

XAVIER

20¹⁸/₁₉

MAGAZINE

FATHERS & SONS

A COLLECTION OF STORIES



LEADING LADY: *Linda Charpentier*
International Champs: Xavier Engineering
Frank Gilbert: FOLLOWING HIS FAITH
Two Pros: Ryan Preece and Tim Boyle



We Are



Family



LETTER

FROM THE *Headmaster*

Dear members of the Xavier community,

Over the past year, the transformation of our school has been rapid. As many Catholic and public schools in Connecticut are experiencing a downward trend of enrollment, Xavier has increased its enrollment over three percent this past year. Part of the reason for growth is our commitment to the plant and facility. This past summer, we took on four major projects that we feel will position us for success in the future.

With the completion of our solar array, Xavier becomes the first Catholic high school in Connecticut that produces all of its own power. The 700 solar panels on the ground and an additional 590 on the roof will be producing nearly 500,000 kilowatts of power annually. This will have a significant impact on our environmental footprint and save the school an estimated \$40,000 in operating costs per year.

With the construction of 500 seats on the visitor side of the field, we have completed construction of Larry McHugh Field and will be now hosting all football games here at Xavier. The additional seating coupled with the grass hill easily allows over 2,000 people the opportunity to attend events at Larry McHugh Field.

The old music room has been converted to a cardio-fitness, athletic training and meeting room. In addition, we cut a hole in the wall of the weight room and connected these two rooms, giving us approximately 2,500 square feet of fitness space for our student-athletes, faculty and staff. An upgraded athletic training room has easier access and is significantly larger to help with the treatment of our athletes after school. We have dedicated this new space in the name of Tony Jaskot, our longtime Athletic Director who will be retiring in June. Tony's dedication to Xavier over the years is unmatched, and we can't think of a better way to keep his name in our legacy.

Our last project was to create a safer area for buses to pick up and drop off our athletes going to and returning from games. We have created a much larger paved area on the east side of the school outside of the gym and locker rooms. By widening this road, we have a much safer environment for both buses and cars.

As we look to future projects, Kohs Gymnasium is ready for a renovation, and my hope is to get that completed in the summer of 2019. Additionally, we would like to look at upgrading the furniture in our classrooms to accommodate technology use in today's learning. The current desks and chairs do not meet these needs. In order to remain competitive, we want to give our students the best possible learning environment.

I look forward to being out on the road meeting alumni this year! I am planning on stops in Boston, New York City, Washington DC, Florida and Los Angeles. I hope to meet many Falcons as I make my way around!

My thanks for all that you do for the Xavier community,

David Eustis

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John Popielaski's
First Novel **Page 40**



FEATURES



The Artist & The Runner

The Sylvains use different tools to create their masterpieces. But they've always encouraged each other to keep chasing their passions. **Page 20**



Father Frank Gilbert '74

A one-time Merchant Marine officer who also worked at Millstone Nuclear Power Plant, he is now a priest in the Norwich Diocese, 44 years after he graduated from Xavier.

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Driven To Succeed

With the memory of his late mother driving him, Chris Fosdick is one of the top Junior Golfers in the world with the skill and ambition to reach his goal of playing on the PGA Tour. **Page 8**

The Family Business

Every time, he steps on the ice, Chase Maxwell is inspired by his dad: a former NHL forward.

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The Bonds of Brotherhood

Sam Norris is passionate about many things at Xavier, but none rival the love he has for his brother, who has special needs. **Page 10**



WELCOME TO XAVIER *M*AGAZINE 20 ¹⁸/₁₉



L-R: Jeff Otterbein '72, Matthew Conyers

Every day at Xavier, close to 800 students, faculty and staff walk through the doors of the building in pursuit of something.

Some chase visions of academic excellence and acceptance into the top colleges in the country. Others are looking to get better in the athletic arena or in the music room. Some want to challenge themselves spiritually and find out more about themselves. But at Xavier, each dream matters.

Since 1963, this school and this community have been helping families take on whatever challenges stand in front of them.

In this year's edition of the magazine, we look at some of those dreams and the people that help inspire and encourage them.

A large part of the magazine is devoted to fathers and sons. Some of the fathers graduated from here, but others did not. Some names are recognizable to those familiar with the school, but others are not. The stories, which are spread over pages 8-35, are meant to cover the diverse landscape of the school and carry with them a wide range of emotions.

There are uplifting moments and heartbreaking moments. In that respect, the Xavier family is like all others. But there also is something special going on here when you talk to students, teachers, staff, parents, and alumni.

From the students to the teachers to the alumni, there are great stories everywhere at Xavier.

Spirit. Mind. Body. Xavier attempts to reach the whole person and to make the person whole.

We hope you enjoy the magazine. We have tried to highlight a diverse collection of people that continue to make Xavier the type of place where any dream is possible.

Matthew Conyers, Director of Communications
Jeff Otterbein '72, Associate Director of Communications
Editors

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FATHERS & SONS



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- Carmine Grippo, Page 9
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- Brendan Buckley, Page 32
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The Jaskots, Kohs and so many more...

At the heart of Xavier are two families. Members of the Jaskot family have filled so many roles here, led by Tony, who retires as athletic director at the end of the school year. Artie Kohs was the school's first

hire. Now the gym is named after him, a gym in which his son Mike coaches and his grandson Stephen plays. Another son, Tim, is the Mercy basketball coach and athletic director. **Pages 22-27**

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THE WILL TO WIN

Golfer Chris Fosdick Has His Sights Set On The Top

Dr. Gordon Fosdick deals with feet as a podiatrist. But what he really cares about is whether his children are in good hands.

He feels comfortable with the fact that his son Chris is a senior at Xavier.

"It is nice to know your child is in really good hands surrounded by Godly people who are very interested in rearing a boy," Gordon said. "I don't think anyone does a better job in taking a boy and making

him a man. I see those qualities in my son. Especially with losing a mother, having that guidance Xavier provides has been healthy."

Chris is one of the top Junior Golfers in the world.

Gordon's wife died of a rare autoimmune disease when Chris and twin sister Sarah, a senior at Mercy, were 11. He says the kids had a phenomenal relationship with their mother, who was a stay-at-home mom.

"Golf has been an outlet for him," Gordon said. "It has flourished and become much more of a serious ... almost like an occupation for him ... since his skills have developed and especially after the passing of his mother.

"He and his mother used to go to a lot of camps and tournaments when he was a kid. It's almost as if it's a tribute. This is what I see."

Chris started golf at the age of 6 when he went to a one-day camp. He wasn't there long because the person running the camp said Chris needed something more

serious. He went to Goodwin Park in Hartford where club pro Jim Goshdigian took him under his wing.

Well, the kid is flying now. He has a scholarship to Florida Southern, a Division II powerhouse that has produced nine individual NCAA champions, including two-time U.S. Open champion Lee Janzen. He'll get to play year-round, which obviously he cannot do in Connecticut. Still, he manages to play just about every day courses are open here.

"Off the course, Chris has certainly grown as a student with his work ethic, maturity and leadership skills. His personal development has carried over to the golf course in his mental approach to the game," Xavier coach Mike Kohs said. "Golf can be a frustrating sport, and now when Chris makes the occasional mistake, he is 100 percent better at refocusing in order to finish his round to his expectation."

That was evident when Fosdick bogeyed the first two holes in the first CIAC State Open in June but ended up with a 4-under 67 and the individual championship.

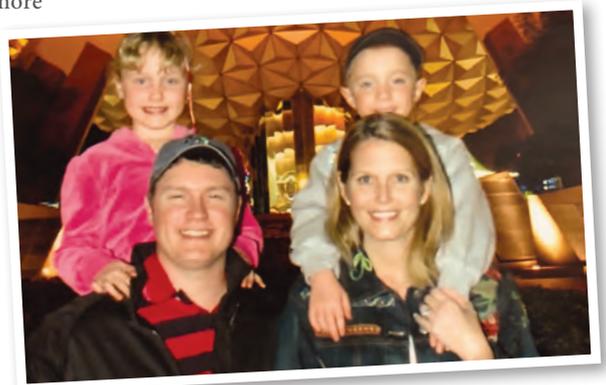
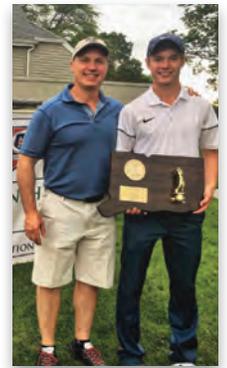
"He's very determined and has something that can't be taught - the will to win," Gordon said.

Chris has worked hard on the mental side of the game. If something goes wrong, he says, "you have to let it go, reset yourself and move on."

The Fosdicks live near Lyman Orchards Golf Club in Middlefield.

"I would drop Chris off there and it was very encouraging to hear the people he played golf with come to me ... and they were all ages ... so many times they would say I really enjoyed playing with him, that he has a great game, personality and a real love for the game," Gordon said.

One of those times was when Chris was about 12. The editor of Golf Digest had played with him and in a note to Gordon said he was "blown away with his demeanor and ability and he opened up a bit about his mother."



That led to a story in Golf Digest in regards to Gordon writing about how golf saved Chris after his mother died.

The memory of his mother is not far from Chris.

"I'm driven to be the best I can be to make my mom proud of me, along with the rest of my family," Chris said.

He won the Connecticut junior title at Yale Golf Course and played in the Junior Players Championship at Valhalla at the end of July. There were players from 18 states and 18 countries; 26, including Fosdick, were top 50 players in the Rolex AGJA rankings.

At the start they were told to look around, that about two-thirds of them would play professionally, so they'd be competing against these same people for a long time.

Chris Fosdick just might be one of those pros. 🌿

CHRIS FOSDICK file

- 🕒 Three-time first-team All-State golfer
- 🕒 Led Xavier to first state golf team championship in 2017
- 🕒 Won inaugural State Open individual title in 2018
- 🕒 Won 2018 Junior Connecticut PGA championship
- 🕒 Ranked in top 50 in world by AJGA

With His Father's Life As An Example, Carmine Grippo Has Embraced Being A Leader

Growing up, Carmine Grippo '19 told his mom he wanted to be the Mayor of Middletown. Callie Grippo, who had been taking her son to political events since he was five, wasn't surprised.

As mothers often do, she had a sense that her son was a leader.

"I tell everybody this story. When I took him to the park for the first time, he was just turning four," she said. "There were



a bunch of older kids about eight years old playing on the swing and there was another boy who was about five and the big boys were making fun of him. Carmine was playing in the sand with his toys and he turned around. He walked up and said:

'You don't make fun of him.' ... Ever since he was little, when he sees something that isn't right, he steps up."

Grippo, the student body president for the 2018-2019 school year, has been standing up for others his whole life. At Xavier, he quickly gained the trust of his peers, making sure he treated everyone the same way he wished to be treated.

"I've always wanted to be a leader and help everybody out," Carmine said. "I wanted to do my best to make everything as good as possible."

Grippo has been watching leaders his whole life, including this summer when he worked with Middletown Mayor Dan Drew as an intern.

His inspiration for leadership hits a little closer to home, though.

Before he died of cancer on September 12, 2014, his father Carmen Grippo served as the ideal role model for Carmine.

"They were best friends - beyond measure," Callie said. "He was the dad that never missed a game, never missed a practice no matter how busy he was. He never missed anything for Carmine."

Said Carmine: "He was just a solid person."

It was ultimately his father's dream that led the Grippo family to Xavier.

Carmen had seen the difference a Catholic education could make, and he wanted it for his son.

