COMMUNIQUÉ

THE ALUMNI MAGAZINE OF ST. JOSEPH HIGH SCHOOL

Fall 2026







TABLE OF CONTENTS

05 **COMING HOME TO JOE:** Introducing SJ's new Board Chair: Father Joseph A. Marcello '94.

06 **ONWARD, WITH PURPOSE:** Introducing two new faces to the SJ Leadership Team.

07 **FACULTY SPOTLIGHT:** Tim Weiss Named Bridgeport Diocesan Teacher of the Year.

08 **FACULTY-ALUMNI:** Celebrating those whose connection to St. Joes is more than a place to work.

12 **MORE THAN COLLEGE PREP:** Academic enhancements to prepare our students for what comes next.

14 **A CELEBRATION OF CHAMPIONS:** Meet SJ's 9th Annual Hall of Fame Inductees.

16 **LEGACIES & EXCELLENCE:** Alumni Appreciation Athletic Games return to St. Joes.

18 **ACT II BEGINS:** Long-time faculty member, Kathleen Cardillo, returns to the classroom and the stage.

20 **A LEGACY OF GIVING:** Class Ambassadors support their class gifts for the Capital Campaign.

ADMINISTRATION & STAFF

President
David J. Klein

Principal
Nancy DiBuono

Assistant Principal, Curriculum & Instruction
Brian Gavin '13

Chaplain
Father Andrew LaFleur

Chief Financial Officer
Linda Batten P '10, '13

Dean of Student Life
Matthew Kavulich

Director of Advancement
Renee Farmer

Director of Athletics
Kevin Butler P '25, '28

Director of Campus Ministry
Raymond Kingsbury

Director of Engagement
Maria Stickney P '30

Director of Enrollment
Megan Merwin P '25

Director of Marketing & Communications
Maria Martinez P '25, '27

Director of Security & Facilities
Joseph Dzurenda '80 P '15, '17, '20

Director of Technology
David Lasecki



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

This edition of the Fall 2026 Communiqué is a tribute to our strong Catholic identity and the timeless core values of faith, family, and fellowship that have long defined St. Joseph High School. I am pleased to report that this new school year is off to a great start and the energy on campus is truly invigorating and emblematic of the enduring mission of SJHS. Let me take this opportunity to formally congratulate Father Joseph Marcello '94 on being appointed by Bishop Caggiano as the Chairman of the Board of Directors - welcome home!

This issue serves as a fitting testimonial to the goodness of this school and the transformative value of the Cadet experience. We have featured outstanding faculty and staff alums who proudly returned to St. Joseph High School to do their life's work. Please read on to enjoy their personal journeys that reinforce the lifelong significance of a St. Joe's education. Our academic program continues to improve and now includes an EMT Certification Course; two new Pathway Programs (Health Sciences and Business & Innovation), and new partnerships with Quinnipiac University and Catholic University. In brief, the Catholic University partnership provides for admissible SJHS students to receive a minimum academic scholarship in the amount of $30,000 annually and begins with the Class of 2027 (total value: minimum $120,000) - more information to come. Thank you to Deacon Patrick Toole for facilitating this exciting new opportunity for our students. Most importantly, the school culture continues to be defined by daily prayer; appropriately high standards for personal conduct, academic focus and integrity; and most importantly, being a good and kind person.

It is my hope that this Fall 2026 edition of the Communiqué fills your heart with pride and confidence. Thank you for your loyalty, support, and commitment to the continued success and forward progress of St. Joseph High School.

In Faith and Fellowship,

David J. Klein

St. Joseph High School provides a learning environment that embraces the Gospel values of the Roman Catholic faith and promotes a commitment to family and community. The school prepares our young women and young men to realize their potential, helps them to excel in higher education, and provides a foundation to guide them throughout their lives.

Board Members

St. Joseph High School is a self-governing institution within the Diocese of Bridgeport.

CHAIRPERSON
Father Joseph A. Marcello '94

Rosario Bacarella '80
P '06, '09, '12, '17, '22
BTX Global Logistics

John Corraro '11
Barnum Financial Group

Michael De Vivo P '26, '28
De Vivo Financial Group

John W. Diercksen
P '93, '93, '96, '00
Private Equity Executive

John Fahey P '20, '22, '25, '27
United Rentals, Inc.

Deacon Patrick Toole P '14
Diocese of Bridgeport

Atty. Marian E. Whiteman
General Electric Company

James Woods P '96, '98, '00
Venman & Co. LLC

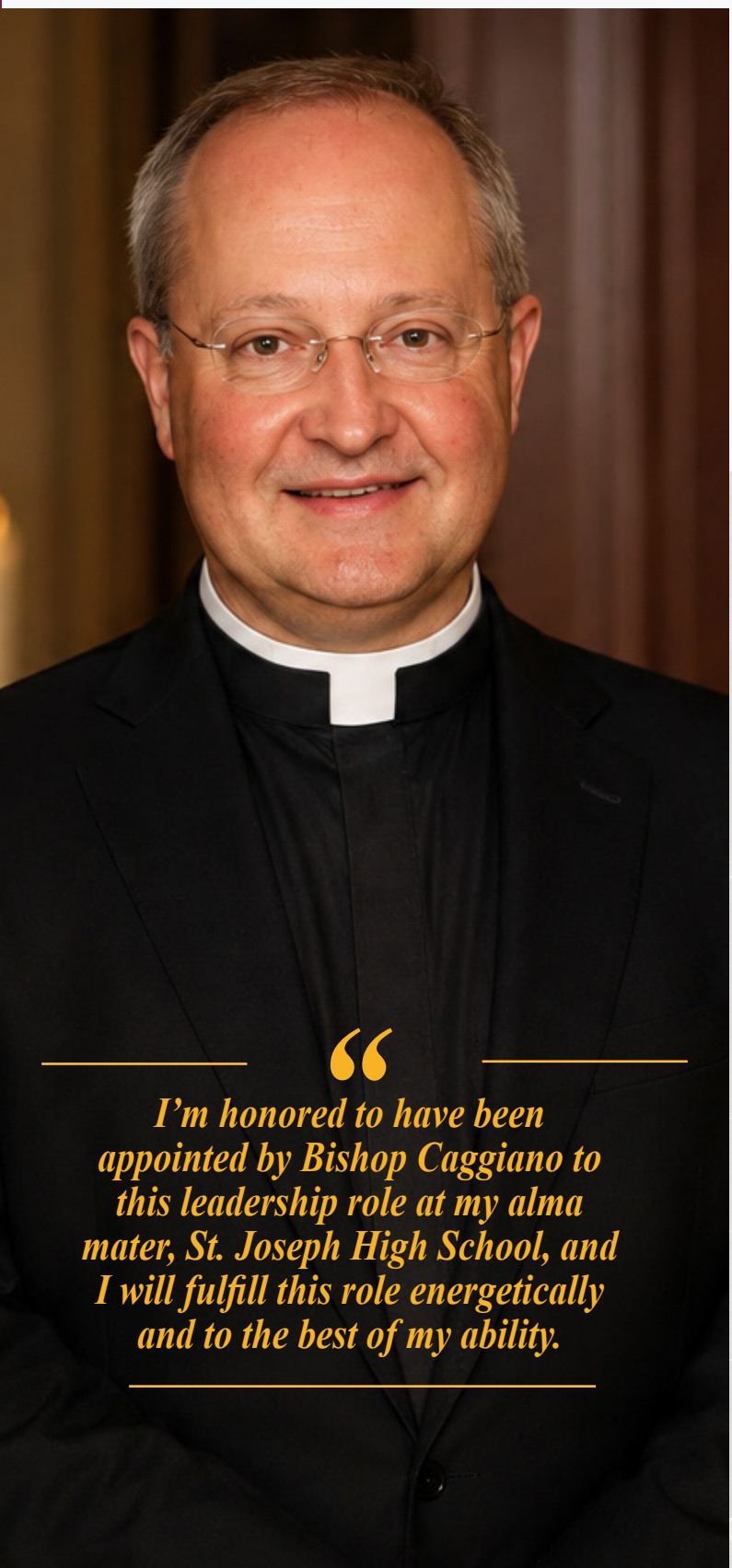
Stacie Stueber
Superintendent of Schools, *ex officio*
Diocese of Bridgeport

