



# TRADITION

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A magazine for the alumni, families and friends of Joliet Catholic Academy

Winter 2015





## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT/PRINCIPAL



Dear JCA Family and Friends,

We've done it! With your generosity, we have raised the money in pledges (\$1.2 million) to complete the first phase of our Capital Initiative: Honoring our Past, Building our Future. Now it's on to Phase II- Back Windows, WiFi to support our 1:1 technology initiative, and air conditioning for each of the classrooms.

We cannot thank you enough for partnering with us to raise the necessary funds for Phase I of this all important initiative. We hope that you have had a chance to visit the school to see the new windows along Larkin Avenue and our new space dedicated to our past... the Heritage Quad. What a wonderful space for our students, parents, alumni and friends of JCA to gather and feel the spirit of not only our school, but of the schools that make up our great Tradition!

As we begin Phase II, we once again look towards the vision for our Joliet Catholic Academy community:

"Joliet Catholic Academy is a school of opportunity... a beacon of light for all. We live Carmelite and Franciscan values, think critically, partner with families, engage the community, and champion Christian Servant leadership, while igniting passion and enthusiasm for life's journey."

We have set a goal of \$1.5 million dollars for Phase II which would cover the expenses for our improvements. We know that once again with your help, this goal is attainable. With your help, we will be able to live our mission and engage our vision! Everything done for the improvement of our school has our students in mind. We want to always work for a better future for our Angels and Hilltoppers!

We truly are Angels and Hilltoppers, Carmelite and Franciscan. With your help we will be able to live our mission and engage our vision. We look forward to a partnership with you that will enable us to make these dreams into a reality.

Blessings,

*Jeffrey R. Budz*

Jeffrey R. Budz  
President/Principal  
Joliet Catholic Academy

## OUR TRADITION

*Published by the Joliet Catholic Academy  
Communications Office*

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# ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

## Stephen Cservenyak Transitions from Home Runs to Country Music Hits

Stephen Cservenyak '09 accomplished amazing feats on the baseball diamond during his four years at Joliet Catholic Academy. Cservenyak was a member of the 2009 State Champion Hilltopper baseball team, and in the process also set the school's single season home run record with 12 homers during his final campaign.

During his college career Cservenyak began to look off the field for that same adrenaline rush he had found on the diamond for so many years, in preparation for the end of his playing career. His outlet became a new playing career of sorts, as Cservenyak began to sing at local "open mic" nights and learn to play the guitar off of YouTube videos. "I started a few years ago and today people are surprised that I sing and play instruments. I'm completely self-taught and music initially was an outlet

for me while in college at St. Francis. By the time I was a senior, music became my competition and adrenaline rush," said Cservenyak.



As the "open mic" nights picked up steam and turned into small shows at local area bars and music halls, Cservenyak was offered the opportunity to record a 6-song EP, basically half of a record. Recorded in Nashville, Cservenyak's EP "I Just Drive" featured performances by J.T. Corenflos (a noted country music guitarist

who has composed music for Luke Bryan, Tim McGraw, and Kenny Chesney to name a few) and the drummer for the band Paramore.

As Cservenyak's star has begun to rise, he decided to adopt the stage name "Stephen Neal", with the Neal honoring his grandfather, and the time spent on his farm as a child that helped him develop a love for country music. Despite the new name, and the rising popularity, "Cserv", as he was known during his JCA days, is still the same Stephen and credits JCA for laying the groundwork for the daily discipline he possesses chasing his music goals.

"Teachers and coaches at JCA made a huge impact on my life. They taught me to push myself, and if not for that I wouldn't be chasing this dream. It can be scary getting up on stage, but when you know there are people who care about you and have confidence in you, it in turn gives you that confidence to go out and perform. That was true in school and baseball at JCA, and I have that today when it comes to music because of that education I received".

This fall, things began heating up for Stephen Neal, as he opened for Joe Nichols at the Country Music Commons

in New Lenox, opened for Bad Company at Naperville Rib Fest, and opened for Chris Young and Jana Kramer at Joliet Memorial Stadium during the Park District's Fall Country Music Concert. He also played a live show at Joe's Bar on Weed Street, a famous country music bar in the Chicago Loop that hosted the likes of Eric Church and Miranda Lambert early on in their careers. His band will begin a College Tour starting in April, visiting all Big 10 and Big 12 schools, with the addition of SEC schools likely.

Stephen is producing a new EP this May, with a full length album planned for the future. Cservenyak added, "I've written over 200 songs and this past year has taught me how to find my unique sound and tell my unique stories. I want to have fun with my music, but also be there for the fans during tough times like broken hearts. We are picking up steam as a group. I can't wait for 2016, with the new EP extended tour anything can happen, and I'm shooting for the top".

By Ryan Quigley, JCA Director of Communications

**Teachers and coaches at JCA made a huge impact on my life. They taught me to push myself, and if not for that I wouldn't be chasing this dream**

~ STEPHEN NEAL







# WELCOME TO THE JCA FAMILY



One of the first words alumni often use to describe Joliet Catholic Academy is family. That family begins with the superior faculty and staff, who work tirelessly to challenge the students to push themselves farther than they ever thought possible. JCA is proud to welcome three new and one returning members to the JCA family. These four individuals bring a wealth of experience and knowledge that will enhance our community and continue to build on JCA's 146-year legacy.

In keeping with the tradition of providing students experts in their various academic fields to foster their educational growth, Joliet Catholic Academy is proud to announce the newest additions to the faculty and staff for the 2015-2016 school year.

JCA President/Principal Dr. Jeffrey Budz stated, "We are so excited to have the following teachers be a part of our JCA family. We know that our curriculum is in good hands with these dedicated experts in their fields, and it keeps with our tradition of family as two alumni, a parent, and a Carmelite brother are all a part of this group."

## New Staff Additions:

**Mr. Steve Bowe** – Mr. Bowe graduated from Champaign Central High School and with a B.A. in History and Spanish from St. Louis University. He also holds an M.A. in Latin American and Iberian Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and will teach Spanish at JCA. He likes to cook, read, and travel. While visiting his mother-in-law

in Washington state this past summer, he went on his first deep sea fishing trip and caught a massive Alaskan king salmon, half of which is still in his freezer.