A year after his father died of stage four lung cancer, Carmine started his first year at Xavier.

With his father's dreams fresh in his mind, he promised to seize every chance that came his way.

"I want to be his legacy," Carmine said. "Even if I don't go any further with the politics, overall I just want to be a good person and keep strong to what I believe in."

To this day, his father's presence remains incredibly strong. Both Callie and her son talk about Carmen in the present tense. And Carmine constantly looks to his father's life for help with his own.

"My father is always in the back of my head," Carmine said. "I feel like if I don't do everything I can do, I'm letting him down. ... I'm doing it for him."

Carmen was diagnosed with cancer a few weeks after Carmine had finished seventh grade. He died three months later when his son was starting his final year at St. John Paul II School in Middletown.

Before he died, Carmen gave his son an important piece of advice.

"He told me while he was in the hospital when he was super sick: 'I don't care what you do, but do it good,'" Carmine said. "He also told me: 'stay tough.' Those two things I remember him very vividly saying."

Words of Wisdom

His father's wisdom has stayed with Carmine and remains evident in the work Carmine does for Xavier as class president and the city of Middletown.

This summer, Carmine help spearhead an effort to get safety fences and netting put up on the Arrigoni Bridge to help reduce suicide attempts. Mayor Drew had been working closely with the DOT for about three years on the issue, but Carmine worked hard to push the effort across the goal line. In messages about the fences, Drew has mentioned Carmine personally and handed him the key to the city.

"This is my town. I've grown up here my whole life," Carmine said. "I just thought it needed to happen. ... I'll feel a little bit calmer knowing the bridge is safer for everybody. And I'm very thankful it got done." 🌸



"My father is always in the back of my head. I feel like if I don't do everything I can do, I'm letting him down."

Carmine Grippo '19

A Unique Bond



THE LOVE OF ONE'S BROTHER

Sam Norris '19 wears many hats at Xavier.

He is a top student, a two-sport captain, a peer minister, an ambassador, an active participant on the school's service trips, but ask him about his most important role and he will not hesitate with his answer.

He is the big brother of Luke Norris.

"[Our bond] can't be recreated with any other person that will cross my path ever," Sam said. "It is an amazing bond we have. We're so close."

Since the day his little brother was born with special needs about a year and half after him, Sam has been there for Luke, including the night when Luke had one of his first epileptic seizures.

"You can say Sam saved Luke's life," their father Joseph said.

One night when Sam was six, he started screaming and woke up his parents. His brother, who was next to him in another bed, was having a seizure. At the time, Sam thought he was having a bad dream, but in reality, his brother could not breathe.

"The loss of oxygen to his brain was serious," their father said. "[Luke] had a couple of small seizures before that and we thought they were in control, but what Sam heard was a pretty serious one and you can die if you're not treated for seizures."

He might not have realized what was happening, but from that moment on Sam has always been his brother's protector.

"From a very young age, Sam was very protective of Luke and always looked out for him, always took care of him," Joseph said.

Luke is non-verbal. He understands language, but he can't process it and verbalize. Still, Sam is always listening.

"Sam has really been formed by his relationship with Luke," Joseph said. "He's been there all the time. I think Sam from an early age was smart enough to look at Luke and look at himself and understand

Sam Norris '19



Luke's Confirmation, accompanied by Sam and their mom

“Sam, from an early age, was smart enough to look at Luke and look at himself and understand that the gifts he had been given could’ve just as easily been given to Luke and not him.”

that the gifts he had been given could’ve just as easily been given to Luke and not to him. He’s always been very respectful and loving of Luke. And that’s translated to Sam’s desire to be a nurturing guy to younger kids. ... The little things he does for younger kids just remind me of his passion and his love for his younger brother.”

In his four years at Xavier, Sam has tried to mentor different students with the same compassion he has shared with his brother.

As a captain for both football and lacrosse and a peer minister, he is always aware of how he can influence others.

“Sam has such a caring demeanor,” Dean of Students Nick Cerreta ’01 said. “He is always looking out for those around him. People feel at ease around Sam because he is a great listener and is never judgmental. He is one of the most genuine and compassionate students I’ve ever been around.”

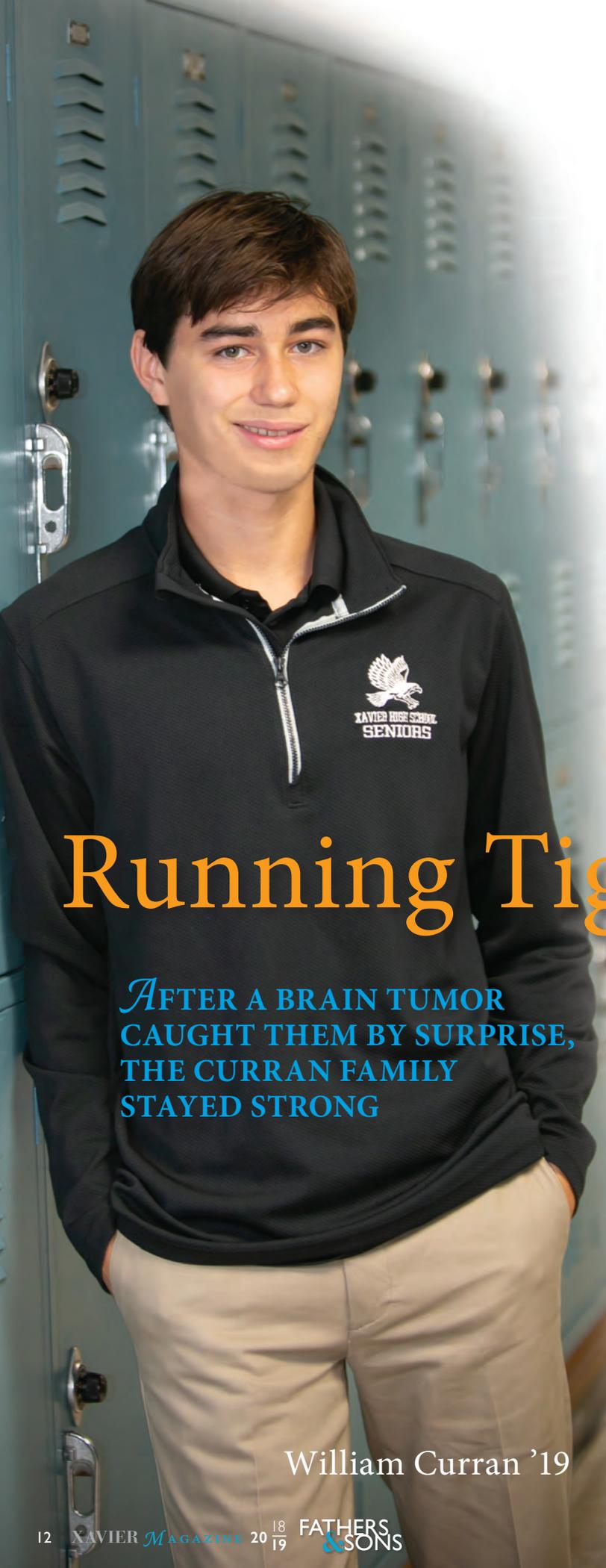
Sam has developed his leadership at Xavier. But he’s also had several strong examples to learn from in his life.

His mother (Beth) and his father have always been there to guide him and instill a strong respect for his faith. His older brother Bryson is a police officer and was deployed to Iraq with the U.S. Marine Corps when Sam was eight. His grandfather was a prisoner of war during World War II and helped his best friend, who was also captured by the Germans, get rid of his dog tags because they identified his religion: Judaism.



Wherever Sam looked in his family, he had examples of how to live and how to be a man. But his father gives the credit to his son.

“He inspires me,” Joseph said. “I wish I were more like him. Whatever he has taken from me, he’s multiplied it a million times. He’s a much better human being than I am. In many ways, he’s my role model.” 🌸



Forty-eight hours after William Curran '19 and his older brother Owen '18 helped lead Xavier cross country to the program's first New England championship in 20 years, the brothers waited for a text message about their father.

Matt Curran, who had just watched his two sons finish in the top 35 in Belfast, Maine, two days earlier, was in surgery at Yale New Haven Hospital, where he was having a tumor removed from his brain stem.

"I had my final surgery prep and then we went to Belfast [Maine] to watch them run," Matt said. "We came home and surgery was Monday morning."

William and Owen stuck to their normal routine that Monday. They went to school, they ran with the team and when they were done they got word from their mom Michelle. The surgery had been a success.

The brain tumor was gone.

"There was really no long-term damage – it was more just disturbance and that stuff takes quite a lot to get better," Matt said. "It just showed up and it is something to live through and deal with and get strong from. And that's what we're trying to do."

In the last year, the Currans have stayed united as they've taken on Matt's comeback from the tumor. But that's nothing new for the family of five – daughter Elizabeth is at Mercy. They're each other's best friends.

Matt said he got through the "worst lottery ticket in the world" by thinking of one thing: family.

"It was William, it was Owen, it was Elizabeth, and it was Michelle," Matt said. "It was like I have to do this for them. There are times where it is really easy to get hung up on what I can't do, but I can't do that for the sake of my family."

Running Tight Together

**AFTER A BRAIN TUMOR
CAUGHT THEM BY SURPRISE,
THE CURRAN FAMILY
STAYED STRONG**

As he was going through the surgery and the recovery, Matt did his best to stay positive and strong.

His youngest son noticed. And was soon motivated by his father's actions.

"Even though it has been really hard to deal with it, I think it has shown everyone the value of dedication," William said. "No matter how bad the situation, it is not bad enough to stop you from doing what you want and doing what you need to do."

For the Currans, being there for each other has always been the most important thing.

Before the children were born, Matt and Michelle made a promise: no matter what, family came first.

As his father continues the recovery process, spending about five hours a week at therapy, William has been there for his father, motivating him in the way only a son can.

"William gets on me," Matt said with a laugh. "He asks me: do you really want to fit into your pants? He's keeping me on the straight and narrow for my diet [because I can't run]."

William has grown a lot in the last year, learning to run for his teammates and classmates. And now is showing off that maturity his family had always seen in him.

William Curran '19



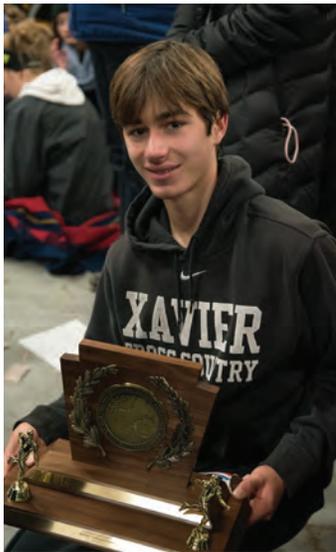
Matt is still in the recovery process. His balance remains off and he's still getting back to where he wants to be, but he is facing the recovery head on. And he is getting help from William, who has stepped into the role of tri-captain after the departure of his brother Owen, who is running at Providence. Owen has also been there for his father.

"I've come miles from where I was since surgery, but I'm definitely not back to my old self," Matt said. "I'm getting better. ... month to month has certainly improved."

William and Matt get plenty of strength from each other. As William takes on more leadership this school year in athletics and the classroom, he's been right there for his father.

Matt has inspired William his whole life. Now his son is returning the favor.

"Even if I wanted to dwell on it and change, he wouldn't let me and that is cool," Matt said about William. "It happened and you have to deal with it. ... Things happen to you. They don't change you." 🌸



"It was like 'I have to do this for them.' There are times where it is really easy to get hung up on what I can't do, but I can't do that for the sake of my family."