David J. Klein
President, *ex officio*

Coming Home to Joe

SJ'S NEW BOARD CHAIR

Father Joseph A. Marcello '94



> ***"I'm honored to have been appointed by Bishop Caggiano to this leadership role at my alma mater, St. Joseph High School, and I will fulfill this role energetically and to the best of my ability.***

For Father Joseph Marcello, returning to St. Joseph High School is more than a new leadership appointment, it is a homecoming.

A proud member of the Class of 1994 and SJ's former Spiritual Director and Chaplain, Father Marcello has returned to St. Joseph High School as Chair of the Board of Directors, effective July 1, 2026, having been appointed to that post by Bishop Caggiano.

Father Marcello also currently serves as Pastor of St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Trumbull.

Eleven years after graduating from St. Joseph High School, Father Marcello returned as the school's Spiritual Director from 2005-2009, helping guide countless Cadets in their faith. Since then, he has continued to serve the Catholic community in a variety of pastoral roles, deepening the experience and perspective he now brings back to St. Joseph High School. As he begins at St. Joseph High School for a third time, he brings his experience as a pastor and his longstanding relationship with the SJ community to this new leadership role.

"Father Marcello's return to St. Joseph's is a full-circle moment, preceded by his time as a Cadet, his service as the Spiritual Director, and now as our Board Chair," remarked President Klein. "His focused leadership will ensure the continuation of our strong family culture, important school traditions and the unwavering commitment to Catholic identity."

Father Marcello's appointment is also part of Bishop Caggiano and the Diocese of Bridgeport's broader renewal initiative, The One, which seeks to strengthen the life of faith across parishes, schools, and ministries. His leadership at St. Joseph High School will further connect parish, school, and family while keeping the mission of Catholic education at the center.

Reflecting on his new role, Father Marcello said: "Since 1990 when, as an 8th grader, I was accepted into the incoming Class of 1994, I've been part of the St. Joseph High School community. My four years as a student were truly foundational in my life and education. The four years I served as the school's chaplain were also foundational for my ministry as a priest. Since that time, I've celebrated the weddings of dozens of former students and baptized many of their children, and it's been a special joy to see the ordinations of former students as well. I'm honored to have been appointed by Bishop Caggiano to this leadership role at my alma mater, St. Joseph High School, and I will fulfill this role energetically and to the best of my ability. I'm looking forward to all that is ahead, and I know I can count on the prayers of our school community, and of our patron, St. Joseph."

New Faces: New Chapters.

We are pleased to welcome two new Leadership Team members to the St. Joseph High School community.



MEGAN F. MERWIN
DIRECTOR OF ENROLLMENT

St. Joseph High School is pleased to welcome **Megan Merwin** as its new Director of Enrollment. Mrs. Merwin brings more than 15 years of experience in admissions and enrollment management, most recently serving as Director of Admissions, Marketing, and Development at St. James School in Stratford. In her new role, she will oversee all aspects of enrollment, from guiding prospective families through the admission process to developing new community partnerships and helping introduce more families to the St. Joes experience.

Mrs. Merwin's background reflects a broad commitment to both education and service. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Religious Studies from Sacred Heart University and began her career as a high school religion teacher. Over the years she has worn many hats, from serving as a customer service executive with the Department of Defense at Fort Ord, California, to working as an independent contractor helping companies strengthen their social media presence and marketing.

"As a former St. Joes parent (Class of 2025), joining this community in a new way is a true gift. I am excited to help families discover what makes St. Joes such a special place: a school rooted in faith, love, and the belief that a Catholic education can transform lives. I look forward to connecting with prospective students and their families, building meaningful relationships across our community, and sharing the many ways an SJ education inspires young people to find their purpose and thrive."



FR. ANDREW LAFLEUR
SCHOOL CHAPLAIN

St. Joseph High School is pleased to welcome **Father Andrew LaFleur** as the new, full-time Chaplain. A Bridgeport native and graduate of St. Ann's School and Fairfield Prep, Father LaFleur first began seriously discerning a vocation to the priesthood during his high school years.

That calling led him to the Seminary of St. John Fisher in Stamford, where he began his formation before earning a degree in Philosophy from Sacred Heart University. He later completed his seminary studies at St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers and was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Bridgeport on May 20, 2023.

For the past three years, Father LaFleur has served as Parochial Vicar at St. Mary's in Bethel. He is now excited to continue his priestly ministry here at St. Joseph High School.

"It is a great gift to serve you all here at St. Joseph's. I have already received a great welcome from the community, and I look forward to getting to know everyone. I am excited to witness and share in our students' faith, seeing them grow closer to Jesus Christ daily. Thank you, and see you all soon!"

Faculty Member, Tim Weiss, Named Bridgeport Diocesan Teacher of the Year.

If you know Tim Weiss, you know he wouldn't want a big fuss made over him. In fact, when he was named the Diocese of Bridgeport's High School Teacher of the Year, his first reaction was, *Who? Me?*

While Tim knew he had been nominated, he hadn't given the award much thought. "There are a lot of great teachers within the Diocese, within St. Joes," he said. "I figured the recognition would go to someone else. I'm just a simple teacher." But that is far from the truth, and maybe that is exactly why the honor feels so fitting.

Tim has been teaching math at St. Joes for ten years. He also moderates the Guitar Club and assists with Music Ministry and the spring musical orchestra. But if you ask students why they love him, the answer won't be any of those things. What they talk about is the way he stays after school to help, writes encouraging notes, and emails parents simply to recognize their child. It's the prayer at the beginning of the class and the conversations in the hallway. In short: it's simply that he cares.

