

HALL OF CHAMPIONS BUSINESS & INDUSTRY SELECTION COMMITTEE

Sue Ruettiger Bebar '90 - Chair & Director of Alumni Relations

Chris Adler '76

Dr. Jeff Budz –JCA President/Principal

Bill Bayci '74

Sue Georgantas Gulas '81

Sue Hansen—Development Coordinator

Laura Pahl – JCA Associate Principal

Ryan Quigley '02— Director of Institutional Advancement

Suzanne Whalen Schuler '86

Christine Voss—Director of Special Events



SAVE THE DATE!

Jubilate

Saturday, March 23rd Bolingbrook Country Club

See Christine Voss for more information

Career Day

Wednesday, April 24th

See Sue Bebar for more information

Joliet Catholic Academy HALL OF CHAMPIONS BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

Class of 2024 Inductees

Daniel J. Allen, Ph.D. '86 • Sr. Jeanne Bessette, OSF, Ed.D.

Gary L. Colabuono '69 • Michelle (Hibler '86) Jankowski

Jean J. Kenol '94 • M. Christine (Wicklein '66) Schwartz

Good Evening,

On behalf of the Joliet Catholic Academy administration, faculty, and staff, I would like to welcome everyone to our 6th Hall of Champions for Business and Industry celebration. We are so excited to be honoring those that have achieved greatness in their business communities. We could not be more proud!

First, congratulations to our inductees: Daniel J. Allen, Ph.D. '86, Sr. Jeanne Bessette, OSF, Ed.D., Gary L. Colabuono '69, Michelle (Hibler) Jankowski '86, Jean J. Kenol '94 and M. Christine (Wicklein) Schwartz '66. You represent the character, integrity, passion, hard work, compassion, and wisdom that make Joliet Catholic Academy one of the premier institutions across the state and nation. Thank you so much for all that you do to make JCA a better place. We are indebted to you for your leadership and kindness towards our institution.

I would also like to thank our selection committee featuring Chris Adler, Sue Hansen, Ryan Quigley, Suzanne Schuler, Laura Pahl, Sue Gulas, Chris Voss, Bill Bayci and Sue Bebar, for their work on this class and the program for today.

Since coming to JCA, this has been part of our vision: to recognize the "best of the best" of our historic Angels and Hilltoppers. You are the foundation of greatness that exists with our students...you give them inspiration, and you offer them an example of how they can affect their community... the way you have inspired so many in yours.

With warmest and heartfelt regards,

Dr. Jeffrey R. Budz, JCA President/Principal



M. CHRISTINE WICKLEIN SCHWARTZ '66

Chris was raised in Joliet. She attended St. Raymond Grade School, St. Francis Academy, Joliet Junior College, and the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC) College of Nursing. After receiving her BSN in 1970, she continued her education at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, receiving an MS in Health Education in 1972.

Upon graduation, Chris joined the Nursing Faculty at Loyola University in Chicago, achieving an assistant professor position with tenure. In 1980, while teaching at Loyola University, she completed a master's degree in surgical nursing at Northern Illinois University.

Chris's love of nursing began during high school where she volunteered as a candy striper at St. Joseph's Hospital and a nurse's aide at Silver Cross Hospital in Joliet. She continues to support nursing education with philanthropy. At the University of Miami School of Nursing, Chris provided the lead gift to build the 53,000 square foot M. Christine Center for Nursing and Health Studies. At the UIC College of Nursing, she funded projects to create new teaching space and a 15,000 square foot Experiential Learning and Simulation Lab. She also serves and formerly Co-Chaired the Dean's External Advisory Board there. At the University of Chicago, she funded research and education and ultrasound machines to support intravenous insertions for patients.

Chris is a passionate supporter of the arts. She has collected and donated over 100 pieces of art by Chicago artists from the late 19th and early 20th century. Her collection can be viewed at www.schwartzcollection.com. To honor her father, Andrew A. Wicklein, she led a project to digitize *Farmer's Week Review* from 1929-2010. Chris is an active member of Art Encounter in Evanston, Illinois, a non-profit focused on art education outreach.

Chris is a member of several associations: the President's Council of the University of Illinois Foundation, Sigma Theta Tau International Nursing Honor Society, and the University of Miami Coral Gables Society. Chris is the proud parent of two children and five grandchildren.



JEAN J. KENOL '94

Jean A. Kenol was raised in Joliet and attended St. Paul the Apostle Grade School and Joliet Catholic Academy where he was part of the first class to attend all four years of the newly merged co-ed institution. In 1998 Jean graduated from the University

of Notre Dame with a B.A. in Government. While at Notre Dame, Jean participated in student government, campus ministry, several intramural sports and served as a resident assistant. He also completed the American University Semester program on public policy in Washington, D.C., where he clerked for Congressman Jerry Weller of the 11th Congressional District of Illinois.

