in basketball, went to Zion Sensley ’24; the Angelo Luisetta Trophy went to Ashanti Dias ’24, who excelled in both basketball and track; and the Dante Benedetti Trophy, honoring a lifetime of coaching, went to Rich Forslund, who coached basketball at both Riordan and Lowell. In addition, Team of the Year honors went to Riordan’s boys’ basketball team, which took second in NorCal after an undefeated season.

Above: Riordan football greats Mike Carey ’73 (left) and Phil Ferrigno ’80 (right) were inducted into the San Francisco Prep Hall of Fame. George Noceti ’67, who directs the organization, stands between them.

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Contact Paul Cronin (pcronin@riordanhs.org) for more info.



75th Anniversary Tailgate, Nov. 2, 2024

Join us for our annual football tailgate as Riordan takes on Serra. We welcome the Riordan Community to come to campus to celebrate our 75th anniversary! Spread the word to classmates, friends & family.
RSVP required. Saturday, 11 am – 2 pm
ARHS Cafeteria & Courtyard



Downtown Lunch, Nov. 22, 2024

San Francisco Italian Athletic Club 1630 Stockton Street
Our premier lunch event is back at a new location. This event is a day of networking, lunch and a special guest speaker from the iconic Bay Area sports world. Check our website for ticket information. RSVP required.

For more details go to: http://www.riordanhs.org/support/events
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