**Mr. Tyler Eakle** – Mr. Eakle will teach in the Math Department and is a JCA graduate ('10). He spent the past year as a 6th and 7th grade math teacher, as well as a K-8 computer teacher. The University of St. Francis graduate is also entering his 5th year as the junior varsity boys and girls tennis coach at JCA. This summer he participated in the Spartan Race Super event.

**Mrs. Jenny Jasper** – Mrs. Jasper graduated from Carl Sandburg High School, and received her B.A. in Psychology from Governors State University. She also holds an M.A. in School Counseling from Lewis University. She will work as an academic aid in the Academic Resource Center. Mrs. Jasper spent nine years in banking before switching to education. She loves theater, and is a graduate of the Conservatory Program at the Second City of Chicago. She also runs the Drama Club at St. Paul Elementary School. She has four children with her husband, and they currently live in and are restoring a 120 year-old home in Joliet.

**Mrs. Julie Jones** – Mrs. Jones graduated from Colorado State University where she studied Outdoor Recreation and interned with USFS in Southeast Alaska. She is currently one class away from her masters through the University of Illinois in Recreation, Sport, and Tourism. Mrs. Jones will teach Math and Science. She spent the

past eight years as an elementary school teacher's aide, and spent two Austral Summers in Antarctica for Antarctic Support Associates.

**Br. Jeff Lima** – Brother Jeff graduated from the University of Guelph with honors with a B.A. and M.A., both in history. He is currently working on his Masters in Divinity and will teach Freshman Religion. He formerly worked in the IT Security Industry, and is from Toronto originally, but is still a Blackhawks fan.

**Mr. Ryan Quigley** – Mr. Quigley is the new Director of Communications at JCA. A JCA graduate ('03), Quigley earned a B.A. in English/Secondary Education from St. Xavier University, while also earning an M.B.A. in Financial Analysis and Investments from SXU. Mr. Quigley will coach sophomore girls basketball and has previously worked as a baseball scout, collegiate baseball coach and a high school English teacher.

**Ms. Rachel Reyes** – Ms. Reyes graduated from Providence High School and from the University of St. Francis with a B.A. in Math. She recently completed her M.S. in Statistics from the University of Illinois at Chicago. She previously worked at Joliet West High School. She teaches clogging and also competes in obstacle course racing.



# CELEBRATING SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS OF IMMACULATE'S 150 YEARS

One by one, 120 members of the century-and-a-half-year-old Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate filled the Cathedral of St. Raymond's last remaining empty pews Sunday, August 2, 2015.

Sunday afternoon's Mass was celebrated to commemorate the Joliet-based order's 150th anniversary – and its lasting legacy within the city of Joliet, the church and the rest of the world.

"[These are women] who get up every day and recognize that their life is for Christ, that they live for the kingdom of God," Joliet Bishop Daniel Conlon's voice echoed through the expansive cathedral. "They faithfully responded to God's calling."

The order was founded Aug. 2, 1865 – when the city of Joliet was only 11 years old.

Over the last century-and-a-half, the Joliet-based

order held influence over the creation of much of Joliet's institutions, having founded the University of St. Francis, the Guardian Angel Home, Our Lady of Angels Retirement Home, the Franciscan Learning Center and St. Francis Academy, which later merged to become Joliet Catholic Academy.

Sister Mary Frances Seeley was among those in attendance Sunday.

"Celebrating Mass in particular on this day, celebrates those who went before us, the present sisters, and the future sisters," Seeley said. "We are all joined together."

Seeley said the Joliet-based order epitomizes the meaning of "Ite, Missa est," the often-heard farewell words for Mass services, which means "Go forth, the Mass is ended."

"It carries the sense of mission," Seeley said. "It's the faithfulness of the sisters. Go where you are sent, go where there is a need."

The Sisters certainly went where they were needed in the last 150 years in Joliet, said Dolores Zemont, president of the Joliet order. Zemont spoke extensively during the Mass of the group's history and accomplishments.

In addition to the educational facilities the order started, the order created The Upper Room Crisis Hotline, the Groundwork Domestic Violence Program and the Center for Correctional Concerns, which provides education to Will County Jail inmates, she said.

There are nearly 160 sisters in the order today, many of whom are in Joliet or the U.S. More than half of the 17 who work in Brazil were in attendance Sunday.

Sister Margaret Guider, a member of the Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate since 1980, said she now teaches at Boston University. Sunday's celebration was an "opportunity for jubilee" for all that the Joliet order has done for the community.

"It's all about mission and keeping that mission at the center of one's life," Guider said.

Zemont said the Joliet Franciscans are "alive with well."

"Our spirit is strong," she said. "We get up each morning trying to live our vocation with hope, hope in the Lord, hope for the future of religious life, and hope for the people of God, trying to faithfully answer the call of Jesus."

~ By Lauren Leone-Cross, *The (Joliet) Herald News/Shaw Media*.



**President Sister Dolores Zemont gives the welcome address at Sunday's Mass at the Cathedral of St. Raymond in Joliet. (Larry W. Kane for Shaw Media) ~ Left.**

**UPCOMING  
JCA  
EVENTS**

**PLACEMENT  
EXAM FOR EIGHTH  
GRADERS**

*Saturday, January 9,  
2016 8:00 a.m.*

**HERITAGE QUAD  
RIBBON CUTTING**

*Details to be announced  
soon as project nears  
completion*

**JUBILATÉ**

*Event Chairs: Maria and Felipe  
Acosta & Lulu and Jim Roth  
Saturday, March 12, 2016  
Visit [www.jubilate.jca-online.org](http://www.jubilate.jca-online.org)  
for more information.*



# Summer Camps Once Again Thrive

For the last 146 years, JCA has been teaching students critical thinking, collaboration and teamwork, preparing them for life in college and beyond. These skills are developed through a strong curriculum as well as an athletic and activities program that is second to none.

Before students even walk through the door their freshman year, they have an opportunity to begin training with the best of the best through JCA's exciting summer camps program. Starting in early June, Joliet Catholic Academy opened its doors and fields to students aged Pre-K through 8th grade for a variety of fine arts, athletics and academic summer camps. In the time of social media, video games, and

**JCA's Summer Camp gives young people a chance to disconnect from everyday and re-engage with the world around them**

digital overconsumption, JCA gives young people a chance to disconnect from the everyday and re-engage with the world around them.

Through the JCA summer camps, kids are able to be kids and spend time with other young people in their own age group with shared interests in music, drama, academics or athletics. The majority of the camps were held on JCA's campus, utilizing the playing fields, classrooms and gymnasium. Additionally, JCA's own teachers and coaches took

time out of their summer to spend some time with future Angels and Hilltoppers.