ACTING OUT & LOVING IT

Sebastian Fazzino '19 Has Embraced His Chance To Shine On The Stage

When Sebastian Fazzino '81 was in grammar school, the nuns had to put him in the back of the room during music class because he sang so loud.

"I used to love that attention, but later on I tended to be more conservative," Fazzino said. "I couldn't push myself [to be out there more]."

For the last four years, his son has more than made up for it.

As an entertaining and integral piece of the Mercy and Xavier Theater Program and the Xavier music department, Sebastian Fazzino '19 has made sure his voice is being heard loud and clear.

After just missing out on a lead role his freshman year, Fazzino has thrown himself into his dual passions of acting and singing. As a junior, he stole scenes as Pugsley Addams in "The Addams Family" and the IRS agent in "You Can't Take it With You." When he was a sophomore, he played King Herod in Jesus Christ Superstar. "If I didn't lose that first audition [in "Into the Woods], I would've never self-reflecting and been like 'Ok you can't just walk in and expect something - you have to work hard for it,'" Fazzino said.

With that first audition as a reminder, Sebastian Jr., who is the president of the Xavier/Mercy chapter of International Thespian Society, has made sure to bring joy to every chance he gets on stage.

"That is 100 percent me up there," Fazzino said. "I don't put on a face. I don't do anything special. I just go up there and embrace it."

The Fazzino men know you don't get any do overs in life. But the chance to see his son step up and find himself at his own alma mater has been special for the Xavier graduate.

"He embraces the role[s] and he's being himself, which is nice to see," Sebastian Sr. said. "His true personality comes out on stage. He's not being fake."

Before coming to Xavier, the younger Fazzino had already established himself on the stage.

As an incoming sixth grader at Cromwell Middle School, he beat out the rest of the boys at his new school for the role of Tom Sawyer in a production of the Adventures of Tom Sawyer.

"That is 100 percent me up there. I don't put on a face. I don't do anything special. I just go up there and embrace it."

Sebastian Fazzino '19



"He always had that laughter and funny spirit in him," Sebastian Sr. said. "He's always embraced all kinds of instruments. He sings. He plays drums and piano. He used to play clarinet. It was all at a young age."

When he signed up for band in elementary school, Sebastian Jr. asked an important question. "They didn't have piano so I was like 'what is the closest thing to hitting something?'" Sebastian Jr. said.

He picked the drums, which he still plays at Xavier.

The Fazzino family has done its part to help foster those earlier aspirations.

Growing up, both of Sebastian's parents (and his cousin Ronny, another musician) have helped flame his love for theater and singing.

"Ever since I can remember my dad has been playing Beatles songs and a bunch of stuff from the 80s and I just love music," Sebastian Jr. said.

Said Sebastian Sr.: "I have vivid memories of me driving the car and him singing loud. It was a joy to hear him singing."

In the Fazzino basement, there's a room covered with posters of the Beatles and filled with a drum set, a keyboard, a guitar and a microphone.

"I have a rock group room in the basement," Sebastian said. "When people come, we just get together and make music, which is really cool." 🎸



BUZZing TO HIS OWN BEAT

Ben Buzzeo '19 Has Many Interests, But His Love For Music Shines Through When He Plays

Ben has a hard time listening to music when he studies.

Whether it be a classical number, a string piece or a jazz standard, the result is typically the same. He has to stop and listen. "I get so into the music that it distracts me from my homework," Buzzeo said. "I can't listen to music and work at the same time because I just get into it. I'm not going to start dancing around, but I'm focused on it and I'm listening to things. I think have a different relationship with music than other people have."

Buzzeo has plenty of interests and talents - he's also a Boy Scout and a leader at Xavier. But when it comes to playing or listening, music gets his undivided attention.

"He is very even keeled, but that goes away when he plays the bari [baritone saxophone]" his father Dominic said. "All of a sudden he is very passionate. You see a passion in him. His face is turning red. His head is bobbing.

His whole body is going with it. He's in his moment."

Buzzeo has brought that passion for the craft to Xavier.

As one of the top players with his bari saxophone, Buzzeo has left a mark on the music department.

"Ben is the gentle giant on the baritone saxophone," music teacher Erik Elligers said. "Buzz is always prepared musically, is an incredibly humble and respectful student and has a natural ability to make everyone around him perform at the highest level."

Last year, he was part of the Southern Regional Musical Festival. He is a four-year member of the Xavier Jazz Ensemble and an All-State violinist.

"Whether he's transcribing his favorite Gerry Mulligan bebop lick, laying down a classic Motown bass line in pep band, or is leading the string quartet on violin, it's not hard to see that Buzz has a deep passion for music," Elligers said. "He is often the first student in the band room in the morning running a saxophone sectional, and is the last student I need to ask to pack up after practicing all afternoon."

Some of his passion for music comes from his family. But the rest of it, he's developed as he's learned more and more.

Buzzeo picked up the violin when he was six. He saw his grandmother's violin and he knew he wanted to try it.

"[My grandmother] saw I had an interest before I even saw it," Buzzeo said. "I was just curious. She saw something more."

The violin quickly led to other instruments. When he was young, he played in a youth band with his violin. The fire had been lit. If he could play somewhere, he was going to find a way. When he was eight, he had a difficult music teacher, but he liked it.



"I've always liked to be challenged," Buzzeo said. "I've always gone for the challenge, whether musically or academically."

Ben's love for music is obvious when he talks about it. A simple question about his musical preferences can lead to a 40-minute conversation.

It's a passion he shares with his father.

"Music is a big part of our family," his father said. "It is an art and we respect it. Everyone in my house has played an instrument at one time or another. There's a great respect and appreciation for what musicians do and what it takes to do what they do. It is more than just a love."

The Buzzeos are close. The two share plenty of similarities. But it is their focus to detail and work ethic that has led them to success holding an instrument or not. And it is also why Dominic Buzzeo knows whatever his son does, he's going to be just fine.

"There's a lot more to Ben than music," his father said. "He's just multitalented. He'll dedicate himself to anything he feels that he loves." 🌸



A Little Piece of the

AMERICAN DREAM

Emad Cheema '20 Is Learning From His Father's Experiences and Seizing His Own Opportunities

Maqsood Cheema has a simple reason for why he started a new life in America at the age of 27.

"Life was so boring," Cheema said. "I had a regular life – I was well settled in Qatar. When I was 22, I believed I had everything."

In 1990, Cheema took a two-week vacation to the United States with friends and never left.

After growing up in Qatar, studying in Pakistan and working as a police officer for the public prosecution section in the capital city of Doha in Qatar, he was ready for change.

"There was no planning, no nothing," Cheema said. "We just said we're going to stay here and go to school."

Cheema, a successful business owner in Connecticut and Massachusetts, didn't end up going to graduate school. But it didn't stop him. Over the last 28 years, he found the life he was looking for in the United States.

"I'm a little piece of the American dream," Cheema said.

With his wife Fariha, whom he is quick to give a lot of credit for his family's success, he has raised his three sons with the same natural curiosity.

As the third and final sibling to come through Xavier, Emad Cheema '20 has created his own path, standing out as an inquisitive student.

"My dad basically built his career off his interests," Emad said. "[I've learned] it is not the worst thing to take something that is a risk – something that I wouldn't normally do, something I haven't learned about – and go learn about it and see if I like it. ... I don't want to miss any opportunities."

It wasn't always that way.

Emad was hesitant to come to Xavier at first. He didn't want to leave his friends in Rocky Hill, where he attended middle school. But after watching his brothers (Eman '14 and Numad '15) find success, he enrolled with a strong push from his parents. And soon enough, he was taking more chances in the classroom and out.

"It wasn't really my choice, but I'm glad that my dad made the choice for me," Cheema said.

His father knows plenty about taking chances.

When he decided to stay in America after leaving Qatar, he had no job or family to rely on. His mother and relatives were back in Qatar and Pakistan.

He was alone with a foreign accent. But with a mix of optimism and discipline, he spent the next three decades becoming a successful business owner (he owned five IHOPs at one point) and a family man (he married his wife after returning home briefly in his early thirties).

"I have a lot of respect and I feel proud that he's my dad," Emad said. "He's willing to take risks and he knows how to overcome them. ... It is amazing that he stuck through [in America]. My work ethic is based off of him and my brothers." 🌟

"[My Dad] is willing to take risks and he knows how to overcome them. My work ethic is based off of him and my brothers."

Emad Cheema '20



Hungary Heart

Benedict Fogarasi '21 And His Father Help Their Cousin Botond '20 Feel At Home At Xavier

After a vacation to the United States a couple years ago from his native Hungary, Botond Fogarasi made a decision.

He had to return.

“I wanted to learn the language and the culture,” Botond said.

This school year, Fogarasi is living with his uncle, Dr. Miklos Fogarasi, and his cousin, Benedict '21. They are the big reasons he is back.

“They encouraged me a lot,” Botond said. “They’ve been very supportive. I’m very thankful for them. They have helped put me on this path.”

As one of the record 21 international students at Xavier during the 2018-2019 school year, Botond, who had lived his whole life in the capital city of Budapest, is getting the experience he had always wanted in the United States.

“My father helped Botond come to Xavier. For Botond, this is not just a new school, but a new country too. I hope one day, I can also help someone come to Xavier.”

Benedict Fogarasi '21 (left)

Following in the footsteps of his father Andreas, who spent a year in the United States during college, Botond, is busy improving his English and learning about the American culture.

“I’ve grown mainly as a student, but I also feel like I’ve grown as a person, too,” Botond said.

Before coming to the United States, Botond didn’t know very much about Xavier.

“I knew it was an all-boys school and that was all,” Botond said. “I had never wanted to go to an all-boys school in Hungary, but now that I’m here, it is better (than I imagined). I really like it now. I think everyone behaves better. It is a very good experience.”

Now, he understands why his uncle and his cousin speak highly of Xavier.

In Hungary, he played basketball, but during the soccer season, he was a member of the junior varsity team and enjoyed it. He hopes to play volleyball in the spring.

His cousin has also looked out for him.

“We have classes together [chemistry, religion and chorus] and he helps me if I don’t understand something,” Botond said.

“I always envied my two brothers, Dominic and Kristof, who are eight and nine years older than me because they went to Xavier together,” Benedict said. “My cousin, Botond, goes to Xavier with me. Now I have that brother I never had before.”

Separated by the Atlantic Ocean, the Fogarasi family stays close.

Every summer, the cousins reconnect in the country of their fathers birth.

“There are three or four days when the whole family meets,” Botond said.

The kind-hearted leader of the pack, Miklos, helps keep the family unit tight. After nearly two decades in the medical field (oncology), he now teaches at Quinnipiac.

Botond is the latest member of the Fogarasi family to arrive at Xavier. Since Miklos’ oldest son Kristof graduated, the family has had a constant presence at Xavier. Dominic graduated in 2013,

“I had a lot of fear coming here, but now I’m happy to be here. I think this year will help me a lot for college and in my life.”

Botond Fogarasi (right)

Benedict is at the school now and their sister Beata graduated from Mercy. Miklos has also been a guest lecturer at Xavier and is a big supporter of the Xaverian values.

“The Fogarasi family has devoted much of their time, talent and treasure over the years and they are deeply committed to helping Xavier live out its mission,” Principal Brendan Donohue said.