It's that relationship-building that drew Tim to teaching in the first place. He started out as a tutor in high school, soon discovering that he was pretty good at taking something complicated and explaining it in a way that made sense. "When I explain things, I try to give the definition in a way that students can understand at any level." This led him to a degree from Sacred Heart University and put him on the road to teaching Mathematics at SJ.

While he may love Math, Tim recognizes that not all of his students will. "The hardest part of teaching isn't explaining the lesson; it's getting a student to believe that they are capable." When he sees a student improve, he will make sure to write them a note or congratulate them in person to remind them of how their hard work paid off.

Tim's relationship with his students also extends beyond the walls of his classroom. His faith is an important part of who he is, and he sees his role as an opportunity to show students what it can look like to live that faith authentically. "I want to show the kids that you can be a 'normal' person who also practices their faith in an authentic way. It makes the faith more relatable – showing them was it looks like every single day."

His faith is what brought about some of Tim's most meaningful SJ memories, in particular, the Kairos retreats, which created a mutual openness and respect between teachers and students. After one of those retreats, Tim's grandfather sadly passed away. The students who attended Kairos with him took the time to send him handwritten condolences. Tim still has those letters. "I'll never forget that," he said.

"Teaching is all about the personal interaction with people," Tim said. "If it's through math, great. If it's through music, great. If it's through Campus Ministry, even better." Ten years of being in the same position and Tim has no interest in going anywhere else. He jokingly considers him a "lifer." And St. Joes is all the better for it.

The Diocese of Bridgeport may have surprised Tim with a well-deserved honor, but the people who know him best aren't surprised at all. They've known it for years. He doesn't need to be "the flashy teacher"; he doesn't need to tell you how much he cares. You can just see it and feel it. And if you've been around St. Joe's for any amount of time, you probably already know what so many of us know: we're pretty lucky to have him.



"

Mr. Weiss makes me remember why I love math. Walking into his class is a breath of fresh air after a long day."

~ Mary Sather '27





CELEBRATING OUR FACULTY ALUMNI

When we say our Alumni can always "come home to Joe", a few of them always seem to take that as a personal mission. Meet some of the faculty and staff who bring a uniquely personal connection to St. Joes because for them, this is more than simply "a place to work".

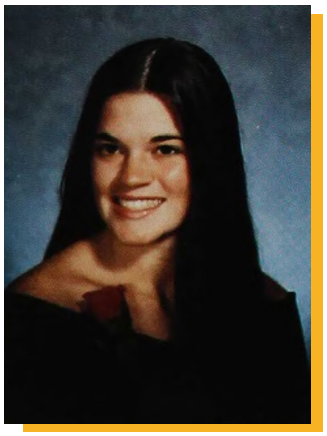
At St. Joseph High School, you will never struggle to find Alumni on campus; they are members of the faculty, staff, coaches, and friends. Their connection to our community goes far beyond any job description and, in many cases, they become SJ parents as well! Their personal ties to the school give them a perspective that is uniquely their own, shaping the way they show up for students and making an already close-knit community feel even more like home. Meet the people who don't just work at St. Joes. They have a stake in what makes it special.

Additional Alumni Currently Working at SJ:

Allen Aldrich Jr. '03 • John Amoroso '12 • Paul Brunner '05
Zachary Carrano '11 • Jim Chaves '98 • David Chervansky '06
Kyle Commodore '95 • Joseph DellaVecchia '81
Martin Dempsey '98 • Joseph Dzurenda '80
Joseph Dzurenda Jr. '15 • Bridget Figmic '09 • John Finan '06
Amaia Gritsko '11 • Quintin Irwin '11 • John Lawson '83
Gary Lynch '68 • Dorothy Miller '84 • Patrick Mulligan '11
Stephen Neugebauer '98 • Kristen Newall '86
Robert Piccuillo '07 • Timothy Pivirotto '03 • Nancy Stablein '12
Ashley Webster '10 • Kevin Wielk '95



ALUMNI-STAFF SPOTLIGHT: MEGAN BAIRD '01



Some of the people who shape our lives as students continue to shape us long after graduation. For Megan Baird, one of those people was her school counselor, Mrs. Siano, whose influence extended well beyond the halls of St. Joes. Mrs. Siano helped Megan discover what she wanted to pursue and remained a mentor throughout college and graduate school.

That lasting relationship is one example of the impact a teacher or staff member can have, and it helped shape Megan's own desire to return to St. Joes and make a difference for another generation of Cadets, including her own daughter, Alexandra, who is currently a freshman.

When the opportunity came along, Megan was excited to give back to the school that had given her so much. She even got to work alongside her sister, who was teaching English at St. Joes at the time. "Coming home to Joe felt like coming home to family."

Today, Megan sees St. Joes from a different perspective, but the one thing she feels hasn't changed are the people. She believes the school's greatest strength is the way its community looks out for one another, creating connections that last well beyond graduation.

That's the experience she wants her students to have, too. She hopes they will find their people, get involved, show their school spirit, and take pride in being a Cadet. For Megan, belonging is a big part of what makes the St. Joes experience special, and something worth passing on.



Megan currently serves as our Assistant Director of College & School Counseling

CELEBRATING OUR FACULTY-ALUMNI

ALUMNI-FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: MEGHAN PIATAK '02



Meghan Piatak didn't return to St. Joes straight out of college. She spent eight years working at two other private schools, gaining experience and developing her own leadership style. So when the opportunity arose to return, she was ready for it.

"I felt firm in who I was as a professional and excited about the possibility of coming home to Joe."

She also had a few familiar faces to look forward to - friendships maintained with several SJ faculty since graduation, making the transition a little easier.

Still, like many returning alumni, calling former teachers by their first names was an adjustment, even if the school community itself felt much as she remembered it. And then there were the uniforms. "The current students are so lucky they don't have the Oxford button-down shirts!"

It's a funny reminder that while some things at St. Joes change, others remain the same. For Meghan, the strongest constant is the solidarity among the people who make up the school community.

"When one of us is hurting, all of us are hurting. When one of us excels, it means excellence for the community at large."

Meghan now helps to shape the experience of today's Cadets. Having seen St. Joes from the perspective of a student and a professional who worked elsewhere before returning, she brings a deeper appreciation for what makes the school special, and a commitment to helping that spirit continue for the next generation.



Meghan currently serves as the Chair of our Theology Department. She teaches Bioethics, World Religions, and Faith & Reason.

ALUMNI-FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: JOHANNA RETALIS '09



To be honest, Johanna Retalis '09 never thought she would return to St. Joes. Then she saw a job opportunity, thought, "Why not?" and here she is, now in her fourth year teaching at her alma mater. Sometimes, when opportunity knocks, you simply must open the door.