At the athletic camps, whether campers were beginners or seasoned "vets", they were able to jump in and get started at their appropriate level. Campers were able to take advantage of a wide variety of options, including baseball camp, led by Coach Jared Voss; dance camp, led by Coach Natalie Minarich; football camp, led by Coach Dan Sharp; and volleyball camp, led by Coaches Christine Scheibe and Rhyen Staley, among several others. They received fundamental instruction, honed basic skills and got to be champions at JCA.

At the fine arts and academics camps, participants put on their thinking caps and got in touch with their creative side. Options included physics camp, led by Jake Ziesmer; musical theater camp, led by Jennifer Szynal; and drawing camp, led by Peg Stoiber, just to name a few. While physics camp piqued their curiosities and got their brains going with exciting experiments, the fine arts camps let their minds wander. Fine arts camps encouraged campers to be themselves and explore their creative side in a safe and accepting environment. These campers were then able to show off what they learned to family and friends at the end of camp with a performance or project!

One of the highlights of the camps was when WNBA star Allie Quigley '04 came home to run the first annual "Allie Quigley Saints and Angels Basketball Camp" with her sister, fellow JCA grad Samantha Quigley '06.

This year's summer camps were a great success and Joliet Catholic Academy cannot wait to open its doors again next summer for another year of inspiring camps with future Angels and Hilltoppers!



## Allie Quigley Camp a Huge Success

Two-time reigning WNBA "6th Woman of the Year" Allie Quigley came back home to Joliet to run a one day girls basketball camp along with the coaching staffs and players from Joliet Catholic Academy and the University of St. Francis this past Labor Day at the JCA Student Activity Center. 68 girls basketball players from the Joliet area, ages 9-14 years old all received quality instruction, an Allie Quigley "Angels and Saints" Basketball Camp T-shirt, and a post-camp autograph session.

Quigley, a 2004 JCA graduate, went on to star collegiately at DePaul and is currently in her eighth professional season, playing both in the WNBA for her hometown Chicago Sky and spending her winters overseas competing in the Euroleague.

In 2015, Quigley was once again named the WNBA "6th Woman of the Year", coming off the bench to average 11.1 points per game, tops among reserves in the WNBA, for the Sky. The Sky

Quigley is currently playing in Istanbul Turkey for Fenerbahce Sports Club during the 2015-2016 winter campaign. She will return to the Sky next summer for her third consecutive season.

Current JCA girls head coach Nick Leonard was also on hand helping to lead the instruction. Leonard takes over an Angels' program that has gone 48-12 over the past two seasons with an IHSA Class 2A Runner-Up finish in 2014.

Joining Leonard and Quigley providing camp instruction was Allie's sister Samantha Quigley '06, the head coach at the University of St. Francis. A former JCA and DePaul star on the hardwood, Quigley recently served as an assistant coach for the USA Basketball Women's U16 Team that won a bronze medal at the 2015 FIBA Americas Championship in Puebla, Mexico. Quigley's Saints squad went 17-15 in 2014-2015, capturing the CCAC South Division title with a 12-5 conference record.

The camp was designed with an emphasis on skill development in all facets of the game of basketball. Current players from JCA and USF also assisted in instruction. The camp proved to be a huge success and there are plans to continue it annually to help promote the Angels' program and youth girls basketball in the Joliet area.





# Benefitting JCA students

Joliet Catholic Academy has helped thousands of students and their families to achieve their goal of receiving a Catholic education. The Generosity of the Carmelites and Franciscans have taught us all to help each other in times of



**FRANK GOLF**

distress and to gift to those less fortunate than ourselves. JCA would like to thank everyone that has gifted to tuition assistance or started a scholarship. These scholarships honor the memory of our loved ones, they reflect our gratitude we have for our own Catholic education, and continue our vision of creating a better future. Andrew Ndoca '79 remembered that his strong background in Mathematics had given him the base he needed to excel in his field of work. Andrew decided to honor Frank Golf for his strong back ground in these skills and started The Frank Golf Endowed Scholarship in Mathematics. Andrew set up this scholarship so that additional gifts would commence additional scholarships. So far we have reached the amount to distribute a second Frank Golf Scholarship in Mathematics.

We are encouraging others impacted by Mr. Golf to gift as well so that JCA can issue a third scholarship in 2016.

To those of you that have started a scholarship, the students of JCA are forever grateful. For a list of current scholarships please visit our website: [www.jca-online.org](http://www.jca-online.org) for additional information on gifting to one of the existing scholarships. If you would be interested in creating a new scholarship please contact John Horn in our Development office at [jhorn@jca-online.org](mailto:jhorn@jca-online.org).

## ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS

- Endowed scholarships for student financial assistance
- Jack Adler Scholarship
- Daniel and Carol Allen Memorial Scholarship
- Baratta Foundation
- Michael Fitzgerald Brown Memorial Scholarship
- D'Arcy Family Scholarship
- Fr. Raymond Foster, O. Carm. Scholarship
- The Frank Golf Endowed Scholarship in Mathematics
- Joan Hussey Scholarship
- JCA Alumni Association Endowed Student Scholarship
- JCA Restricted Endowed Scholarship
- Timothy C. Klotz Memorial Scholarship
- Korst Family Scholarship
- The "Mammo Strong" Memorial Foundation
- Marcita Ley Scholarship
- Mother Borromeo Mack Scholarship
- Dolores R. Moran McShane Scholarship
- Brandon Kivlin Moyer Memorial Scholarship
- Multiple-Sibling Family Scholarship (anonymous)
- Leonard F. and Dorothy Hartmann Nasenbeny Scholarship
- Phyllis Olsta Scholarship
- Marie Picha Scholarship
- Loretta Plavec Quam Scholarships
- August and Ann Russell Scholarship
- Scheibe Family "We Believe in Angels" Memorial Scholarship
- Matt Sicinski Memorial Scholarship
- Lillian M. Tunze Memorial Scholarship
- Zachary Vargo Memorial Scholarship
- Vranicar Memorial Scholarship
- Robert E. Wright Family Scholarship