Botond has made the most of his time during his year at Xavier, making new friends and improving his English, among other achievements. “I had a lot of fear coming here, but now I’m happy to be here,” Botond said. “I think this year will help me a lot for college and in my life.”🌸



Jordan Leonardi '19

More to Prove

After a disappointing start, Jordan Leonardi Has Worked Hard To Test His Limits At Xavier

When Jordan Leonardi '19 took the entrance exam for Xavier four years ago, things did not go as planned.

He felt a bit 'off' and struggled.

Instead of breezing through the test, he was unable to finish, leaving areas where he thought he would excel blank.

"It was a very disappointing day," Leonardi said. "I felt defeated. ... That internal flame was lit."

This past September, Leonardi started the school year as senior class president and the president of the National Honor Society.

It has been a busy few years for Leonardi since he got that entrance exam score back.

With the disappointment fresh in his memory, he's made sure to pursue every challenge in front of him at Xavier, joining clubs and making the most of his experience.

"I saw Xavier as the beacon on the hill - this was the big leagues," Leonardi said. "I knew that test didn't really reflect what I'm capable of. I knew I was worth so much more. And I knew I could push myself so much more."

Leonardi's list of accomplishments since he got in the building is long. He's been an active member of the Mercy and Xavier Theater program and created several initiatives to help give back. But some of his most worthwhile experiences took him off Randolph Road.

After completing his service hours and still wanting to give back in some way, Leonardi created his own independent project to help the community of Middletown.

With the help of family and friends, Leonardi created a book collection for the holidays. Instead of giving money, he set his eyes on something else: education. When he was done, he had 80 new books ready to donate to the Middletown Community Renewal Team for the Head Start Program.

"I've lived in Middletown for 13 years," Jordan said. "Middletown has become my established home. I have always wanted to do something where I could make an impact on the community. I want to see good done."

Before coming up with the book collection idea, Leonardi had volunteered at St. John Church in Middletown, where he moved items for the warming center and helped



provide food for the homeless. He also collected more than 300 personal care items for the St. Vincent de Paul Soup Kitchen and Pantry in Middletown.

Since he was a young boy, he has always wanted to give back to his community.

"I saw Xavier as the beacon on the hill - this was the big leagues."

He credits his father Sebastian for helping instill that drive. From the beginning, his dad has prompted him to do more with his life as his relatives did (Through college, Sebastian's father worked at the Cloud Chamber at Columbia and his great uncle worked on the Manhattan project).

"To be average all you have to do is what is required - that's it," Sebastian said. "The point is. Don't be average. Rise above and find whatever opportunities you can for yourself and others."

Throughout his life, the pair have traveled all over the world and formed a tight bond, learning more about other cultures.

Jordan is an only child. He wasn't even supposed to be here. His mother was told she wasn't able to have children and then two years and two months later, she found out she was pregnant.

"We're soulmates," Sebastian said. "He's my treasure. ... He's exactly what I needed."

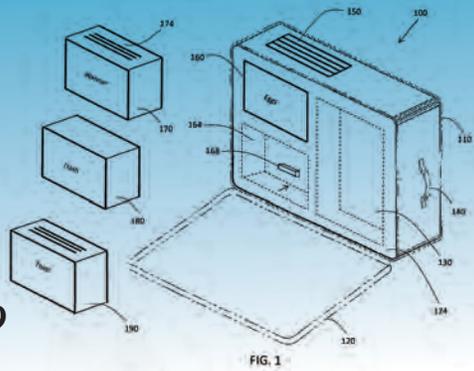
The pair practically finish each other's sentences. They look alike. They talk alike. And there isn't much they like to do apart, whether it be diving in foreign waters, practicing martial arts or attending a concert together. As Jordan says, "they're a carbon copy."

They also share a familiar personality trait. They don't back down from a challenge.

"I always tell Jordan: may you always challenge yourself and seek to find your limitations and I hope you never find them," Sebastian said. 🌸



Cooking Up AN IDEA



In Fifth Grade, FRANCIS BROWN '19 Created A Patented Product

Just a typical day in the life of a fifth grader. Go to school, invent a product, and eventually get a patent.

When Francis Brown was attending Corpus Christi School in Wethersfield, he invented a Portable Modular Cooking Enabled Bag. That's a mouthful, which is exactly the point.

For those on the go, unable to take time to eat at home, Francis came up with the invention. "As with many things, it was born out of necessity," said Patrick Brown, Francis' father. "We live about 30 minutes from the parochial school Francis attended through Grade 8, and as a consequence it was often a challenge to wake up, get dressed, eat, and head to school for the start of the day. Often eating breakfast was sacrificed for time.

"Francis thought it would be handy to have the ability to make his breakfast while traveling."

He went to work on the ideation, design and prototyping while another student handled the marketing, as students worked in pairs. It was a hit when they demonstrated it at the school's Invention Convention.

"One woman came up to me and said to me that she was amazed I had a real invention," Francis remembered.

That is not all that surprising -- after all, they were fifth-graders. But Francis was thinking out of the box. And beyond his years. After hearing that comment, though, the family wondered if maybe there was something more to this. Thus came the patent process.

"He first filed for a provisional patent, which buys a prospective inventor some time and protection to subsequently file a formal patent application," Patrick said. "That took about a year, and then over the course of the next two to three years the patent application

was published for public review and then prosecuted, or evaluated, by a patent examiner for plausibility and uniqueness.

"After some back and forth with a very helpful examiner, his application was approved. After the first patent was approved, Francis was able to expand the scope and reapply for a second, broader patent. That, too, was approved after some time and further prosecution."

So the next logical question is can you buy these?

"As a matter of fact, Francis signed a non-disclosure agreement with a manufacturer who contacted him to bring the invention to market," Patrick says. "Discussions have occurred over the past year or so."

Cost is to be determined but you can't put a price tag on what Francis has learned. He took a problem and solved it, seeing it as an opportunity, not an obstacle.

"It gave me a different mindset," Francis said.

At Xavier, Francis is on the sailing team. He knew nothing about sailing, but got interested his freshmen year. He was made a captain junior year and helped the team qualify for the Great Oaks Regatta in September. He was selected to go on the Xaverian Brothers School Sponsored (XBSS) Junior Retreat, takes five AP classes, had a perfect GPA his first year, won the Brother Celestine Award, is a member of the concert band and five honor societies and serves as a peer minister. Out of school, he does taekwondo and he and his father like to go to car shows.

So he balances a lot, which is not atypical of a Xavier student.

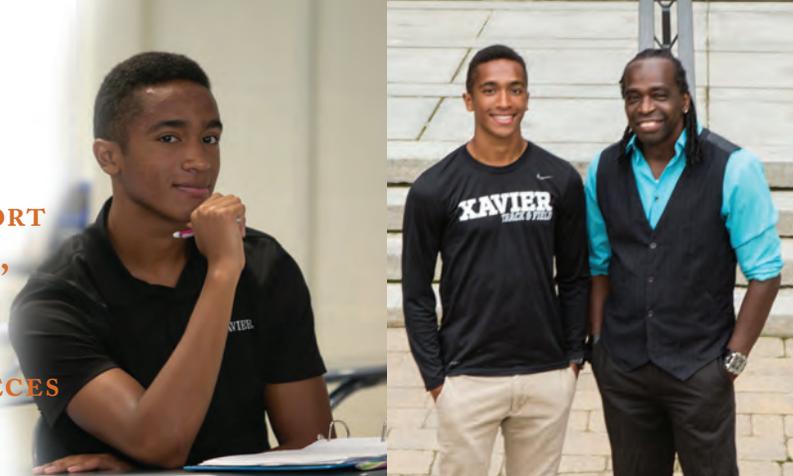
He will leave Xavier with a feeling of "community and brotherhood," and thankful for his opportunities.

"The teachers are very supportive and understanding here," Francis said. 🌸



Works OF Art

WITH THE SUPPORT OF EACH OTHER, THE SYLVAINS CREATE THEIR OWN MASTERPIECES



Pierre Sylvain '19



When Pierre Sylvain, a Haitian born artist, is working on a project in his basement studio, he is a study in concentration. He is cool and collected.

When he is watching his son Pierre Sylvain '19 run at tracks across Connecticut, he is a bit different.

"I'm so nervous," Pierre Sr. said with a big laugh. "I'm not relaxed."

The Sylvains work on different canvases. The father can use a tire or old porch window and produce something dramatic and beautiful. The son can take a race that seems lost and glide effortlessly to the front of the pack. But they both create masterpieces.

Pierre Sylvain Jr. is a track star, his specialty middle distance events. Last winter, he finished second in the 600-meter dash in the Class LL Championship in 1:24.62 and sixth in the State Open. He later helped Xavier break a school record in the 4x800 (7:50.22) and distance medley relay (10:28.66).

It was a breakthrough year for the quiet leader, whose stride makes him appear as if he is doing no work.

"Pierre runs with such grace that you always believe he's in the race to win," Xavier track and cross country coach Chris Stonier said.

Pierre Sylvain Sr., who moved to America in his 20s from Les Cayes, Haiti, needs more than 85 seconds to get his work done. But the end result can be as stunning. After working in his studio for hours on end, Pierre Sr. will emerge with the type of art that can speak to an audience.

"If you don't put yourself all in, it is not going to happen," Pierre Sr. said. "Art and Sport are the same thing. You just have to invest 100 percent."



FATHERS & SONS

Art by Pierre Sr.

Together, they have helped each other grow in their respective endeavors.

"As my dad was pumping himself up [and chasing his dream], he also pumped me up," Pierre Jr. said. "I've gotten a lot of lessons from him. I've learned how to fail, and how to learn from it."

Since the day he was born, Pierre Jr. has provided his father with inspiration.

"I think he's a really tough kid," Pierre Sr. said. "He's very generous. He's responsible and mature. ... I know he will prevail."

Growing up with an artist father, Pierre Jr. can sometimes take for granted what he gets to see every day.

"It is actually easy to forget that he's an artist but I'm reminded when my friends see it or through reactions of strangers," Pierre Jr. said.

With the stereo playing some jazz and the family's animals wandering around, Pierre Sylvain is the definition of devotion as he works. He is passionate about his projects. In one corner of his studio, he has depictions of the Underground Railroad, painted on old windows. In another part of the basement, there are pieces of art that focus on the heroes of the Civil Rights movement and the Haitian revolution. Some of his works have raised money for the people of his birth country.

Inside and outside their home, there are touches of the artist and the runner. There are the running shoes worn down from the miles it takes to make a champion, something that Pierre Jr. is hoping to become this season during the winter and spring track seasons. And there are the mosaics, the paintings and sculptures by the older Sylvain everywhere you look.

"It is different than other places and unique," Pierre Jr. said. "It is not the same as every house and brings other things out of people. ... It can bring a smile out of you."

The same is true of the Sylvain men.

"I think what really matters and what people really remember is how you treat them and if you make everyone feel special," Pierre Sr. said. 🌸



"Art and Sport are the same thing. You just have to invest 100 percent."

The Maxwells Are A Hockey Family Connected By Shared Goals

Before every Xavier hockey game, Chase Maxwell '19 pulls out his phone and looks at a picture of his dad in a Minnesota North Stars jersey. As his teammates listen to music and follow their own pregame rituals, Chase is reliving family history, dreaming his own hockey dreams.

If one Maxwell can find a way, maybe another can.

"I want to be there," Chase said. "That's obviously the ultimate goal. It is just really cool to see my dad in an NHL jersey. I just look up to him."

In a decades-spanning career, which has seen him travel from the rowdy rinks of Western Canada to Madison Square Garden, Kevin Maxwell has held several titles in hockey.