Walking through the lobby, Johanna was struck by how different the school looked from the one she graduated from in 2009. Yet some things immediately felt familiar. The middle staircase is "still a zoo every day", and the academic wing brought back a surreal sense of déjà vu.

Seeing her former teachers, now colleagues, was another reminder of how much had changed, even as so much remained the same. Although, she admits, there are still a few former teachers she just can't bring herself to call by their first names.

As a student, Johanna didn't fully appreciate the sense of community that makes St. Joes special.

As a faculty member, she has come to understand and love the family that SJ truly is - perhaps explaining why so many people "come back to Joe."

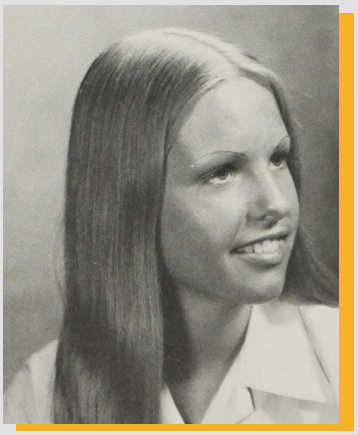
Today, she loves introducing students to science, helping them develop strong study skills, and building relationships she hopes they will remember for years to come.



Johanna currently serves as a Science Faculty Member, teaching Biology and Forensics.

CELEBRATING OUR FACULTY-ALUMNI

ALUMNI-STAFF SPOTLIGHT: LYNN MALLON '75





For Lynn Mallon, returning to St. Joseph High School meant coming home in more ways than one.

In 1999, while working at St. Lawrence School, Lynn was approached by then-Vice Principal Fr. Rob Karpinski about an opportunity at St. Joes. She didn't hesitate. Returning to her alma mater and working at the school her sons attended was an opportunity she couldn't pass up.

Coming back as a staff member gave Lynn a whole new perspective on a place she already loved. She found a close-knit staff, formed friendships with teachers who had once taught her, and enjoyed working with both students and alumni. As a parent, she also had the unique experience of seeing St. Joes through her sons' eyes.

For Lynn, what makes St. Joes truly special is its community. Alumni, students, parents, faculty, and staff come together to celebrate, support one another, and show their love for the school.

That spirit, she says, is especially evident when the community rallies around someone in a time of need.

Today, one of Lynn's favorite parts of being at St. Joes is simple: when students stop by her office just to say "hello". Watching them grow into wonderful young adults is a privilege and a meaningful part of her own St. Joes story.

Lynn (L) currently serves as the Administrative Assistant for College & School Counseling

ALUMNI-FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: EMILY FERNSCHILD '15





Some of the friendships you make in high school stay with you for the rest of your life. For Emily Fernschild, St. Joes is where many of those relationships began, including some of her closest friendships and even the one with her fiancé.

It's a pretty meaningful connection to a place, and one reason returning to campus as a teacher felt like such a natural next step. Emily had a positive experience as a student, and the opportunity to give back to the community that had shaped those years was one she welcomed.

Of course, coming back as a faculty member meant getting used to a few new dynamics. Among them? Working alongside teachers who had once stood at the front of her own classroom.

"I still have a hard time calling some of them by their first names!"

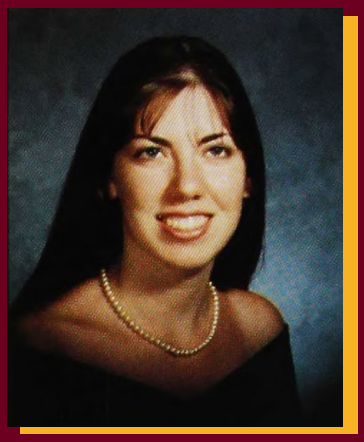
Still, Emily has found that much of what made St. Joes meaningful remains part of the school's culture. She sees a community where people genuinely care about one another. Now, she gets to be part of that experience for her own students. Emily is grateful to help create the same kind of environment that made her high school years so memorable; a place where students can feel supported, build lasting friendships, and know they belong.

For Emily, getting to help today's Cadets build connections of their own is a pretty special reason to come to work every day.

Emily (L) currently serves as a Science Faculty Member teaching Biology and Biotechnology

CELEBRATING OUR FACULTY-ALUMNI

ALUMNI-FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: LAUREN (TABAK) MARINO '01





After graduating from Southern Connecticut State University, Lauren Marino signed up to be a substitute teacher at St. Joes. That opportunity quickly turned into a full-time position and the beginning of a new chapter at her alma mater. Adding to the significance, her brother was a senior at St. Joes when she began working here.

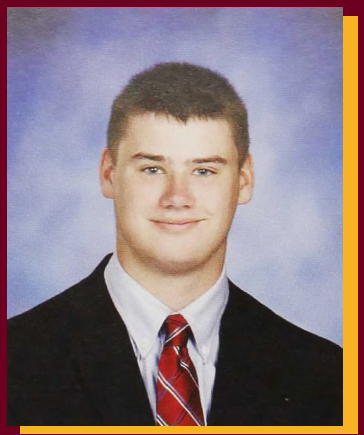
Returning to campus was certainly an adjustment. "It was very odd coming back as a faculty member," she recalls. She found herself working alongside some of the teachers who had taught her, which was initially "terrifying," but ultimately comforting. Over the years, those former teachers became friends, and many remain an important part of her life today.

Having experienced St. Joes as both a student and faculty member, she has come to appreciate the school from a unique perspective. For her, the most meaningful part of the St. Joe's experience has always been the people - the experiences shared and the friendships formed along the way.

And now, her St. Joes journey is coming full circle once again. Next year, she will experience the school in a brand-new role: as a parent. From student, to teacher, to parent, her story is a true reflection of what it means to be part of the St. Joes family.

Lauren (R) currently serves as a Social Studies Faculty Member, teaching U.S. History, Modern World History, Law & Criminal Justice, and American Government

ALUMNI-FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: BRIAN GAVIN '13





The hallways, classrooms, fields, and even the cafeteria still feel familiar to Brian Gavin, but these days, he walks through the school with a very different responsibility: Assistant Prinicpal. For Brian, returning to St. Joes was about more than returning to a familiar place; it was about being drawn to the tradition of the many alumni who return to serve the school, and bringing his own knowledge to the next generation of Cadets. Brian's return has also been a reminder of the importance of his faith, renewing his appreciation for what it means to be part of a community grounded in shared values.

While plenty looks the same as he remembers it, Brian has also seen how much the school has grown. New faces, expanded course offerings, and academic partnerships have opened up opportunities for today's students that weren't necessarily part of his own experience. That balance between tradition and growth is central to how Brian approaches his role. He sees working at St. Joes as both a privilege and a responsibility: an opportunity to work alongside talented faculty and staff while helping students make the most of their high school years.