## NON-ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED ANNUALLY:

- 49'ers Scholarship
- Catholic Education Foundation Grant
- Rosemary (Boetto) DeBartolo Memorial Scholarship
- Franciscan/Carmelite Scholarship
- Hilltopper Scholarship
- Jeri Hogan-Whiteside Scholarship
- David W. Hostert Memorial Scholarship
- JCHS/SFA Class of 1980 Scholarship
- Mammo Scholarship
- Helen McKeon Scholarship
- Omni-Mte Scholarship
- Omni-Mte Student Distinction in Academics & Athletics Award
- Omni-Mte Student Distinction in Academics & Performing Arts Award
- Andrew P. Pavletich Memorial Foundation
- Patrick Quigley Memorial Scholarship
- Remembering "G" Memorial Scholarship
- Harold D. Scroggins Scholarship
- Tom Seddon Scholarship
- James R. Sefcik, Jr. Scholarship
- Sr. Faith Franciscan Scholarship
- Glenn E. Steed, Jr. Memorial Scholarship
- Sr. Loretta Tures, OSF Memorial Scholarship
- Maxine F. Ward Memorial Scholarship

ONLY 500  
TICKETS TO BE SOLD!

**JOLIET CATHOLIC ACADEMY**  
2016 Jubilate | Under the Boardwalk

**CASH OR TRIP OF A LIFETIME RAFFLE**  
\$100 per ticket (Not deductible for tax purposes)

**Grand Prize: \$10,000 or Dream Trip for Two**  
**1st Prize: \$2,000 or Your Choice of Live Auction Item**

**NEW EARLY BIRD DRAWING INCENTIVES!**  
WINNING EARLY BIRD TICKETS GO BACK INTO GRAND PRIZE DRAWING.  
**1st Drawing: December 1, 2015 | Chicago Overnight and Dinner for Two**  
**2nd Drawing: February 1, 2016 | The Herrington Inn & Spa and Dinner for Two**

Grand Prize Drawing to be held on Saturday, March 12, 2016. | Winner need not be present.  
Tickets may also be purchased online at [jubilate.jca-online.org](http://jubilate.jca-online.org)



# The LIGHT of Our History

By Alivia Phelps, JCA Student '17



The history of Joliet Catholic Academy is a long running event that our tradition keeps alive, but what exactly is our tradition? Most would answer and say our tradition starts at the base of the JCA foundation: family. This tradition of family began almost 150 years ago with the start of a Catholic school for girls. In 1869, St. Francis Academy was opened by Mother Alfred Moes in hopes to educate and inspire the young women of the time. The school's original location was just off of the Illinois and Michigan Canal, but with a growing number of girls wanting to attend the school for their outstanding academics, St. Francis Academy made the big move to Larkin Avenue where the school still resides today. The new building was unlike anything the young Catholic girls had seen with its beautiful front entry and signature blue windows. A new building meant a new start for the traditional Catholic school, with more classes being added each year and more girls going on to carry out the Franciscan charisms in new and brighter ways. St. Francis Academy became recognized across Joliet for the elegant young women and numerous academic achievements it produced.

Across town another tradition began during the opening of DeLaSalle High School for boys. The Christian Brothers, under the direction of George Cardinal Mundelein, built the soon to be excellent high school in the former St. Patrick's Church Hall as a place for the local young men to come and get a higher education in the Joliet area. The Christian Brothers released ownership to the Carmelite Order in 1933, who in turn renamed the school Joliet Catholic High School.

The Hilltoppers, (a name given for the spectacular high ground that the school was built upon) became known around the city of Joliet as the boys to beat. The school produced students with amazingly high test scores and athletic ability. The athletic ability possessed by the boys is what really propelled them into the national spotlight. During the construction of the school, a lighthouse was built as a sign of hope for all who passed, but it quickly developed a more symbolic meaning. The statue would light up anytime the boys won a game, promptly giving this monument a new name: The Victory Light.

The Victory Light provided a sense of family and hope to the community; everyone felt light in their hearts when the tower was glowing and future Hilltoppers in Joliet dreamed of the days when their own efforts would shine for the city to see. Soon, people began to drive by the school every night in hopes of seeing the brightly lit Victory Light. For almost a century, the statue was a focal point in the skyline for the Joliet Community, spreading warmth and happiness through all who gazed up at its beautiful structure. The Victory Light helped guide JCHS students home, much like the early Joliet priests of St. Patrick who would put lanterns in the church towers to guide boats through the canal, while also celebrating their increasingly successful accomplishments on the athletic fields.

So why build a new Victory Light at Joliet Catholic Academy? The answer lies in the very root of JCA; our tradition. Just as one might leave the porch light on for a returning family member to their home, The Victory Light is a beacon for not only current students, but also future students and returning alumni. When St. Francis Academy and Joliet Catholic High School combined in 1990, not only did a new name evolve, but also a combination of old and new traditions. A multitude of alumni donated to the extravagant Heritage Quad, wishing to contribute in any way they could to the school that guided them through their teenage years. In honor of these amazing people, the Donor Walls were constructed, listing the names of every proud citizen that helped out. The quad also features beautiful donor benches honoring families who have contributed to the overall project, and have given so much of their lives to the JCA community over the years.

Driving down Larkin Avenue the public will look to their side and see a school clearly displaying its pride through these structures, just as we as a city looked up proudly to the old light built on the hill on Broadway Street. Every family has their own traditions, and the new Heritage Quad will show Joliet Catholic Academy's past, present, and future highlighted with the hope that only The Victory Light can bring.







## PHASE II FUNDING INITIATIVE:

Phase II of the capital initiative, Building our Future, is currently underway. The initiative will involve three major projects, both exterior and interior at the school. JCA President and Principal Jeffrey Budz said, "This keeps with the JCA tradition of honoring our past, paying tribute to the schools that shaped who we are today, while also building towards our future."

New windows across the front of the building and surrounding Heritage Quad have been completed, resulting in an aesthetic upgrade to the building. Finishing the back of the school will complete the window project, replacing the original windows from St. Francis Academy. The new windows have allowed for greater control of classroom temperatures, a more comfortable learning environment, and increased energy efficiency by 50 percent within the building.

Coupled with the windows will be the installation of air conditioning throughout the

building. Currently, several classrooms have self-contained, ductless air conditioning units. Air conditioning will place our students in an optimal learning environment for our entire school year. Updating our Wi-Fi infrastructure is paramount in preparing for our one-to-one technology initiative set to begin during the 2016-2017 school year.