As his son, a clever forward for Xavier, looks to take the next step with his game as a leader, Kevin, the Director of Professional Scouting for the New York Rangers, has been there providing him with wisdom as a father, a fan, a pro and a scout.

"It is a cool thing to share just conversations about the sport and competing and trying to be the best you can," Kevin said. "It is neat. We're driving along and just going to games and talking hockey. I'm 58 and I'm still able to share that with my young son. ... The camaraderie of hockey and the teamwork and the synergy it takes to be a good team: those are all the rewarding things I've found over the years that keep coming back. If I can give anything to him, it is just being part of that."



Chase is not the only one gaining inspiration. As he watches his son take on new challenges for the Falcons, Kevin has been reminded how much the game has given him. And together, Chase and Kevin are helping each other hunt down their hockey dreams.

Chase, who has stepped into a leadership role for the Falcons after the departure of several key contributors, wants to keep playing this game as long as he can, which possibly means a post graduate year after high school. Kevin, in his eighth year with the Rangers, is still looking for the ultimate prize in his NHL career: the Stanley Cup.

"I can already see it," Chase said. "I think he'll get it."

Kevin was close at the start of his career. After playing just six regular season games in 1981, he played an important role for the North Stars as they made a run to Stanley Cup Finals before losing in five games to the New York Islanders.

The Cup might be missing, but he has been rewarded for his hard work and talent throughout his career. He was born in Edmonton, lived

Chasing Hockey Dreams

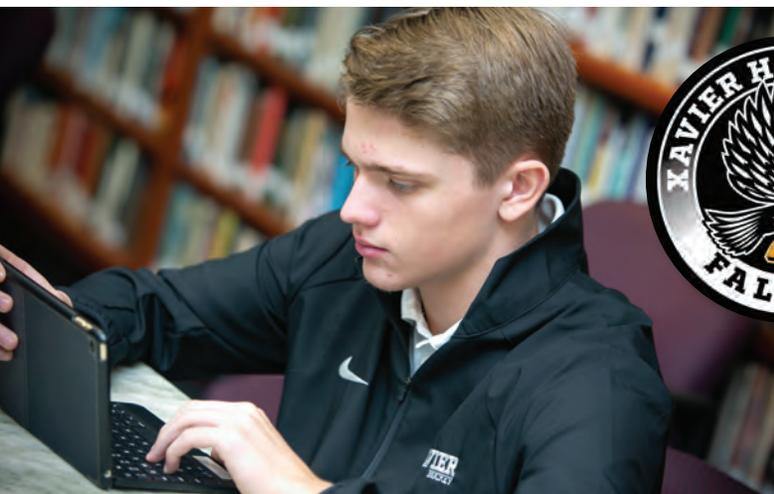
in British Columbia, played for North Dakota and, when he was 20, got the call to play for Canada in the 1980 Olympics at Lake Placid. For Chase, there's plenty of examples of things he wants to emulate as he plays, including his dad's modesty.

"It is a privilege to play hockey but it is also humbling," Kevin said. "To play in the Olympics and the NHL, I'm grateful for it. But I'm pretty low key about the hoopla. My dad always said I'm not one for blowing my own horn."

As Chase continues to mature and look to be a go-to-guy for his classmates (this summer he also stepped up and helped transfer students), he gets advice from his father. If Chase needs something, he knows his dad is there for him. Kevin, who was All American at the University of North Dakota, doesn't force anything on his youngest son. When Chase needs help, he offers it.

"You try and guide him in the right direction," Kevin said. "If I could give him anything it is to use his imagination. I think that was one of the things my dad always told me. [My dad] challenged me and wanted me to work hard. But if you can use your imagination, you might have a chance." ✨

"It is a cool thing to share. We're driving along and just going to games and talking hockey. I'm 58 and I'm still able to share that with my young son."





Jaskots &



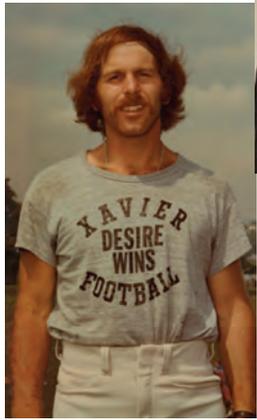
& Kohs



**FAMILIES SOARING
ABOVE AND BEYOND**



The Jaskots: Matt '02, Greg '00, Tony '69, Donna and Dan '98



Family Spirit

After Six Decades, Tony Jaskot '69 Leaves Behind A Legacy Of Dedication and Decency

In 1965, Tony Jaskot '69 followed his brother to Xavier High School. "I came to school here because my brother Joe came to school here," Tony said. "I have seven brothers and sisters. Joe is a year and a half older than me. He came and played basketball and baseball. He was my role model so I followed his footsteps."

Family was why he came, and it is why he never left.

For the last six decades, Xavier has been his home.

It is where he grew up and fell in love. It is where he built a career and raised a family. And it is where his name will always generate the same reaction.

"There is not a bad bone in his body," Headmaster David Eustis

said. "He exudes the virtues of the Xaverian Brothers. He lives them all."

For 44 years, he ceded the spotlight to legends. Now, he'll join them.

After spending the last 44 years as an educator, coach and administrator, Jaskot will retire at the end of the 2018-2019 school year, concluding an era of dedication and decency.

"My father has lived his life for Xavier High School and the people who have been at Xavier High School, mainly the students," his son, Greg '00, said.

Tony started his career as a physical education teacher, a job he loves to this day. His desire and commitment to helping others kept leading him up the ladder from assistant football coach to head coach to athletic director.

"A title doesn't define you, it is what you do with the title," Jaskot said.

He wanted to stay behind the scenes, but he cared too much and believed too much in the school.

"He put the students and school and his family before himself always," his son Dan '98 said. "He is a selfless individual, who cared more about some kid he saw twice during a year and doing something right by that kid."

When he steps down this spring, Tony will have been just the second athletic director in the history of the school.

"Tony Jaskot is the epitome of what a true man is," Dean of Students Nick Cerreta '01 said. "He has changed the lives of so many people over the years just being who he is: the most loving, kind, funny and compassionate human being there is. Everything Tony did was for the kids."

Throughout his tenure, he's tried to keep the same approach to whatever he does in the building.

"Do it 100 percent, full speed ahead," Tony said. "I'm a regular guy, who doesn't mind getting his hands dirty."

It is a trait he has passed on to his co-workers and his sons, who have helped Xavier in their own way. If there is a problem that needs solving, the Jaskot men find a way to answer the call.

Since they were old enough to walk, the three Jaskot sons have been part of the Xavier family and called the place home.



They have cut grass. They have waxed floors. They have tarred the roof.

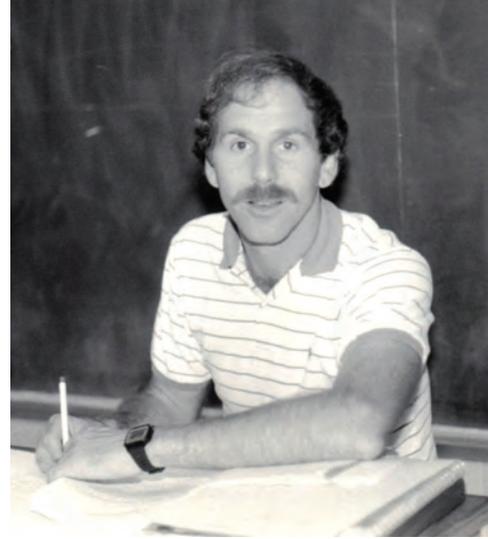
“We all worked here in the summer months as the custodial staff,” Dan said. “There aren’t a lot of kids that know where the boiler room is or the attic is.”

The youngest son Matt '02 remembers sitting high in the

bleachers and keeping score for basketball games. Greg and Dan recall the great assistant coaches and athletes as if they were Hall of Famers.

The faculty, the coaches, the athletes – they were all family.

When Greg breaks a huddle as the offensive coordinator for football, he has grown accustomed to ending with the same word: *family*.



The **Jaskot** family
is the **Xavier** family
and the **Xavier** family
is the **Jaskot** family.

“FAMILY was why he came, and it is why he never left.”



“I think a lot of it stems from our experiences when we were kids,” Greg said. “The kids that played football for my father were part of my family. We got to see them practice. We spent time with them.”

Greg is the Associate Director of Advancement and a former teacher. Dan helps run Empower Leadership down the street and comes often to help mentor students. Matt rewrote the music to the school song. They love the school. And they want to give back.

“We took a lot from this place,” Dan said. It also gave them a lot.

From their father and their mother Donna, the caring heart behind all four men, they have each learned how to be leaders and fulfill the Xavier motto.

“Our dad is the motto of the school: Be a Man,” Matt said.

Tony said his legacy is his three sons and described them as his best friends.

“They mean the world to me,” Jaskot said. “We’re the best of friends.”

After this June, it will also be their job to carry on what their father helped build.

“If I could do half of what he did, I would consider myself to be a successful person,” Greg said.

Greg never planned on staying as long as he has already (he’s been in the building for

more than 13 years). But he stayed for the same reason as his father.

“It is hard to leave,” Greg said. “Every kid that I’ve coached and every kid that I’ve taught mean a great deal to me as a person. The people you meet here – they become your family.”

Tony Jaskot helped make it that way.

“I know that the impact my father has had on this place is going to live on forever,” Greg said. 🌸





EVERLASTING LOVE

For The Kohs Family, It Fits On A Number Of Levels

When Artie Kohs walked into Xavier in 1963, how could he have known that the school would end up meaning everything to him ... and his wife ... and his family.

He was the first person hired here. He taught, he coached, he ran the athletic program. He picked out the school colors, the mascot. Three sons would graduate from here. Mike is the boys basketball coach at Xavier and walks past the plaque outside the gym, the one honoring his father. Tim is a former assistant athletic director at Xavier and now is the athletic director and basketball coach at Mercy High School.

This is the family business. It is who they are. All the kids grew up playing sports, with Todd, Mike and Tim eventually playing basketball at Xavier and sister Paula at Mercy.

That's a lot of hustle and bustle but somehow the Kohs family made it work. Actually, there is one big reason for that:

Carolyn Kohs, who died unexpectedly in 2017 while in the midst of a courageous seven-year battle with cancer, became as much a part of all of this as Artie. She was at all the Xavier games. She went to the Mercy games. She drove the kids here, there, everywhere. Well, let Artie talk about what his wife was like.

"She was a very special person," Artie said. "Family meant everything to her. She always wanted to support me, the kids, grandkids. I'll never forget the wake. It was supposed to be from 4-7. People were still coming in at 8. People waited an hour, hour and a half in line. Everyone liked her."

He is proud that his sons are coaching. "It's great to see," he said, but quickly adds, "I wish my wife were still alive. She was really a fan of Xavier and Mercy, went to all the games."

Then he relays the story that Tim and Mike also tell. If there was a game at Xavier and Mercy on the same night, she'd spend half at each.

Tim was an assistant boys basketball coach at Xavier under Rich Magner when he saw the Mercy opening in 1993. He figured it was a way to get started as a head coach, so he took the job, thinking at some point he'd be a boys coach. He had success early, loved coaching the girls and never gave coaching boys another thought. Then he landed the athletic director job in 2011.

"Great players, parents and administration," Tim said. "Why would I ever leave?"

His daughter Avery and niece Lauren, Mike's daughter, will be Mercy freshmen next year. And you guessed it, both play basketball.