After college, Jean attended the University of Illinois College of Law on a full tuition Lincoln scholarship, graduated in 2001 and that year was admitted to practice law in the State of Illinois and the United States District Court Northern District of Illinois. During his law school career, Jean had the honor of interning for the Honorable Ann C. Williams, United States Court of Appeals, Seventh Circuit.

Jean is a partner with the law firm of Gould & Ratner where he serves clients in real estate law. He has represented clients in a wide range of matters, from single family residential closings to multi-million dollar commercial transactions. Prior to joining G&R, Jean was a partner with the law firm of Mahoney, Silverman & Cross, LLC.

Jean enjoys being active in his community as well as with his alma maters. Formally, Jean served as the President of the Notre Dame Club of Joliet, on the Board of Directors for the Joliet Catholic Academy Alumni Association, United Cerebral Palsy of Will County and for the Joliet Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry. In February of 2008, he was appointed as a Commissioner of the Joliet, Police and Fire Commission and served for two years. In September 2012 Jean was honored to be named the Joliet Area Young Professional of Year by the Joliet Region Chamber of Commerce. Currently, serves as the Chairman of the Board of Directors for Silver Cross Hospital in New Lenox.

Jean has also been an active member of the Illinois State Bar Association. He served as Chair of the Young Lawyers Division Council in 2013 and from 2010 to 2012, Jean was honored to serve as the ISBA's under 35, outside of Cook County delegate to the American Bar Association. From June of 2012 to June 2014 Jean was appointed to the Illinois State Bar Association Board of Governors which is the 27 member board that oversees the operations and management of ISBA.

Jean resides in Chicago with his wife of 14 years, Clo Ewing, and their two very active kids.

EVENING PROGRAM

Master of Ceremonies

Dr. Jeffrey Budz

Invocation

Br. Neil Conslick O.Carm.

Dinner

Jacob Henry Mansion

Presentation of Awards

Daniel J. Allen, Ph.D. '86

Sr. Jeanne Bessette, OSF, Ed.D.

Gary L. Colabuono '69

Michelle Hibler Jankowski '86

Jean J. Kenol '94

M. Christine Wicklein Schwartz '66



DANIEL J. ALLEN, PH.D. '86

Daniel J. Allen, Ph.D., began his term as La Salle University's 30th president on April 18, 2022.

Allen has worked in Catholic higher education for more than 20 years. Prior to his January 2022 appointment at La Salle, Allen served as the senior vice president for advancement and external relations at DePaul University—

where he held leadership roles beginning in August 2015. In this capacity, Allen provided leadership and executive management for all fundraising, alumni relations, and advancement communications strategies.

Before joining DePaul, Allen served as senior associate dean for external relations at the University of Chicago's Harris School of Public Policy. He also served as vice president of institutional advancement at Lewis University in Romeoville, Ill., and at Loras College in Dubuque, Iowa.

Allen is a product of Catholic education. He completed his doctoral studies at Loyola University-Chicago, where he earned a Ph.D. in education with a concentration in higher education. He received his master of arts in physical education and bachelor of arts in English literature from Loras College, a Catholic institution located in Dubuque, Iowa.

Allen has frequently presented at various educational and healthcare development conferences and seminars. His doctoral dissertation considered how academically talented, low-income students access highly selective postsecondary education. He has presented his work to the Association for Institutional Research and has had his research published in "Research in Higher Education." Allen also has presented research on college choice and social reproduction to the American Educational Research Association and the National Association for College Admission Counseling.

Allen is a board member of the International Association of Lasallian Universities, a group of 64 universities located across the globe. In 2023, he was named to the Committee of Seventy, a nonpartisan civic leadership organization in Philadelphia, and the transition subcommittee on education for Philadelphia Mayor Cherelle L. Parker as well as inducted as a fellow into The College of Physicians of Philadelphia.



MICHELLE HIBNER JANKOWSKI '86

Michelle was born and raised in Joliet and graduated from SFA in 1986. After high school, she headed straight to Professional's Choice Hair Design Academy (PCHDA) to become a cosmetologist and began her first position at

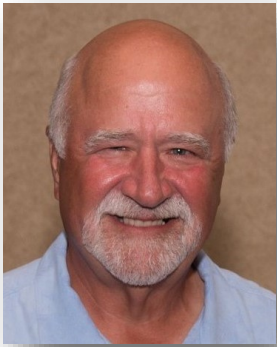
Bergner's Hair Studio.

In 1990, she married her husband, Bob Jankowski, and decided that motherhood would become her next full-time job. Michelle went on to raise three tremendous humans, Devinn (Gio) DeLira, Jake (Kelly) Jankowski, and Max (Erin) Jankowski, all of whom are third generation JCA alums. Once her children became older and she had a little more time on her hands, Michelle and her best friend Jane Devine (SFA 1978) decided to launch a catering business. After a lot of sweat, and a few tears, Bella Cucina Catering officially opened its doors in 2005. Michelle took on sole ownership of the business five years later as Jane decided to follow a different career path.