Additionally, each faculty member has received a Chromebook to begin using in 2015-16. This will allow teachers to integrate the technology into their curriculum to enhance their students' learning. Wi-Fi access points in every classroom will allow for greater signal strength for students and teachers working with their Google Chromebooks. The existing technology infrastructure will be re-configured with new servers, an upgraded firewall and uniform technology equity in all classrooms.

Contact Director of Development John Horn for more information on how to get involved with Phase II: Building Our Future.

# Building Our Future



**New Front Windows completed during Phase I of the capital initiative (above).**

**Current Back Windows. The original windows in need of repair (top right).**

**Ductless air conditioning in each classroom will provide relief from the heat (bottom right).**

**Epson projectors in every classroom infuse technology into the curriculum (right).**





# HALL OF CHAMPIONS SECOND ACT SHINES



Mark Grant began his acceptance speech with a humble, "I don't deserve this."

And then he said, "Remember, growing old is mandatory. Growing up is optional."

A huge Saturday night at the Joliet Catholic Student Activity Center – where Grant, Terry Gannon, Mike Alstott, Liz Tortorello-Nelson and the late Elmer "Tippy" Madarik constitute the second class inducted into the Joliet Catholic Hall of Champions – could not conclude in a livelier manner. In a sense, you can say Grant hasn't grown up, which is what endears him to everyone he meets.

The former eight-year major league pitcher, who these days partners with Dick Enberg as the colorful color commentator for San Diego Padres telecasts, broke the mold. If you missed him Saturday night, plan to attend the Hilltopper Alumni Banquet on Nov 12, where he will conduct a Q-and-A-style session with "Da coach," Mike Ditka.

among those on the video talking about Gannon. The topic for University of St. Francis baseball coach Brian Michalak was his cousin, Grant.

It began with Michalak and McCarthy chatting as they prepared to speak. Michalak asked McCarthy when they asked him to do this, and he said about three weeks ago.

"They asked me about 11:30 last night," Michalak said, indicating it was difficult to find someone. "What am I supposed to say? Maybe I'll just make something up."

When Grant accepted his award, he was choked up but still was able to dig deep into his bag of funnies.

For example: "How many of you honorees can say you started a food fight, ran over a teacher in the hallway and were suspended for being drunk? I can."

And: "It's amazing what having a good fastball can do compared to a 1.8 GPA."

Grant was the No. 10 overall pick by the San Francisco Giants out of high school in 1981. Gannon – his classmate, who went on to play basketball at North Carolina State, where he was sixth man for Jim Valvano's 1983 national champion – was the shortstop when Grant pitched and blew hitters away.

"I was nice to look over my right shoulder and see Terry at short and Scott Markley in center field," Grant said. "Terry, I'm sorry you didn't get a lot of work, but it was nice to see you out there."

From another story: "I was called into the dean's office ... shocker."

And: "It said 1981 on my diploma, which is the an

broadcaster for ABC Sports, NBC Sports, ESPN and The Golf Channel. He was working The Deutsche Bank PGA tournament in Boston over the weekend. After two months of asking, he finally got off one day to attend the banquet.

He joked that if he wasn't on The Golf Channel's coverage at noon Sunday, it probably means he's out of a job. Not to worry. He was on TV sounding as good as ever, although he had to be exhausted.

Vince Cornelius, Gannon's high school teammate, said that anytime the greatest shooter in Joliet history is debated, it's always Gannon and Roger Powell Sr. 1-2, in either order.

Mike Gillespie, Gannon's coach at Joliet Catholic, was on the video with this: "I remember the night Terry scored 44 points and missed one shot. He had those great nights. The great night for me was the one and only time I got to kick Terry out of practice for not giving his best."

Gannon said being at the banquet was the most important thing for him to do Saturday night. He said Joliet Catholic "gave me the confidence to be part of something that is bigger than yourself."

Once at North Carolina State, Michael Jordan was on fire for North Carolina. Valvano said, "Can't anybody stop this guy?" Gannon was next to him on the bench and offered. Valvano said, "That's Michael Jordan, not Hamilton Jordan."

After Tortorello-Nelson's sister, Laura, and former volleyball teammates Gretchen Beltzhoover-Troha and Mary Penosky, talked of her in glowing terms, Tortorello-Nelson said, "That's tough to listen to about yourself. It's great, though."

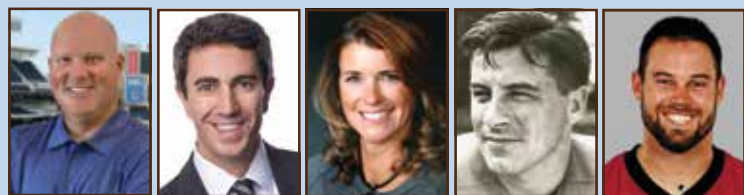
"You know, all the other honorees have a Wikipedia page. I don't. I'm the only one without one. But that's OK."

Tortorello-Nelson led St. Francis Academy to two straight state appearances, including a fourth-place finish in 1986. She then led Wisconsin to the Big Ten championship and the Sweet 16 of the NCAA Tournament. She coached at Loyola for 11 years and now is the athletic director at Chicago Latin.

"It's great to win," she said. "But that's not going to happen all the time. Kids who walk in the door have to see the support system like you have [at JCA]."

Madarik, after returning from serving in World War II, became the first NFL player from Joliet Catholic. As was common in those days, he did it all for the Detroit Lions and Washington Redskins. Terry Ziesmer, his nephew, accepted his award and told stories about some of his noteworthy plays, such as booming a punt 50 yards and downing it himself and catching a deflected pass he threw and taking it in for a touchdown.

- By Dick Goss, The (Joliet) Herald News/Shaw Media



**From left to right:**  
Mark Grant,  
Terry Gannon,  
Liz Tortorello-Nelson,  
Elmer "Tippy" Madarik  
Mike Alstott

The format of the induction ceremony was a video presentation on each inductee, followed by a brief acceptance speech. The video introduction for Grant was priceless.

First, after Gannon accepted his award, the emcee, JCA athletic director and football coach Dan Sharp, said, "That concludes our program – let's eat." It evoked laughter from the audience because everyone knew who was left.

"Oh, I guess we have one more honoree," Sharp corrected himself.

Former JCA basketball coach Dan McCarthy was

amazing thing in itself."

He concluded with a serious thought, "You show people what it's like to be a Hillman or an Angel by the way you treat people."