Yet another generation makes its way to a school on Randolph Road, a route traveled by the family so much that it might as well



Kohs Family



The Kohs: Stephen '20, Mike '84, Artie, Tim '85



time the coat got hung up on one of the side basketball rims in the gym. Yes, dad got a technical for that one.

Mike is entering his 20th season as the varsity coach at Xavier and at one point had his father on the sidelines as his assistant. Why not?

“He has a great basketball mind and related well to the kids,” Mike said.

Mike and his wife Robin have two other children besides Lauren. Sarah is a freshman at UConn and Stephen is a junior at Xavier and is on the basketball team. When Stephen is on the court, things are very clear. He’s a player, not a son.

Tim’s Mercy teams have won three state titles, including last year and the one early in his career, 1996, when Jen O’Brien, the school’s all-time leading scorer, played there.

Mike’s had some great teams, too.

The 2004-05 team had Amari Spievey and Chauncey Hardy as starters and Nick Greenwood coming off the bench. Spievey played in the NFL for the Detroit Lions, Hardy played college basketball at Sacred Heart and professionally overseas, and Greenwood played Major League Baseball. That team lost to Crosby in the state semifinals; then the next season, despite a bunch of obstacles, Xavier had a huge comeback and knocked off Crosby in the quarterfinals.

When Mike got out of college he took a job in the finance world, but after about seven years he asked himself if he saw himself doing this all his life. He didn’t. And when a medical leave left a job opening at Xavier teaching business for two months in 1993, Mike took it. He was a full-time teacher the next year. He left money on the table, but not happiness. And now he’s in his 11th season as golf coach, which includes the school’s first state title in that sport in 2017, and about to hit the 20-year mark in boys basketball.

He gets to coach in the Arthur M. Kohs Gymnasium.

“That’s special, unbelievable,” Mike said.

IN CASE YOU’RE WONDERING...

Artie Kohs, the first athletic director at the school, chose the nickname and colors.

TEAM NICKNAME:

He chose the Falcons because of the Air Force Falcons and the fact he did not know of any other state high school team with that nickname.

TEAM COLORS:

He chose black and white because he remembered how good they looked on Providence College players.



“I know how much love [my father] had for this building. I remember him saying to me, ‘If I could change anything in my life, I wouldn’t change a thing.’”

Artie calls the 34 years spent here the best of his life.

“Love the school,” he said.

“Love what it is.” 🌸

be named Kohs Way. As Tim says, “My mom drove us everywhere, went to every game. She loved it. It seemed she was in nine places at once.”

And that would include her job as a nurse.

“She was everywhere all the time,” Mike said. “We had no idea how she did it.”

Now Tim is reminded of his mother when he sees his wife Carly driving the kids all over the place and attending games. Carly’s brother was Tim’s roommate at Springfield College. And Artie coached Carly’s father when he was at Hale Ray in Moodus before Artie got to Xavier. Small world.

At 51, Tim has been around girls basketball a long time and continues to be impressed with his players. “They work hard, and they are tough,” Tim said. “I am demanding.”

“Tim’s much more demonstrative than I am,” said Mike, 52, of his brother’s vein-popping style. “I’m pretty vocal, but he is off the charts.”

That might have been a description of Artie back in the day. Mike remembers his father in a coat and tie at games, but when he didn’t like a call, off came the coat and he might fling it into the bleachers. One



An Easy One To Pin Down

For the Moynihans, Xavier is The Right Fit



Patrick Moynihan '17
Quinn Moynihan '20

For Eileen and Patrick Moynihan, there was no wrestling with the decision -- the boys would be going to a Catholic high school, which is what Eileen and Patrick each did. They went to East Catholic in Manchester but when it came time to send their eldest child, Patrick, Xavier won out.

And now Xavier and the family are both reaping the benefits. Patrick, who wrestled for coach Mike Cunningham, is a 2017 graduate and now at the Coast Guard Academy.

"He never would have been there if not for Xavier," his father said.

Quinn Moynihan '20, wrestles, as does Ronan '22. All they need to do is look at big brother Patrick.

"I know going to Xavier can help me get into a better school," Quinn said. "And wrestling has helped me with discipline."

Patrick had an outstanding career at Xavier. He was a four-time SCC

champion and a two-time Class LL state champion. He was a captain as a junior and a senior and won the prestigious Falcon Award that goes to only one senior every year at graduation

"I learned self-discipline and how to develop time management skills at Xavier," Patrick said. "These skills have helped me succeed in college, both in the classroom and as a wrestler at the Coast Guard Academy. For that I am grateful to my coaches and teachers at Xavier."

Last year, Quinn placed fourth in the Class LL championship

Like all sports, wrestling demands discipline, even to the point of making the right weight. Not a bad life lesson. And then there is the bond.

"You get to be friends with everyone, you can rely on them and they can rely on you," Quinn said.

The team also relies on Eileen, a mother of four [their daughter graduated from Mercy this year]. Eileen is a fifth grade teacher in Portland at Brownstone Intermediate School. Eileen and her husband, who wrestled in high school and is now a state marshal, have been around wrestling since Patrick started at about the age of 10.

At Xavier, Eileen is the team mom. She is the link between Coach Cunningham and the parents of the wrestlers. She sends out correspondence and takes care of logistics. For instance, last year the team went to Virginia, Maine and Vermont for tournaments.

"She has been in charge of that position since the 2014-15 season," Cunningham said. "Essentially, since we wrestle an extremely tough schedule and a lot of our competition is out of state, she sets up all the hotels for the team and any schedule changes or modifications she gets out to the parents. She is unbelievable in the time she takes to help me out, and it gives me the chance to focus on the kids and the team."

She jokes that it is a part-time job but smiles when she says it because it is one she clearly enjoys. As she said, she has never been one to sit around.

As the family left an interview for this story, Ronan and mom were on their way to a meeting about sailing, a sport offered here but not at many schools in the state.

That's the beauty of Xavier, a chance to explore the open waters. 🌸



BORN TO COACH

By Following His Father Into The Coaching Ranks,
Mike Cunningham Has Found His Calling

In 2003, Mike Cunningham coached three varsity sports at Xavier: lacrosse, soccer and wrestling.

He was in his mid-thirties and he had two young children (eight and 10). But for Cunningham, there was no way he was going to say no to the challenge. Cunningham had waited his whole life to coach.

“Getting kids to do more than they ever thought they could ever do is really the thrill,” Cunningham said. “The winning is fantastic. But the process of seeing them develop is the thrill.”

He was born to coach.

In his almost three-decade career at Xavier (he’ll celebrate his 20th anniversary teaching at Xavier this school year), Cunningham has built one of the finest wrestling programs in New England. But he doesn’t need to be coaching wrestling to be content.

Cunningham, who wrestled at Springfield College, just needs to coach. If you gave him

a chessboard, a few players and a schedule of events, he’d get the job done.

“Any sport you coach it doesn’t matter what you know – it is just how you deal with kids and how you prepare, how you practice, what you expect and what your standards are,” Cunningham said. “I could coach tiddlywinks.”

He no longer coaches lacrosse at Xavier. He stepped down years ago. But there’s not a sports season at Xavier that goes by where Cunningham isn’t working his magic with some athlete or some team.

In the fall, he’s with soccer as an assistant soccer coach. In the winter, he goes to the mat with his powerhouse wrestling team. And the in spring, he’s out coaching junior varsity golf.

All those hours? All that stress? He wouldn’t have it any other way. “The lives you change,” Cunningham said. “That’s the rush.”

At Xavier, Cunningham, who works as a physical education and science teacher during the school day, has taken the wrestling team

to another level. Xavier has won a State Open Championship (2012), two Class LL Championships (2012 and 2011), seven SCC titles, as well as produced several individual state champions. He’s also been fortunate to coach his two sons. His son Tyler was a top wrestler for Mike and his younger son Colin, who also wrestled, returns to coach the team in the winter, too.

Cunningham points to a great staff and the right standards as the key to a successful program.

“Any sport you coach it doesn’t matter what you know – it is just how you deal with kids and how you prepare, how you practice, what you expect and what your standards are. ... I could coach tiddlywinks.”

“We believe we can get a kid to do more than he ever dreamed he could do,” Cunningham said. “You just want to have an impact on people’s lives. That’s why I do it.”

As the wrestling coach, he has to bring a certain degree of toughness.

“My standard is high, and I think kids like that,” Cunningham said. “They thrive on that.”

For Cunningham, coaching and helping young men was always part of the family business. His father was the athletic director at Holy Cross in Waterbury.



COLIN CUNNINGHAM '14

As a child, Cunningham grew up watching his father help kids. He saw the impact his dad had and he wanted to do the same.

“My father coached football, track and wrestling in the 60s,” Cunningham said. “I was always there. I liked the idea of turning young boys into men and teaching them the right values.”

He jokes that’s he’s never leaving the wrestling program. “I’m probably going to die before I give that up. ... As long as I’m alive, I’m going to try my [hardest] to keep it at a high level.”



Cunningham with his father and son, Tyler '12.



HERE'S HOW THE STORY GOES...

Xavier junior Tim Rinaldi, then a freshman, is at Pratt & Whitney with his mom Carolyn to go to the credit union. Tim sees a quarter scale model of a cut-away engine and texts his father, who works there, to get him photos.

His father obliges and during the next couple of weeks Tim is cutting cardboard meticulously. Hour by hour, it starts to look more and more like a jet engine. At last year's Durham Fair, it gets exhibited.

The Pratt & Whitney communications department finds out and does a story on Tim. The company also invites Tim and the robotics team to visit the jet engine museum in East Hartford, where they get a crash course in jet engine familiarization.

We're not done just yet ... the president of Pratt & Whitney gives Tim a handwritten note saying how impressed he is with what Tim has done and a job awaits when he gets older. Tim also gets a leadership coin, which doesn't get handed out by the president all that often.

"That's what I admire about Tim. He can get laser-focused," said his father Steve said. "What it has taught me is to never second guess where he is going."

Tim is always on the go. The junior is on the robotics team, in the engineering club, and in the jazz band at Xavier, where he plays the alto saxophone. But he also can play the flute and clarinet and piano. Oh, and we forgot, he is a first degree black belt in karate who went with his mother to the world championships in Ireland last year. His mother competed, too. His dad did not, but he is a third degree black belt like his wife.

Take a breath yet?

FULL BLAST for RINALDIS

JET ENGINES, ROBOTS, KARATE AND MUSIC

Seemingly the only time the family takes a breath is the summer. "We're juggling a lot," Steve said. "But when you get a break and reflect on what you did, the accomplishments are pretty rich. We've always had a philosophy of run hard and not try to figure out everything ahead of time."

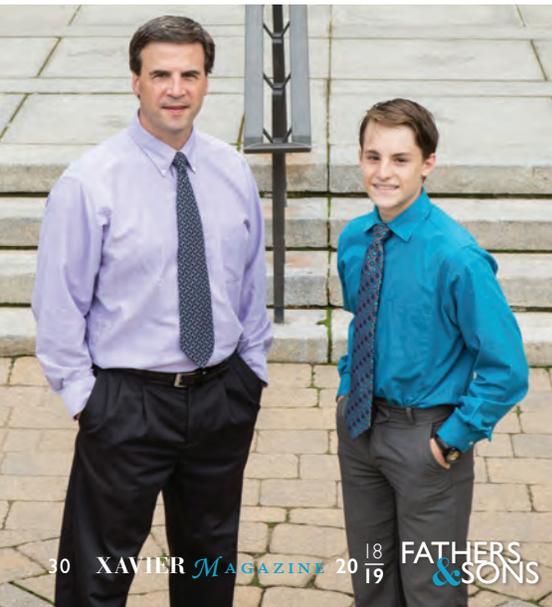
Tim ended up going to Xavier because of the robotics program and the jazz band. His praise for music teacher Erik Elligers is effusive. At first, though, Xavier was not on the radar. But the family went to a robotics competition in Waterbury before Tim was in high school and talked with Xavier people. They went to a Xavier open house, remembering that Xavier had a robotics team. Tim got to hear the Xavier jazz band. That was enough. He was going to be a Falcon.