The pandemic challenged all kinds of catering norms since most social events came to a standstill, but Michelle was determined for Bella Cucina to come out on top. Getting creative, she started "Curbside Carryouts" and joined forces with local non-profit organizations, such as Shorewood Hugs, Team Make a Difference and Pink Heals, to host "Curbside Carryouts for a Cause." This initiative helped the nonprofits to raise money during a time when fundraising opportunities were scarce. The kindness didn't stop there –with the Curbside's newfound success, she reached out to local businesses who voiced they were struggling and offered to collaborate. Year round, Michelle can be found organizing free sack lunches and kindness bags for those in need and helping the community whenever she can, which is where her "Be kind...it's working!" motto stemmed from. All of Michelle's charitable efforts within the Joliet community awarded her the Zonta Club's "Woman of Distinction" award in 2022.

When Michelle is not busy running her business, she enjoys spending as much time as she can with her family, most notably, her granddaughter Nora Jayne and her "bonus" grandson Giovanni.

"I've always loved gathering in the kitchen. There's something magical about adding a pinch of this and a dash of that to create something scrumptious. Plus, I come from a long line of amazing, strong women who were also fantastic cooks, so it's in my heart and soul," said Michelle. There is always plenty of laughing, storytelling, music, and good food in the kitchen. After all, isn't that what cooking is all about?



GARY L. COLABUONO '69

Dolores Colabuono (SFA '45), insisted on a quality Catholic education for her boys so after attending St. Joseph's grade school in Joliet, Scott ('66), Gary ('69) and Alan ('70) all attend-

ed Joliet Catholic.

Scott was the smart one while Alan excelled at sports. Gary managed to eke out a letter in golf in his senior year, but chess club, bowling league and comic books were more his style.

After high school Gary attended Northern Illinois University where he met his bride of 50 years, Patty. With an advertising degree in hand he started working in the ad department of the Arlington Heights Daily Herald immediately upon graduation in 1974.

While employed at the Herald Gary branched out and opened his first comic-book shop, Moondog's, during the summer of 1978 in Mount Prospect, IL. The shop was an immediate success and soon after he opened a second location in Schaumburg, IL. In September 1981 shortly after the birth of their daughter, Mandy, Gary struck out on his own and left the Herald to work full-time at Moondog's.

From those rather modest beginnings Gary grew Moondog's into a 6-store chain. After selling Moondog's in 1994 to Classics International Entertainment, and now running the parent company, he eventually grew Moondog's into a 21-store chain of pop-culture shops located in 5 states.

Gary was named CEO of the Chicago Comic Con in 1991. Under his guidance the convention grew to become the second-largest gathering of comic book fans in the country.

After exiting the comic-book business in 1999, Gary joined the team at Incredible Technologies and helped launch the newest version of the popular arcade game, Golden Tee Golf. Within 3 years Golden Tee became the highest-grossing arcade video game in history and is still number-one over 20 years later.

Gary, Patty, Mandy and son, Kevin, along with their spouses and granddaughter, Emma, all live in Chicago's northwest suburbs.



SR. JEANNE BESSETTE, OSF, ED.D.

Sr. Jeanne Bessette, OSF, Ed.D. began her high school teaching career at St. Francis Academy, working in the English department from 1979 to 1984 and helping to launch and direct Kairos retreats at SFA. She earned a B.A. in English from the Col-

lege of St. Francis, an M.A. in English literature from Loyola University, Chicago, and an Ed.D. in private school administration from the University of San Francisco. She has completed coursework at 10+ other universities, including in non-profit business administration at the Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University.

After 11 years of teaching, Jeanne became principal of Trinity High School in River Forest, Illinois, where she initiated the third Catholic school International Baccalaureate program in the U.S. She was an early adopter of block scheduling when Trinity became the first private school in Illinois to institute this innovative program. Jeanne was called on to present many workshops to other high school faculties on women's education, block scheduling and the IB curriculum.

In 2000 Jeanne was elected as a Councilor on the Governing Board of the Joliet Franciscans. She served in that capacity for eight years and worked closely with the boards of their five sponsored ministries in Joliet, including JCA.

Jeanne was hired in 2009 by the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati to be the founding president of DePaul Cristo Rey High School, the 25th school in the nationally acclaimed Cristo Rey Network. During her tenure as president / CEO, the school grew to 360 students, partnered with over 100 businesses in greater Cincinnati to provide work experience and revenues for her students, and saw their first six classes attain 100% college acceptance. Many of these extremely low income students were the first in their families to finish high school, not to mention college. Before her election as President of the Sisters of St. Francis in 2021, Jeanne raised over \$24 M and oversaw the completion of a state of the art high school building in Cincinnati.

She has won awards for teaching excellence, educational and business leadership, innovation and scholarship. She received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from Mount St. Joseph University in Cincinnati. Jeanne is happy to be back in Joliet with her Franciscan congregation and her family – her mom Lil, brothers Wayne and Carl, sister Celeste, and their families.