Alstott, who coaches high school football in Florida, was unable to attend. He made six Pro Bowls with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and played with the Super Bowl XXXVII winner. His brother, Mark, accepted his award, and he and others on the video spoke of Mike's unparalleled work ethic and the work he does for charitable causes in the Tampa Bay area.

Gannon, the ultimate class act, has worked as a



Coach Ditka with Fr. Jeff Smialek, O. Carm. and Sr. Barb Kwiatkowski, OSF.

# Da Coach Headlines 2015 Hilltopper Banquet

The pairing of Mike Ditka with Mark Grant was so dynamic, there is suspicion it caused the power outage that struck Thursday night at Joliet Catholic Academy.

Whatever the reason, the crowd of about 700 at the Joliet Catholic Alumni Association Hilltopper Banquet in the Student Activity Center spent a while in silence and darkness.

Once things got rolling, however, the program was as entertaining as expected. A format where Grant serves as master of ceremonies and goes back and forth with Ditka is a can't-miss.

Grant is a Joliet Catholic graduate (Class of 1981), a former major league pitcher and current TV color analyst on San Diego Padres games. He needs little introduction, and the same certainly applies to Ditka.

"Iron Mike," or "Da Coach" if you prefer, is the former tight end who helped the Bears win the 1963 NFL championship and later became the first tight end elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

He also coached the 1985 Bears to the Super Bowl championship, a team many consider among the best of all time. He owns several restaurants, works tirelessly for charities and is an analyst on Sunday NFL Countdown and Monday Night Countdown on ESPN.

His TV work might be short-lived, however. Ditka said the travel is getting to be too much, and he is not fond of the format of the shows he is on, including the far-too-frequent spouting of statistics by his colleagues. He said his contract will be up

after this season and that might be it.

The work for charities will continue – among them, The Mike Ditka Foundation, which raises funds for Misericordia, a residential facility for developmentally disabled children and for pediatric AIDS research programs, and the Gridiron Great Foundation, which Ditka said helps suffering former NFL players live dignified lives.

What players today  
have to realize is  
that the game is not  
about individuals – it's  
about team.

~ MIKE DITKA

That is the essence of Ditka. Grant, like so many in the audience who never had met him before Thursday's event, came away impressed with how important giving back and sharing are in his life.

Grant began the give-and-take with his introduction of Ditka, saying, "This guy is a real stud, a real big name," and added other words of praise. To which Ditka responded, "I hope I don't have to shovel the whole load you just put out there."

Playing to the audience, Ditka complimented Joliet Catholic graduate Tom Thayer – who, of course, was the right guard on the Super Bowl championship team he coached. "Tommy Thayer was a great player," he said.

The thought occurred to Grant that Ditka has been seen wearing a jersey of the bitter rival Green Bay Packers in a McDonald's commercial.

"What's up with that?" Grant asked. "It was for the commercial. Screw the Packers and the jersey," Ditka said.

The crowd reacted, and Grant responded, "Hey, he's Mike Ditka. He can wear a Joliet West jersey, for all I care."

Ditka said he had an opportunity to play at Notre Dame rather than his alma mater of Pittsburgh. "My mother almost killed me," he said of his decision to attend Pitt. "She was a devout Catholic. But I didn't go to Notre Dame. I wanted to be a dentist. But after two semesters of chemistry, it was obvious I wasn't going to be a dentist anywhere."

Ditka was drafted by the Bears and the Houston Oilers of the old AFL in 1961. He said he sat down with Bears owner and coach George Halas, who offered a \$12,000 salary and \$6,000 signing bonus. There were no agents in those days.

"I had a terrific first year," Ditka said. "The old man said he knew I missed a curfew a couple of times, and I did. I enjoyed it.

"So he said, 'I'll give you a raise to \$14,000.' I said, 'I got \$18,000 my first year, so that's no raise.' So he pulled out a contract with \$18,000 on it and told me I was getting that. I got no raise after having a great season. A dollar to him was as precious as air."

Ditka said Halas and other early NFL owners "would be doing flip-flops in their graves

Story continues on page 14





# JCA STAFF AND



Monday, November 9, 2015 marked JCA's 3rd annual all school retreat and service day. Students and staff at JCA all worked together to collectively strengthen their faith during a day that is both about improving one's self, and also helping others.

The freshmen class participated in sessions organized by the counseling department focused on study skills and success in high school. Female students were given presentations on empowerment by Mrs. Kathy Major and Mrs. Kris Horn from the Guidance Department, and all freshmen learned about child abuse awareness by taking part in the Protecting God's Children program.

The sophomore class participated in a retreat put on by Net Ministries titled "Reality Check". JCA Campus Ministry Directors Fr. Jeff Smialek, O. Carm., and Sr. Barb Kwiatkowski, OSF,

realized that sophomore year is when problems can begin to arise away from school for students. Sr. Barb noted, "Students are given more freedom during their sophomore year when they begin driving and are given more responsibilities away from home. We want to focus on preparing them on the decisions they have to make ahead, so that they make the smart decision away from school. The pressures on teenagers today with so many distractions away from school: cell phones, social media, etc., can be difficult to navigate, so we want to prepare them ahead of time."

The junior class took part in a retreat organized by the Diocese of Joliet Retreat team. The purpose of the retreat was to prepare them for the leadership roles they are beginning to assume both inside the halls of Joliet Catholic Academy, and in the outside world.

Sr. Barb noted, "The Diocese of Joliet Retreat team does a great job putting our juniors through leadership and team building activities. It helps to have a fresh voice from the outside closer to their own ages leading our students, it speaks to them. The Retreat team noted how much they loved interacting with our students and working with them."

After participating in the retreat day the past two years, this year's crop of seniors at JCA was ready to serve outside of the classroom. Fr. Jeff said, "The staff and senior service day is a great witness to what JCA is about. We serve and give back. We want to continually ingrain into our students the part of living our faith through service. We do this through our actions and donating our time. We live comfortable, spoiled lives at times, so we want our kids to witness others who have less."



# STUDENTS VOLUNTEER

The JCA staff and seniors volunteered their time this year Hands of Hope Ministries, St. Vincent DePaul Society, Morningstar Mission, Senior Star Nursing Home, Our Lady of Angels Nursing Home, Feed My Starving Children, Joliet Animal Control, Hopeful Tails Shelter, Wags 2 Wishes Shelter, Ready Set Ride Stables, and New Life for Old Bags. Sr. Barb added, "It's a wakeup call for our kids to see how we've been blessed. How often do we get the chance to serve together with our students? Our staff becomes role models for our students and there are so many people to thank because of all the time and planning that goes into making this day possible; from finding places to volunteer, placing staff and students at locations, feeding 500 people during the retreat, and arranging transportation".