Steve said Xavier fits his and Carolyn's philosophy, which is to gain leadership and responsibility. And, of course, when the robotics team found out that Steve worked at Pratt & Whitney, he was recruited to be a mentor.

"It has been a great experience," Steve said. "It's not just about the robots. It's a fully-functioning organization from a business plan to marketing to designing, prototyping, manufacturing, testing. And of course the fun part is the competition and the social networking that goes along with all of that."

Tim said from robotics he has learned time management and working together as a team; from karate stamina, focus and staying mentally and physically in control. And jazz band allows his artistic and creative side to flourish.

He's interested in mechanical engineering and designing. Someday, a robot that plays multiple instruments with a black belt in karate is coming our way. 🦾



Steering The Ship

The Khuntes Are Guiding Forces



Akshay Khunte '20



Junior Akshay Khunte realizes the opportunities he has at Xavier High School.

“From the start I have been pretty involved, challenging myself in and out of the classroom,” Khunte said.

He is a top student, an Eagle Scout, the coxswain on the crew team and a member of the engineering club.

“As the coxswain you’re one of the smallest in the boat but have the biggest voice,” Khunte said. “In crew I have learned how to be a good teammate, motivating and guiding others.”

“In engineering club it’s team involvement, producing a project and working with others to meet a certain goal.”

Last year the engineering team won the International RWDC Award in April.

Akshay’s older brother Mihir is a 2017 Xavier graduate and also was a member of the engineering team. Mihir, the valedictorian of his class who also won the mathematics department award, is attending Yale.

The importance of education is at the forefront of why the Khuntes are part of the Xavier family.

Ajay Khunte, the boys’ father, grew up in India where he also went to a Catholic school. Mr. Khunte decided Xavier was the place for his sons for the many opportunities offered, but the top reasons are academic rigor and discipline.

Just as Akshay is the guiding force in the boat for his teammates, Ajay has been the guiding force in his sons’ education. It is of utmost importance to him.

Ajay said his sons have matured over their Xavier years and blended in because of “the community feeling the school offers.”

His older son was accepted to Yale in part because of Xavier.

“It prepared him well for that kind of pressure,” Ajay said. “The academic challenges are there so that the transition to college isn’t as difficult.”

The school motto, “Be A Man,” embodies so many attributes. Father and son talked about maturity, being responsible, setting examples for others, being a well-rounded individual.

To that end Akshay earned his Eagle Scout badge as a freshman. For his project he built an aviary for a raptor rehabilitation center in Ashford.

He has been back there, and in it was a peregrine Falcon. One Falcon helping another falcon, so to speak.

“I’m very proud of Akshay,” said his father, who is chief financial officer for a business unit under United Technologies Corporation. “He is a really nice, caring person at heart.” 🌸



RUNNING MATES

“Brendan has the ability to treat everybody with the type of respect we all yearn for.”



AS A LEADER (AND A HORSE RACING FAN), BRENDAN BUCKLEY STRIVES TO KEEP PACE WITH HIS FAMILY ROLE MODELS

When Brendan Buckley '19 was in second grade at St. Rita School in Hamden, his teacher had a nickname for him.

“She started calling me the Mayor,” Buckley said. “That was a sign of respect she was giving me, which in second grade was a big thing. ... I just had good relationships with people. And I’ve just grown from that.”

The nickname never did stick for Buckley. But that teacher was on to something.

Buckley is never afraid to take an interest in others and see if he can offer help.

“He’s in his best element in that role,” his father John said. “That’s something that he enjoys, and it comes naturally to him.”

As one of the leaders of the class of 2019, the trait has only gotten stronger over the years.

At Xavier, that same personality that caught the attention of his teachers has allowed him to make an impact on his classmates and the school.

“Brendan has not been afraid to embrace the challenges of leadership and has earned the respect of his peers, teachers and coaches,” Xavier principal Brendan

Donohue said. “He is a man of strong character and integrity. Xavier is a better place because of Brendan’s contributions.”

Early on, his parents saw those leadership qualities in their son.

“He’s always had a high social IQ,” his father said. “He understands how people react to him and he understands how he reacts to people. Brendan has the ability to treat everybody with the type of respect we all yearn for in life. Generally, he’s come to understand that when you respect people the respect often comes back to you.”

John Buckley won’t take credit for his son’s leadership skills. He points to his wife and others. But his son knows it has been a mix of his entire family, including his father. From his mother Tricia,

who is a newborn intensive care nurse, to his two siblings John and Meghan, he’s never been short of role models.

“I’ve learned from them,” Brendan said. “It has come from both my mother and father. They’ve done a lot for me ... along with my brother and sister. Being the youngest, I’ve been able to watch a lot of my life.”

John and Brendan have a tight connection as father and son, including a love of two sports that share little in common: horse racing and hockey.

Since the late ‘80s, John Buckley, a successful lawyer in New Haven, has owned hundreds of horses, including Keen Ice, who handed Triple Crown winner American Pharoah his first loss at the Travers Stakes at Saratoga in

2015. He got into the business with his own father, who had always wanted to try it. Their first horse was named Acting Gallant.

Brendan has traveled with his father to some of the most famous tracks in the country: Churchill Downs, Belmont Park, Saratoga, watching his father in action.

“Brendan has been around it since he was in a car seat,” John said. “It has been a great ride.”

John Buckley has lived a full life. As a teenager, he went to three different high schools because of his father’s job. He was captain of the Middlebury College hockey team. There’s plenty to learn from his experiences. And Brendan has tried to honor his father by approaching life with the same type of focus and effort.

“He’s been a large inspiration in my life,” Brendan said. “One of the things he’s instilled in me since Day 1 is with hard work and determination you can do anything. Whether it is sports or academics, you can go anywhere you want in life with those things. He’s done a great job of pushing me to my absolute limits to make me the best person I can be.” 🌸



Family of FAITH

The Bakers Have A Story To Tell

VERNON BAKER is a founding member of Bach Investments Plus. He has written books, articles and reviews. He has been on the faculty of MIT, Brown and UMass Boston. He has served on various boards.

His wife, the Rev. Katherine Fagerburg, is the Chaplain of Connecticut Baptist Homes. His son Sam is a junior at Xavier High School and converting to Catholicism.

That would seem to be enough of a story, but there is more. Mr. Baker drifted into alcoholism in the early 1980s and was homeless for a time. Once he overcame that, he teamed with photographer Philip Farnsworth on a book called *Under The Bridge*, published in 1988, that depicted the homeless in Hartford.

Baker should write his own life story. It would require an investment of time, so maybe that is a project for later in life. Hollywood should come calling. In fact, he has been approached about making a movie, but that is not Baker's style. He is philanthropic, giving of his time, but "likes to fly under the radar."

Baker's life has been like some of the winding roads so common to Connecticut. He was a college professor and taught anthropology and archeology. But at one point alcohol got the best of him.

"The result was that things fell apart and I lost relationships, a lot of things, ended up on the streets, but by the grace of God I turned it around," Baker said.

He went on to become a financial planner and takes tremendous pride in helping people "live their lives, send their children to colleges, get set for retirement."

Not so different from being a teacher. "You help people get to where they want to go," Baker said.

In the late '80s, on the heels of the book, Baker and Farnsworth did presentations at schools and other places, even doing one in Washington, D.C., in front of various politicians.

To this day, Baker might get a call from someone he does not know, but they know his past. And they want to talk to him because a family member is having issues. He makes himself available.

"The result was that things fell apart and I lost relationships, a lot of things, ended up on the streets, but by the grace of God I turned it around." – Vernon Baker

Baker beat his addiction in part because "I've been blessed with the ability that once I resolve not to do something, I don't do it. ... So many souls cannot do that and unlike the vast majority who find themselves down and out, I had a tremendous education to fall back on." That, and as he said more than once in the conversation, the grace of God.

Baker, who was raised in the Catholic faith, met his wife at South Church in New Britain, where they were married in 1991 and where Katherine eventually became co-pastor. Daughter Abi is a sophomore at the University of Vermont and son Sam is a junior at Xavier.

Sam came here as a Protestant, but Xavier changed him "in unimaginable ways." He is in the process of converting to Catholicism, and both his parents are happy to see him engaging in his faith. Sam, a member of the crew team and jazz band, says he wants to study theology in college, "something I would not have thought as a freshman."

His parents' faith is carried out in real life. It has been his mother's career and the cornerstone of what his father has become.

Sam is a member of the Principal's Advisory Council, Philosophy Club and Model United Nations. He has impressed the faculty and administration with his passion for literature. He is extremely well-read. "You don't often find a junior in high school, whose favorite author is C.S. Lewis, but after learning about the Baker family, it is not surprising," Xavier Principal Brendan Donohue said.

Vernon Baker believes that those with the resources to do so, should give to others.

He says life is a rice bowl, and everyone must get some. "If some have too much and some not enough, something is wrong. We are called upon to help, to stretch ourselves out of the comfort zone ... I can tell you that Katherine and I feel the more we give, the more we have received."

Another Baker belief: "Do things that are appropriate and right. Don't rest on your laurels and don't look for a pat on the back." Maybe just a helping hand. 🌸

BECOMING YOUR OWN MAN

After Growing Up The Principal's Son, Brendan Donohue '19, Has Made Sure To Make The Most of His Time At Xavier

Before he started his first day of high school, Brendan Donohue '19 asked his new principal for a rare favor.

He wanted to sleep in a little later before he had to go to work with his dad, who had always gone in bright and early.

"He asked 'so what time are we leaving [in the morning]?' " the eighth principal of Xavier said with a laugh.

In his four years as a student at Xavier, Brendan Donohue hasn't requested much of his father or, for that matter, looked for any help (beyond a little later wake-up).

Instead, he has quietly helped his class make an impact.

"I feel like our class can leave a strong legacy," Donohue said. "I feel as a class we can really set an example for the next three classes that are here and they can set an example for the classes that follow."

As the first son of a principal in the school's 55-year history, the younger Donohue has a unique opportunity at Xavier. And he's made the most of it.

"I've really tried to learn the most from Xavier before I move on," Brendan Jr. said.

His father has done his best to help, too.

After watching his son grow up at Xavier, Brendan Sr. wanted Brendan Jr. to have the same experience as the students he leads every day.

"I've tried to give him the genuine Xavier experience without his dad being principal," Brendan Sr. said. "I've very consciously tried to treat him like any other student, not being lighter on him and also not being tougher on him."

It has worked well. Brendan Jr. has been able to create his own legacy at Xavier, giving back through service and a commitment to the school.

"Our school motto is 'Be A Man.' I think he has lived that and he's going to continue to live that," Brendan Sr. said.

At the start, the principal wondered what it would be like with both in the building. Often, they go days without seeing each other until the end of the day. While Brendan Sr. is occupied with his daily duties, Brendan Jr. is busy making the most of his experience as a Xavier student. In his four years at the school, Brendan has made an impact as a peer minister, a Big Falcon, a National Honor Society officer, a member of Model UN, and Empower Leadership. Additionally, he is part of six honor societies, takes nine AP classes and plays baseball.