Brian considers himself fortunate to now have a hand in shaping what the school will mean to the Cadets who come after him. It's a responsibility he takes seriously—and an opportunity he doesn't take for granted.

Brian currently serves as the Assistant Principal for Curriculum & Instruction

MORE THAN COLLEGE PREP

At St. Joes, students don't just imagine what's possible. They make it happen.

"At St. Joes, we believe a truly meaningful education prepares students for more than college. These experiences allow students to make the most of their time here while preparing them to succeed wherever their journeys take them."

For today's high school students, college preparation means more than earning the best grades or checking off the right boxes. College prep means discovering what subjects excite them, exploring which clubs or sports spark their interest, and gaining the confidence and skills to explore those new passions in college.

At St. Joes, we understand that college prep is more immersive than ever. Through our new academic Pathways, hands-on professional training, and expanding college credit opportunities, Cadets are finding more ways to connect what they learn in the classroom to the world beyond SJ.





GAINING HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE: NEW EMT COURSE

Launched in Fall 2026, twenty St. Joes seniors are partaking in our brand new, Emergency Medical Technician course. The full-year, honors-level course is taught by EMS program coordinators, paramedics, and educators who work with the Echo Hose Training Center in Shelton, CT. The EMT course takes learning beyond the traditional classroom and into real-world scenarios.

"I'm thinking about the pre-med track in college," remarked Miranda Martinez '27, "and I'm hoping that this class will show me whether I'm on the right path."

Cadets will study patient assessment, emergency care, medical terminology, and other essential skills while developing the confidence, teamwork, and critical-thinking abilities needed to respond in high-pressure situations.

"How many high school students can say that they are EMT certified before they even graduate?" said Nancy DiBuono, SJ Principal. "The skills our students will learn in this EMT course are going to drastically change their preparedness for college and we are thrilled to be able to bring this course to St. Joes."

All participants will be eligible to take the EMT Certification Exam.

DISCOVERING THEIR DIRECTION: SJ DEBUTS PATHWAYS PROGRAM



St. Joes recently debuted a signature program beginning with the Class of 2029: two Pathways Programs that will give students the opportunity to pursue their interests through a four-year sequence of courses and experiences designed around a particular field.

During this inaugural year, students will be able to choose between the Health Sciences Pathway or the Business & Innovation Pathway.

Students on either Pathway will have to take a series of classes over their four years that focus specifically on their field of interest. The major difference will occur during their senior year when Health Science students will culminate their experience with a Capstone Research Methods course, while Business & Innovation students will complete an off-campus internship.

Students who complete a Pathway will be recognized at graduation and earn a distinctive academic recognition on their transcript.

"Being on the Pathways track will give our students the edge they need on their college applications to get into the schools that fit best for them," said Nancy DiBuono, SJ Principal. "We look forward to rolling out this program for our current sophomores and adding additional Pathways in the future."

STARTING COLLEGE EARLY: MORE COLLEGE-CREDIT COURSES THAN ANY OTHER PRIVATE SCHOOL IN OUR AREA

Why wait until students are college freshmen to have them experience college-level coursework?

St. Joes has always been proud to offer more college-credit earning courses than any other private school in our area, and this year, we've added even more.

In addition to our current partnerships with the University of Connecticut, Sacred Heart University, and Iowa University, we are proud to announce a new partnership with Quinnipiac University. This year, St. Joes has six courses that will earn students college credit through QU. In total, St. Joes offers our students 18 Dual Enrollment Courses and 18 Advanced Placement Courses for a total of 36 college-level courses that can potentially earn them credits on their transcript before they even step onto a campus.

We look forward to expanding that list even further in the 2027-2028 year.

University of Connecticut:

Advanced Physics (4 credits)
Biology & Lab (8 credits)
Calculus, BC (8 credits)
Discrete Mathematics (3 credits)
Environmental Science (3 credits)
International Relations (3 credits)
Music Theory (6 credits)
Physics (4 credits)
Statistics (4 credits)
U.S. History Since 1877 (3 credits)

Sacred Heart University:

Faith & Reason (3 credits)
World Religions (3 credits)

Iowa University:

Exploring Entrepreneurship (3 credits)

Quinnipiac University:

Statistics (3 credits)
Calculus, AB (3 credits)
Women in Literature (3 credits)
Anatomy and Physiology (3 credits)
Spanish 4 (3 credits)
Advanced Percussion, Advanced Ensemble, Chamber Choir (1 credit)



Advanced Placement Courses:

Art & Design
Business with Personal Finance
Calculus, AB
Calculus, BC
Chemistry & Lab
Cybersecurity
Economics
English Language and Composition
English Literature and Composition
Environmental Science
European History
French Language
Pre-Calculus
Psychology
Spanish Language
Statistics
U.S. Government and Politics
U.S. History

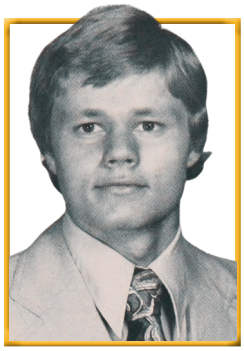
9TH ANNUAL HALL OF FAME

On October 9, 2026, St. Joseph High School inducted seven individuals and one team into the Athletic Hall of Fame. The Ceremony recognizes those who have been instrumental in the overall development and success of athletics at the school. Read more at sjcadets.org/halloffame.

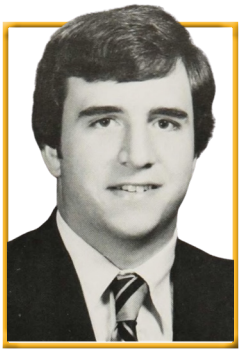
2026 INDUCTEES



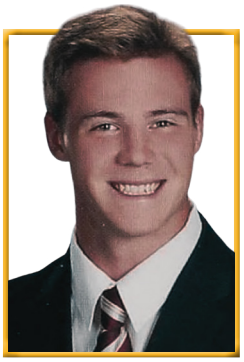
James Olayos '76
Former Athletic Director



Timothy Shea '77
Football, Basketball, Baseball



Thomas Harrigan '80
Football, Basketball, Baseball



Lars Pedersen '15
Football



Lauren Pitney '15
Volleyball, Softball



Jenna Bike '16
Soccer



Jada Harris '16
Track & Field



1977 Basketball Team

A CELEBRATION OF CHAMPIONS

What a night! During the Athletic Hall of Fame, St. Joes celebrated the accomplishments and lasting contributions of our distinguished alumni, coaches, and community members during the annual celebration dinner and induction ceremony.

The event brought together members of the school community, including current and former faculty, alumni, families, and friends, to honor individuals whose achievements and dedication have made a lasting impact on the school and beyond. This year's inductees were recognized for their accomplishments as well as their continued commitment to the values and traditions of our school.

Throughout the ceremony, inductees watched video messages shared by their family and friends and they reflected on their experiences and the people that helped shape their lives. The evening served as a reminder of the many ways members of the school community continue to make a difference long after graduation.