Vice Principal Bill Pender volunteered at Morningstar Mission, where students and staff prepared Christmas presents for those in need. Spanish teacher Mrs. Mary Ann Worst volunteered at St. Vincent

DePaul where students were given the opportunity to show an inquiring mother with an eighth grade child what the JCA experience can be like for incoming students. Mrs. Debra Witmer, Mr. Greg Vogen, and Mrs. Joyce Cabay went with senior students to Senior Star Nursing Home, where they worked with World War II veterans assembling care packages for troops overseas. They also led exercise class for Alzheimer's and assisted living clients.

St. Barb said, "Each year we are building on this day, and what makes it most rewarding is our kids thank us for this day. They need to reflect, and they need to serve." Fr. Jeff added, "Word has been spreading and other agencies are reaching out to us to get involved. It's always good to step back from our everyday normal routines and look at how you are living your faith. Each day we should challenge ourselves in how we shape our relationships with others and with God."



Joliet Catholic Academy students recently volunteered their time during lunch to volunteer at the St. Patrick's Parish Food Pantry on Monday, October 26, 2015. The event featured 31 students from JCA, in conjunction with The Holy Trinity Knights of Columbus Council in Joliet, distributing food to the hungry during the St. Patrick Fresh Food Truck Distribution. The Knights of Columbus sponsor the food truck stop for the Catholic Charities Diocese of Joliet Mobile Food Pantry.

JCA Guidance Counselor Kris Horn chaperoned the students and said, "It was a great event for our kids to be a part of, to learn firsthand how true service affects those in need. We had so many that were willing to take time out of their school day to help out a great cause, and we were honored that the Knights of Columbus included us in their event". The JCA students will return in November to St. Patrick's with an annual truck donation to their Food Pantry.







# Fall Athletic Roundup

Senior **Jared Olson** in the boys soccer program was named to the 2015 Chicago Fire Boys All-State All-Academic 1st Team honoring Illinois soccer players for their academic and athletic accomplishments.

Olson was also an IHSSCA All-Sectional player, a two-time ESCC All-Conference player, a two-time "War on 34" all-tournament team selection, and the JCA soccer team captain this season.

The JCA girls volleyball team finished second at the IHSA Class 3A State Finals for the second consecutive year, giving the Angels their eighth state trophy in the past thirteen years under head coach Chris Scheibe. The Angels (26-13) were hot at the right time, finishing the season with a nine-match winning streak before heading into the state title showdown. Senior **Jessica Simon** and junior **Taylor Zurliene** were named

the ESCC All Conference Team.

The Joliet Catholic Academy varsity football team completed another successful campaign in 2015, finishing 10-2 overall on the year and capturing the ESCC Conference Championship. The Hillmen were ranked No. 1 in the state of Illinois in Class 5A for a majority of the season. Senior running back **Michael Johnson** was named the ESCC's Most Valuable Offensive Player, senior **Tyler Witt** was named the Most Valuable Offensive Lineman, and senior **Zach Lukasik** was named the Most Valuable Defensive Lineman.

Senior girls tennis team member **Nina Bertino** was recently tabbed the East Suburban Catholic Conference Singles Player of the Year. Bertino recently qualified for the IHSA State Tournament for the fourth consecutive year by finishing third in the

Plainfield North sectional, and advanced to the final 16 in State Tournament play after winning her first three matches.

Bertino made history earlier this year, becoming the first JCA girls No. 1 singles player to win the ESCC conference tournament in over 20 years. Bertino joined teammates **Maddie Bauer** and **McCoy Hutchison** in representing the Angels at the State Tournament. The junior doubles tandem of Bauer and Hutchison (both two-time state qualifiers) also made a run into the final 16 at the State Tournament by winning their first three matches last week.

Overall, the Angels finished tied for eighth place as a team at the tournament, which featured over 150 high schools represented. Bertino, Bauer, and Hutchison were the last Joliet area players remaining in the IHSA tournament after their first three victories secured spots in the top 16.

Senior girls basketball players **Andriana Acosta** and **Mia Farrell** were both named Esmark High School All-Americans for 2015. The award is in recognition for their outstanding achievements in athletics, academics, and community service, combined with their character and perseverance.

The Cathedral of St. Raymond's 8th Grade (A) basketball team captured the 6th Annual Izzo Classic Hillmen Basketball Tournament on Sunday November 15, 2015 in the Student Activity Center at Joliet Catholic Academy. John F. Kennedy, Plainfield finished second; Aux Sable, Plainfield won the third place contest, and St. Dennis Lockport was crowned Consolation Champions.

The tournament was run by Head Coach Joe Gura's JCA boys basketball program, and featured several of our star varsity basketball players working the scoreboard and running concessions.

## MIKE DITKA - Continued from page 11

in they knew what NFL players and teams were making these days."

And all that celebrating that goes on when a touchdown is scored or a sack is recorded?

"Players have to respect the game more than they do now," Ditka said. Grant asked what his touchdown dance would be if were playing now. "There would be no touchdown dance," he said.

"What players today have to realize is

that the game is not about individuals – it's about team. If in the process of the team succeeding an individual player winds up making a lot of money, that's fine. But team is what it's all about."

Before the program began, Ditka took a few minutes to address the members of the Joliet Catholic football team, which was preparing to take on Nazareth on Saturday in the Class 5A state quarterfinals. Hilltoppers coach Dan Sharp said Ditka's message

to the team "was about respecting the game and respecting your opponent.

"He was great for our guys to hear."

Before the night was over, Ditka responded to many more of Grant's questions and others from the audience. The power was out for a while, but the Ditka-with-Grant show continued to shine.

- By Dick Goss, *The (Joliet) Herald-News/Shaw Media*





# @JCA ONLINE TOP TWEETS

1

In honor of today's big wins by @JCAGirlsVB and @HilltoppersFB let's light the light! #victorylight.

2

Drake Fellows, son of Annie and Roger Banister and Robert Fellows, commits to Vanderbilt University. @VandyBaseball.

3

The Hilltopper Prayer. The Hilltopper Prayer. Coach Rudy leading our young men before the Homecoming Football Game >> Visit Joliet Catholic Academy on YouTube to View.

4

Angel Volleyball is state bound with a 25-12, 25-15 win over De La Salle.

5

Great job by Mrs. Szynal, staff, and students in the Drama Department performing this year's fall play.

6

Beautiful day with Heritage Quad Project nearly completed. Donor walls are engraved, landscaping is next.

7

Congrats to Ke'Von Johnson @Key\_Johnson6 on being named the Buffalo Wild Wings @BWWS Athlete of the Month for October.

8

Nina Bertino qualifies for state. Maddi Bauer and McCoy Hutchison also win 6-0, 6-0, in #1 Doubles at the Plainfield North Sectional in girls tennis.

## In Memoriam

Sadly we acknowledge the passing of the following members of our JCA family:

### 1938

Jeanette (Morrissey) Bedford  
Patrick M. Webb

### 1939

Sr. Eileen Bannon, O.S.F.  
Frederick G. Wilhelmi

### 1940

Arthur J. Melcher  
Mildred (Erjavec) Pucel

### 1941

Marilyn (Burt) Long

### 1942

Gerald J. Gallagher  
Gloria (Annunzi) Krall-Llewellyn

### 1943

Francis J. Denneau

### 1944

Robert E. Hayes

### 1945

Ernest Dalpos  
Bernard F. Mutz  
Stephen R. Stukel

### 1946

Theresa M. Georgantas  
Aloysius A. Gonda  
James F. Kinsley  
Joseph H. Stengele

### 1947

John A. Darin  
Collette (Stuckel) Harrison  
Francis J. Ulrich  
Captain Quentin E. Wilhelmi, USN (ret)

### 1948

Marilyn (Grein) Burich  
Lucas J. Plese

### 1949

Walter L. Bush  
Walter A. Jakielski  
Ann (Murdock) Kane  
Arthur H. Krieger  
Joseph E. O'Connell

### 1950

Ronald C. Fagan, Sr.  
Joyce (Juricic) Korst  
Marilyn (O'Brien) Spencer

### 1951

Audrey (Gilgen) Goede

### 1952

Donald L. Cordano  
Elizabeth (Shelley) Holmes  
Bert J. Kucinic  
Marilyn (Schwab) Neilis  
Elsie (Ferencik) Wagoner

### 1953

Glenn E. Trost

### 1954

John W. Edgar, Sr.  
Richard J. Georgantas  
Glen D. Kelly, Jr.  
Janet (Troha) Wonnell  
Norris L. Zimmerman

### 1955

Gerald R. Moran

### 1956

Leo M. Ardaugh  
Mary Ann (Kachelhoffer) McGann  
William T. Schmars  
Shirley (Kauzlaric) Sedar

### 1957

Albert R. Chamberlin  
Sr. Rosemary Winter, O.S.F.  
Helen (Pezze) Hollenbeck

### 1959

Helen (Pezze) Hollenbeck  
David L. Meyer

### 1960

Patrick M. Magosky  
Frederick R. Mau  
Tonya (Ferguson) Reposh

### 1961

Sandra L. Podlasek  
William J. Offerman

### 1962

Edmund A. Povalish  
Donna (Trubich) Raub  
Robert J. Waclawik

### 1963

Donald E. Hallihan  
Anthony F. Lapaso, Jr.

### 1964

Kathleen (Marietta) Gatz  
Kathleen (Kociss) VanDuyne

### 1965

Mary (Whitmer) Larkin

### 1966

Deborah (Ance) Nichols  
Marsha (Bolte) Princko

### 1967

Marilyn J. Reddy  
Anthony P. Uremovic

### 1968

Michael Wicnienski

### 1969

Josephine D. Gualdoni

### 1973

Fr. Leonard Gilman, O. Carm.  
Bernard R. Gura  
Barbara A. Vidano

### 1976

Thomas M. Baudino

### 1981

David T. Jandura

### 1982

Alan G. Lauterbach

### 1985

Robert C. Collatz

### 1990

Marie (Ligon) Watterson

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.



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## REMEMBERING "G" JANUARY 23, 2016

*at Joliet Catholic Academy  
Cocktails - 6 p.m.  
Dueling Pianos 8 p.m. - 11:30 p.m.*

*Join us for a night of friendship  
and great entertainment*

*Proceeds benefit JCA scholarships and initiatives  
in memory of Andrew Giaudrone*



*Tickets \$25 each  
Cash Bar (\$2 beer, \$3 mixed drinks)  
Raffle Items  
50/50 - winner must take*

*Tickets may be purchased at the door,  
or tables of 10 may be  
reserved with pre-payment by calling Karen Tyrell  
815-931-8452 or Ian Tyrell 815-503-1930  
Checks should be made payable to  
"Remembering G Foundation"*

## SAVE THE DATE

- Christmas Break  
School Closed  
December 21, 2015  
January 2, 2016
- Jubilaté @ Bolingbrook  
Golf Club  
Event Chairs - Maria & Felipe  
Acosta and Lulu and Jim Roth  
March 12, 2016
- Spring Musical  
March 17-19, 2016  
@ Bicentennial Park  
Theatre, Joliet
- Art Show  
March 20-23, 2016
- Hall of Fame Induction  
March 26, 2015
- Easter Break  
School Closed  
March 28-April 3, 2016
- Baccalaureate Liturgy  
May 18, 2016
- Graduation  
May 22, 2016

Visit [il.8to18.com/jolietcatholic/](http://il.8to18.com/jolietcatholic/) for full Winter  
and Spring Athletic Schedules

View detailed school calendar at:  
[www.jca-online.org](http://www.jca-online.org)

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- Don't miss the latest news about JCA, Angels and Hilltoppers, events and more; visit our web site, [www.jca-online.org](http://www.jca-online.org), or download the Joliet Catholic Academy app, available on iTunes and Google Play.
- Keep in touch with the school by forwarding Sue Borella, Development Coordinator, changes and updates to your contact information at [sborella@jca-online.org](mailto:sborella@jca-online.org), or call 815.741.0500, ext. 215.
- Stay connected through social media. "Like" Joliet Catholic Academy on Facebook, "Follow" JCAOnline on Twitter, "Join" Joliet Catholic Academy on LinkedIn, and check out "Joliet.Catholic" on Instagram.
- Questions regarding JCA's use of social media networking should be directed to the Communications Office at 815.741.0500 or [communications@jca-online.org](mailto:communications@jca-online.org).