"What an incredible evening," said Renee Farmer, Director of Advancement. "We were honored to induct these seven individuals and one team into the Hall of Fame and add their placard to our wall. Their accomplishments are a source of pride for the entire St. Joseph High School community."

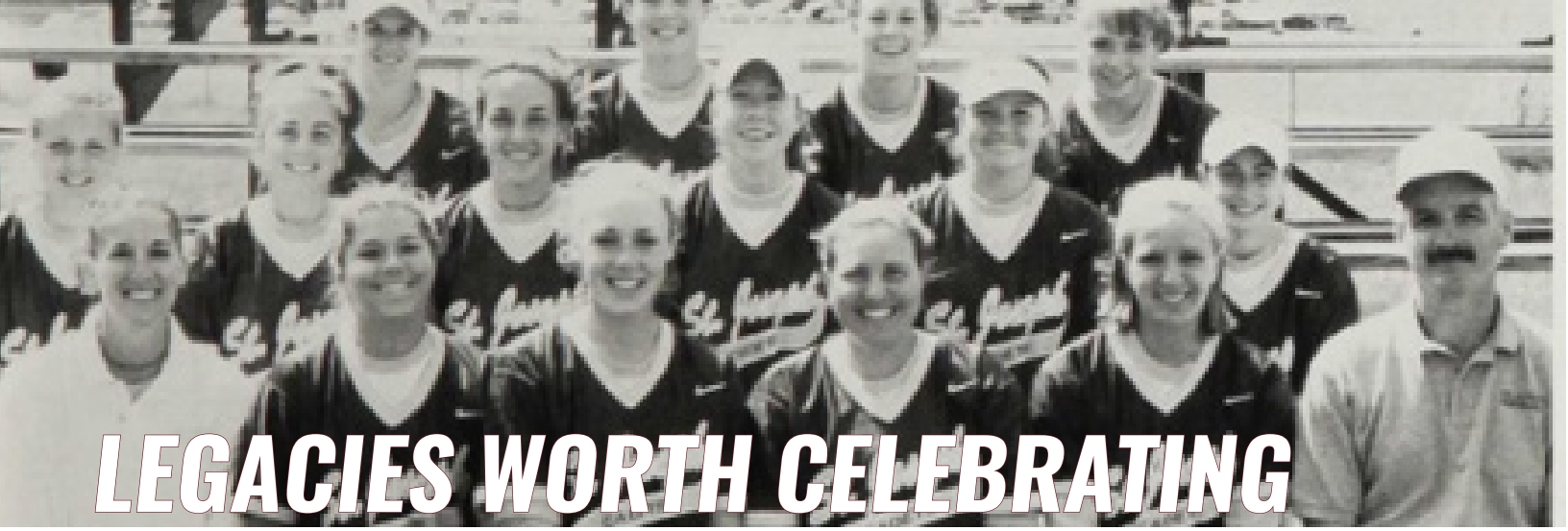












LEGACIES WORTH CELEBRATING

Alumni Appreciation Games Return to St. Joes

Some victories never fade. This year, St. Joseph High School is proud to welcome back some of our most decorated championship teams for our annual Alumni Appreciation Games, honoring the players, coaches, and memories that helped define Cadet athletics.

Each year, St. Joes celebrates teams marking milestone anniversaries (10, 25, and 50 years) since capturing a State, CIAC, or FCIAC championship. Alumni are invited back to the field or court where it all happened, recognized in front of a new generation of Cadets, and presented with a keepsake to commemorate the occasion.

For these alumni, the achievement on the scoreboard was only part of the story. Many have gone on to build careers, raise families, and stay connected to the St. Joes community long after their playing days ended, but the bond formed through chasing a championship together has never left them.

"It's a place that stays with you," is a sentiment echoed by so many of our returning Cadets, and nowhere is that more visible than when former teammates reunite on the field where they once made history.

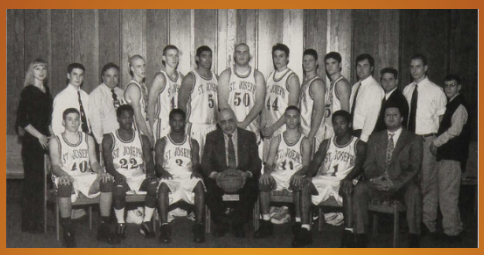
We invite the entire St. Joes community to join us in honoring these teams as they return to campus this season. Watch for exact game dates in our upcoming newsletters and on our website, and be sure to stop by, say hello, and thank these Cadets for the legacy they built.

Congratulations to all of our honorees — once a Cadet, always a Cadet.

Watch for Alumni Appreciation Game dates in upcoming newsletters and on the St. Joes website, and join us in welcoming these champions back to campus.

THE CHAMPIONS WE'RE CELEBRATING THIS YEAR:

2001 BOYS BASKETBALL
Class L State Champions, celebrating their 25th anniversary



2016 GIRLS CHEER
Class M State Champions, celebrating their 10th anniversary



GIRLS SOFTBALL
2001 • 2006 • 2007 • 2016 State Champions
To be honored together this spring



FROM THE ATHLETICS OFFICE



In September 2026, the St. Joes' lobby received an upgraded new look! Thanks to the generosity of alumni and friends, our traditional **Hall of Fame has now become digital**. The 65" touchscreen television provides a dynamic and interactive way to celebrate the outstanding accomplishments of our alumni, students, faculty, and friends of St. Joes. Visitors can explore honorees, learn more about their achievements, and experience the rich history and traditions that make our school community so special.

Throughout the coming year, additional information will be added to the homescreen display. Specifically, there will be options to view photos from the school's history, academic news and accomplishments, as well as past photos and videos from drama productions. Be sure to return to Campus to check out the new board.

In August, SJ Captains had the opportunity to attend the **FCIAC Leadership Workshop,** gaining valuable insight into what it means to lead, inspire, and make an impact both on and off the field. In attendance were: Finn Kilmartin, Avery Johansen, Josef McDonagh, Brady Caserta, Taryn Czick, Sarah Lovett, Mia Massey, Noah Lorenzo, and Maegan Grisanti.





Congratulations to our **Girls Track & Field 4x800 Relay Team** on their 1st-place finish at the spring O'Grady Invitational. The team, comprised of Devyn Smith, Francesca Pagano, Grace Glaser, and Erin Jacques ended the season ranked 2nd in the state.



A Bond Beyond the Field

For SJ seniors Will Zaccagnino (L) and Finn Kilmartin (R), football brought them together, but their friendship has grown into something much deeper.

The two Shelton natives have shared the field for years as teammates and friends. At St. Joes, Finn has made his mark as a linebacker and running back, while Will has been a force on both sides of the line. But their connection recently extended far beyond Friday nights under the lights.

Will became Finn's godfather.

During Finn's sophomore year, he began a journey toward becoming Catholic. With the guidance of former St. Joe's Chaplain, Father Ferry Galbert, he received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Communion at the Easter Vigil in 2025. Standing beside him throughout that journey was Will, who served as his godfather.

For both young men, the experience added another dimension to a friendship that had already been built over years of shared experiences. What began on the football field became a bond rooted in friendship, faith and family. Now, as they enter their final season wearing their Maroon & Gold uniforms, Finn and Will have one more season to share the field, the locker room and all the memories that come with being part of the Hogs family.

Their football careers at St. Joseph will eventually come to an end, but the friendship they built here - and the faith that brought them even closer - will continue long after their final game.

ACT TWO BEGINS

Mrs. Kathleen Cardillo Returns to SJ in the Classroom and on the Stage



When she walked back into her classroom at SJ this fall, it felt like coming home.

After more than two decades as an English teacher, theater director, and mentor to generations of Cadets, Kathleen (Katie) Cardillo has spent the previous year and a half away from the school while undergoing treatment for leukemia. Her return is not something she takes for granted. She wasn't entirely sure her body was ready for it, but mentally, she knew she needed to be back.

"I just need my brain to be working all the time," she said with a laugh.

And, of course, there are the students. "The energy from the kids is really good for me. The St. Joes community, in more ways than I'll ever be able to thank, carried me through everything."

That sense of connection has defined much of her St. Joes story.

Katie arrived at St. Joes in 2005 after working in professional theater and teaching Shakespeare to high school students. At the time, she was pursuing a career as a professional theater director and was working toward an MFA in directing. When that path didn't immediately pan out, she considered teaching full time. More than 20 years later, that decision has grown into a legacy.

Katie spent her first several years teaching English while earning her master's degree and teaching certification. When an opening arose for a theatre director, Katie stepped up, going in with a clear vision for what a high school theater program could be.

Beyond putting on a great production, Katie wanted students to actually hone their craft. Her goal was to create something like a

conservatory-style experience - one in which students could develop their skills in acting, singing, stage management, technical theater, and production.

More importantly, she wanted the theatre program to belong to the students. Before she took over, parents were tasked with building the sets and handling much of the technical work. Katie changed that model, creating opportunities for students to take ownership of nearly every aspect of a production. She also established a student Board, allowing members a voice in the program's direction.

Today, stage managers run the show. Students build and operate the sets. They take on technical responsibilities. She remains nearby, ready to step in when needed, but the students are trusted to make the production their own. That trust is intentional. "If you get your hands dirty and you're exhausted, then your pride in the production is so much deeper."

It is also one of the biggest lessons she has learned from her students: how capable teenagers can be when adults give them the opportunity to prove it. "You just have to get out of their way sometimes."

Her own experience over the past two years gave that philosophy an entirely different meaning.

When she was first diagnosed with leukemia, Katie continued teaching through six months of chemotherapy, even directing a fall production during treatment. "It kept me going, honestly. Having a routine and having the kids around me, it kept me focused."

After a bone marrow transplant, the treatment became much more difficult. She spent a month in the hospital, followed by ninety days in isolation at home, even from her own three children. One thing she learned: "Recovery does not end with treatment. There are permanent changes





within you."

Returning to school, then, was not simply a matter of picking up where she left off. There are physical weaknesses to overcome. There are ongoing medical appointments and constant uncertainty. And there is the very real challenge of returning to a building full of teenagers while her immune system continues to recover.

Still, she chose to return. "I felt like the kids here, the drama kids especially, needed me in a weird way."

But the students were not the only ones. Throughout her absence, faculty members sent cards. The football team invited her to games. There were constant ways the school reminded her that she remained part of the community even when she couldn't physically be on campus.

"I felt very loved by St. Joes," she said. "I think the best of who we are was shown through my experience."

Now, she is ready to give some of that love back. Her return to the English department and the Drama Program comes with a new fall production, *Leaving Iowa*, a contemporary comedy chosen in part because the program was ready for something modern, light, and joyful. It also fittingly ends on a heartfelt note.
For the students who knew her before her absence, Katie's return means having their director back. For the students who never had the opportunity to work with her, it means working with the teacher they've already heard so much about.

Thanks to Katie, many SJ Alum have gone on to work professionally in theater and entertainment. For a teacher who has always believed that students are capable of more when given the chance, the accomplishments of our Fine Arts Alumni are perhaps the greatest evidence that her philosophy works.

And now, she is back in the classroom where so many of those students discovered what they could do.

Back on the stage where students build the sets, run the lights, manage the crew, and tell the stories.

Back where she can teach them - not just how to perform, but how to create, lead, collaborate and trust themselves.

Back home.

"I felt very loved by St. Joes," she said. And judging by the students who spent the past year and a half waiting for her return, that love goes both ways.

LEADING A LEGACY OF GIVING:
Class Ambassadors Support their Class Gift for the *Onward, With Purpose* Campaign

The St. Joes Class Ambassadors continue to embody what it means to serve with purpose. As alumni leaders committed to strengthening the future of St. Joseph High School, the Ambassadors have taken on a pivotal role in rallying support for their class gift to the *Onward, With Purpose* Capital Campaign. Their efforts reflect not only a deep love for the school, but also a shared belief in the power of collective generosity.

Throughout the year, Class Ambassadors have been engaging classmates in thoughtful, personal ways, reconnecting over shared memories, highlighting the campaign's vision, and encouraging participation at every level. Their outreach has helped classmates see how the campaign's priorities will shape the next generation of Cadets, from enhanced learning environments to expanded student opportunities. By grounding their message in their own high school experiences, Class Ambassadors are reminding alumni of the values, friendships, and formative moments that began on Huntington Turnpike and continue to influence their lives today.

What distinguishes the Ambassadors' work is the authenticity behind it. They are not simply asking for support; they are inviting their peers to join them in paying forward the gift they once received. Their leadership has sparked momentum across class years, reinforcing a powerful truth: When Cadets unite around a shared mission, they create lasting impact.

As the *Onward, With Purpose* campaign advances, the dedication of the St. Joes Ambassadors stands as a testament to the strength of the alumni community - and to the enduring spirit of a school that continues to inspire purpose in every generation.

MANY THANKS TO OUR CURRENT CLASS AMBASSADORS.
IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO REPRESENT YOUR CLASS, REACH OUT TO
RENEE FARMER, DIRECTOR OF ADVANCEMENT, AT RFARMER@SJCADETS.ORG

Kenneth Graham '66
David Hoha '71
Deborah Komoroski '73
Deborah St. Laurent '73
Jeffrey Adzima '74
John Kubik '74
Nancy Matthews '74
Andrea Serino '74
Michelle Armstrong '75
John Fitzgerald '75
James Luchansky '75
Lynn Mallon '75
Louise Simonetti '75
Mary Topham '75
Rosemary Collins '76
Eileen Douglas '76
Betsy Sorrentino '76
Karen Caliendo Corcoran '77
Mary Beth Fessler '77
Marybeth Marx '77
Pamela Moore '77
Mary Butala '78
Thomas Gorman '78
Robin Julian '80
Johnny Vazzano '80
David DeDonato '82
Lisa Russell '82
John Larkins '84
Diane Montelli Morrisey '84
Marisa Kopec '85
Joseph Pagliaro '86
Laura Bossio '88
Nicole Daly '88
Mary Dineen '88
Andrea Maldon '89
Jonathan Maldon '89
Thomas Matthews '89
Stacey Wymbs '89
Patricia Zito '89
Robert Studley '90
Michele Goode '91
Kevin Kellogg '91
Holly Orazietti '91
Tina Tison '91
Kristen Campbell '92
Liza Gambino '92
Gina Luczaj '92
Kathleen Fagan '93
Brian Farnen '93
Barbara Bazar '94
Jill LaPlante '94
Joseph Laucella '95
Sandy Laucella '95
Shannon Diaz '98
Robert Dunford '98
Rosanna Mallozzi '98
Johnna Wallace '99
Kristen Bedell '00
Catherine Worrell '00
Megan Baird '01
Lauren Marino '01
Patricia Mikan '02
Sarah Minea '02
Meghan Piatak '02
Arthur Poje '02
Michael Boyce '03
Kristina Cornut '03
Michael Esteves '03
Amanda Bisack '04
Ashley Lupo '04
Alexandra Julian '08
John Corraro '11
Matthew Pavia '11
Kayla Chuba '12
Matthew Julian '12
Marcelle Morrisey '12
Taylor Smith '12
Owen Bonaventura '16
Michael Denihan '19
Alice Maldon '19
Gina Orazietti '19
Samantha Sorrentino '19
Peter Spinelli '20
Patrick Dineen '21



Your Gift. Their Experience - the Importance of Fundraising

ST JOSEPH HIGH SCHOOL

MCMLXII

PRIVILEGE AND RESPONSIBILITY

SJ FUND

Your Gift. Their Experience.

The SJ Fund is St. Joseph High School's annual fund and one of the most important ways our community supports the school each year.

Gifts provide flexible funding for tuition assistance, student programs, school traditions, and the many experiences that make St. Joes so special.

The strength of the SJ Fund comes from the participation of our entire community - families, alumni, parents, and friends.

We ask every SJ family to make a gift to the SJ Fund each year, at a level that is meaningful to them.

Every gift and every family that participates makes a difference and helps ensure that St. Joes can continue to provide exceptional opportunities for today's Cadets and those who follow.

Make your gift today

CLASS NOTES & CADET CONNECTIONS

Celebrating the milestones, memories, and moments that continue to shape our alumni community.
Want to include your Class Note for our Spring 2027 issue? Visit sjcadets.org/stayconnected.



Thomas Bodnar '76 has been married 40 years to his wife, Debbie, and they have three sons. Thomas retired after spending 35 years working at retail garden centers, co-owning a nursery, and finishing the last 16 years in management at White Flower Farm in Morris, CT. He still creates fine art photography and hope to have a gallery exhibition in 2027.



Having completed various administrative roles in higher ed, **Kathleen Boozang '77** is back to being a full-time law professor, which she finds invigorating. "Since the students never get older, I mustn't either. I love serving on boards, traveling, hosting family on the Cape and my new hobby refinishing furniture. I have been blessed with a rich life."



Recently, **Daniel Craw '76** had the pleasure of reuniting after 50 years with **Keith Liscinsky '73**, **Sid Maietto '74**, and **Kevin Healy '75**. It was a great time getting together and discussing their lives, sharing plenty of laughs, tears, and joy!

Carmen Suarez '77 retired after a 42-year wonderfully rewarding career as a creative director/editor. She now enjoys spending time at the beach with her family and soul mate.

Thomas Wynne '77 is proud to share that his son is a Urologist in Washington DC, giving Thomas the opportunity to travel between South Carolina and D.C. "Life is good!"



Cathy (Cunningham) Beutler '82 married Pete Beutler on July 11, 2026.

Jennifer Course '91 has worked as a teacher of Multilingual Learners since 2002 at Brattleboro Union High School. She feels blessed and privileged to get to do this work and serve families from around the world. She lives in Vermonth with her husband, Tim, has a 19-year-old son, Mateo, and a 30-year-old stepdaughter, Marcela.



Evan DeBenedetto '16 continues to dance on tour with Katy Perry. He is currently doing a festival tour with her which includes Europe over the summer.

Michael Rosati '17 was a proud member of the SJ Drama Club, remembering fondly of his senior year as stage manager. Now, he teaches high school special education and helps run a fully adapted special needs musical in Milford with his sister **Julia Rosati '19**, also an SJ Drama alum!

Joan Corcoran '09 studied Psychology and Communication at Merrimack College before heading to Thailand to teach English. After teaching special education at both Stratford High and Bunnell, she worked at a children's home in Kenya. She then earned a Master of Public Administration at NYU before joining the Uganda Village Project in 2019. Today, Joan serves as Director of Institutional Partnerships at Neighborhood Villages, a Massachusetts-based nonprofit focused on improving access to high-quality, affordable child care.

At SJ, **Taylor Smith '12** participated in Chamber Choir, Honor Society, Student Ambassadors, and the Drama Club. She went on to study at Ithaca and Northeastern and was one of the first females to receive a Masters in Jazz Performance. She is now at UNC earning her PhD in Musicology.



Benjamin Jimenez '26 is attending Hobart and Williams College in the Fall and playing Division 3 Football.

IN MEMORIAM

The following alumni passed away between July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026. We ask that you keep their families in your thoughts and prayers.

"It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins."
(2 Maccabees 12:46)

Albert Rourke '66

Joanne Marchitto Sullivan '66

Susan Robinson Thomas '66

Christine Biesadeski '68

James DeStefano '68

Mary Alice O'Donnell '68

Kurt Breither '71

Richard Wilber '71

Lee Molnar Paoletta '76

Mary Malinak '80

Shawn Fitzgerald '81

Douglas Wilson '88

Shelley Testi '90

Robyn Lefkowski '91

Tamara Ospina '91

Paul Yablonski '04

Alec Crispino '14



ST. JOSEPH HIGH SCHOOL
2320 Huntington Turnpike
Trumbull, Connecticut 06611

2026-27 Upcoming Events

November 12-14
Fall Play
Leaving Iowa
sjcadets.org/drama

November 26
Thanksgiving
Football Game

December 17
Winter Concert

March 19
The Feast of our
Patron, Saint Joseph

April 7
Spring Open House

April 8
Grandparents Mass

April 25
Ladies Luncheon

April 29 - May 1
Spring Musical

June 5
Commencement for
the Class of 2027



Follow @SJCadets!

www.sjcadets.org