"He works his tail off," Brendan Sr. said. "He has always taken the toughest courses and he's always excelled in them. And it hasn't been easy. His mother and I expect him to always to do his best."

Since he was old enough to walk, Brendan Jr. has been coming to Xavier. He knows all the ins and outs of the

building. When asked about his earliest memory, Brendan Jr. recalls a scene in an empty classroom.

"I got set up in some classroom with toy dinosaurs and a TV and a couple movies," Brendan Jr. said. "I think I was watching Star Wars."

His father remembers one of the first memories at Xavier for the pair.

"This picture is in my mind," Brendan Sr. said. "He's two years old. The school is empty and he's walking down the halls. And I always kind of look through his eyes. Those halls must have seemed like they went on forever and forever. ... I also remember this one time he had to stop at every locker and spin every combination."

Brendan has grown up with his father at Xavier. But the bond is not tied only to Xavier. They have many common interests. They like the same sports teams and J.R.R. Tolkien novels. They love history and have a connection to Ireland (Brendan Jr. has played Gaelic Football in national competitions and traveled to Ireland as part of a special trip sponsored by the Irish government. His father spent a year of his life in Ireland).

"He's always been a role model in the way to act, the way to treat other people, the way to do your business," Brendan Jr. said about his father.

One of their favorite Lord of the Rings quotes can also be linked to the school's motto: "put aside the ranger, become who you were born to be."

They will share another connection at graduation, too.





“Our school motto is Be A Man. I think [Brendan Jr.] has lived that and he’s going to continue to live that.”

In May, Brendan Jr. will walk across the stage as his father reads his name, making them the first father and son pair to have that experience at Xavier.

As he has done for the last eight graduations since he became principal, Brendan Sr. will read out each name with the same inflection, making extra sure to keep the same rhythm. It has been a priority for the older Donohue to make sure every family has the same opportunity to enjoy the special moment. He wants every name to be read in the same manner and celebrated equally.

It won’t change this year when he has to read out his son’s name. But for the pair, who have already shared a lifetime in these halls, it will be one more memory they can keep quietly between themselves. And that works perfectly for their relationship. 🌸

BRENDAN DONOHUE '19



Nucci Delaney '21 “Xavier has always been, and will always be, a constant, benevolent force in my life. This force manifested in my father, who graduated from here in the class of '86. You can see its effect on me in my name: my middle name is Xavier, after the school. For this reason it's safe to assume I was destined to go here. Xavier was always the stricter, tougher school compared to other Catholic male high schools I was introduced to. My dad told me stories of his JUGs [Justice Under God - detentions]. I was very scared. But now that I am also a member of the community I understand my father so much clearer. I realize where he gets his integrity and work ethic from, and I wish to do the same.”

Every year sons and brothers come to Xavier after hearing stories from their family members their whole life. This year is no different. In all four classes, there are several students with family connections. We caught up with a handful of them to learn what they heard from their relatives and what it means to be at Xavier now...

On a Familiar Path

Ronan M. Marino '20 “All families have their valued traditions and one of my family's traditions is producing Xavier Falcons. Starting in 2007, when my oldest brother came here as freshman, through May 2020, when I graduate, we have had thirteen continuous years of one or more of my siblings or me walking the halls. That is a lot of footsteps and a lot of hallways. It is also a lot of football games, SAC dances, retreats, practices, late night away games, lost ties and surprisingly not as many JUGs as you would expect. 13 years can bring many changes. Our school campus has had a dramatic change since 2007. Xavier is also a place, where traditions last. Five siblings have had many of the same teachers, we've had only one guidance counselor and one Driver's Education instructor. In May 2020, I will follow my brothers' footsteps, continue the tradition and become a proud Xavier High School graduate and alumnus.”





Conor Selfors '22 “When I was younger I never really thought much about high school or Xavier. I knew my dad had friends from high school that he kept in touch with. I heard stories about high school, running and races. I was introduced to people all the time where my dad would simply say I ran with him at Xavier. I knew about the Xavier running dynasties. I met members of historic Xavier teams. My Uncle had run, for a short time, and pole vaulted at Xavier. When we were little Dillon and I took turns wearing his Xavier Cross Country championship jacket. I hope to follow in my father’s, uncle’s, sister’s (a state champion at Mercy) and brother’s footsteps and make a difference at Xavier. But at the very least I want to have as many great stories and friends from Xavier.”

Francisco Quintana '19 “From a young age, I could recall my dad speaking about his days at Xavier and how he cherished each one of them, and I knew that I wanted a high school experience just like that. I want to go to this place that my dad went to high school, as well as my godfather. As I grew up my dad kept on talking about how this school helped shape him into the man that he was and I didn’t understand exactly what he meant at the time, but I knew that everyone who has ever met my dad said he was a great guy, so I had an idea of what this school could do. As eighth grade came around all my friends were talking about all the places they were applying to, but I knew where I was going. I was going to the school that turns boys in to men. It was the only thing in my life I knew I truly wanted from Day One.”

Joseph Lane '22 “My dad graduated from Xavier in 1995 and as a baby I went to many events at Xavier. [His mom, Heidi, teaches Spanish and is the Foreign Language Department chair.] Many teachers have known me since I was born. As I got older, Xavier became a second home to me because my dad also worked at Xavier for a number of years and I remember all the football and basketball games he brought me to. When I started school here I wanted to live the life my dad did at this school and follow in his footsteps. A quote that I like is “Living a lasting legacy.” This means to me that I am continuing my father’s legacy and that is what I am planning to do for the rest of my Xavier career.”





Linda Charpentier came to Xavier in 1974, right out of UConn. She never left. She's in her 45th academic year, and the mission remains the same.

“**Boys** are still boys, and the job of helping to mold them into responsible Christian young men is still much the same,” Charpentier said. “However, the tools of teaching *have* changed, especially with regard to technology.”

Back then, Charpentier not only walked into an all-boys school, but also into an all-male teaching staff.

“While I was not the first female teacher at Xavier, the school had gone without one for a few years, I was the solo female teacher for three years,” Charpentier said.

She has taught the biological sciences for all but one year since arriving at Xavier. She now only teaches one course: AP/UConn ECE (Early College Experience) Environmental Science. Charpentier is uncertain when she will fully retire. In the end, what might get her is the copier.

“The most frustrating moments for a teacher?” Charpentier said. “Trying to use the photocopier, only to have it jam. Which is why I embrace modern technology. It saves paper, trees – and my sanity.”

The most satisfying: “Hearing success stories from alumni.”

Three questions for Charpentier:

What was the school like back then as compared to now?

Back in 1974, there was an even mix of Xaverian Brothers and lay faculty at Xavier. Everyone wore their hair much longer, students and teachers alike. *Everyone* attended Friday night football games at Palmer Field. There was no varsity hockey, volleyball, crew, sailing, rifle, lacrosse, Ultimate ... not even varsity soccer. Academically, no AP or UConn ECE courses were offered. There was no music program, only the opportunity to sing in the choir for Mass.

How has technology changed teaching for you?

I remember the day (early '90s) my husband gave me his old desktop computer and told me I could use it in my teaching. “What am I ever going to do with a computer as a teacher?” I asked him.

Technology has reshaped teaching, especially in a descriptive science like biology. Gone are the days of trying to draw complex diagrams on the blackboard with only one

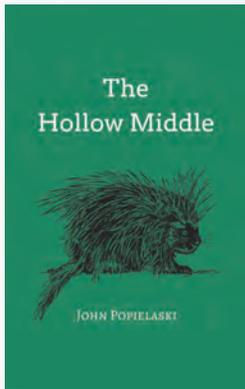
“I was the solo female teacher for three years”

color of chalk. Overhead transparency machines helped, but they could not be animated like modern slideshows with computer projectors.

Today, students take their assessments online. Clear, colorful diagrams can be incorporated, even animations, and students receive instant feedback, at least for the objective part of their exams and quizzes. Homework assignments are posted to an online calendar. Short video clips can be inserted into lessons. Students can collaborate online in real time for team lab reports. All homework and lab reports are submitted electronically, and I can annotate these and send them back to students at any time of day without the use of any hard copies at all.

What are some special memories?

- ⊗ The Xavier choir singing and Brother Jeremiah Dromey taking the photos at my wedding to Peter.
- ⊗ Watching our son, Tom, walk across the stage as a 2006 Xavier graduate.
- ⊗ Teaching in the science department with legends like Brother Houlihan, Brother Joe Pawlika, and Tom and Theresa Pierce. Working with other legends like Brothers Jim Kelly, Raymond Hoyt and James Boyle.
- ⊗ Grateful memories of vice principal Bill McKenna mentoring me as a young teacher.
- ⊗ Exciting memories of attending every Xavier football state championship game.
- ⊗ Being an assistant coach on the 2004 and 2006 state championship sailing teams. 🌸



Book Excerpt: The Hollow Middle

English Teacher John Popielaski's First Novel Explores Autism And The Great State of Maine

A few years ago, Xavier English teacher John Popielaski lent his mother-in-law a copy of Tea Obreht's *The Tiger's Wife*.

When she was done, Popielaski was busy getting started on his first novel.

"When she finished [*The Tiger's Wife*], she asked why I hadn't written a novel. So I started one," Popielaski said. "I'd been wanting to make my man-fleeing-society-for-the-wilderness contribution to American literature anyway."

After a career spent teaching Xavier students the last two decades, Popielaski can add novelist to his resume.

In *The Hollow Middle*, Popielaski tells the tale of Albert Lesiak, an aging English teacher in Connecticut, who makes the decision to leave the life he knows and move to the land he owns in Maine after receiving a windfall in delayed acknowledgement of the government's complicity in his father's death.

When Lesiak's wife suggests they foster or adopt autistic twin boys, he starts to imagine taking on the role of patriarch in his new life.

Here is a short passage from the novel, which is available now at unsolicitedpress.com

"Sadness floods through Albert when he thinks how little is held sacred, how little is perceived as lost. Try telling someone with a flat-screen television and a mortgage and a riding mower and a laptop and a dream of children college-bound that if he wants a fuller, more authentic life he should be mindful of the solemn grandeur and the cherished, long-term memories of rocks, that if he wants the dust to be more loving and responsive to his footsteps he should lose the shoes and socks more often, that if he has an inner life and sense of history he should feel haunted by the native dead, the souls of those the white men so efficiently dispossessed. If you're like Albert, you don't say a word (unless you've had a few) because you know the sacred and the secular are mismatched rams, the former waiting for the final head-butt to relieve it of the stress of balancing on the precipice so long. You yourself, although you're always open to the possibility and really want it to be true, can't always wrap your brain around the sentience of a rock, and, despite your excellent grades in two college courses on Buddhist thought, your fluency eludes you when you try to posit how it might be possible. You yourself were raised believing in the need for arch support. You are a tenderfoot and thus don't like to contemplate too much the always rising mountain of discarded shoes you've added to for many years. You argue with yourself that you were not there at the dispossession, that your forebears took a later boat, that you have little reason to feel haunted by the spiritus mundi you are not unwilling to acknowledge probably exists. You'd rather whistle past the graveyard. You do not say a word, but, if you're like Albert, you are bothered, gnawed at by a sense that you are not at peace—with your surroundings, with yourself. This feeling doesn't follow you with the insistence of a Fury, but you sometimes wonder if it's always there and you have simply missed the subtlety, the understated, native way that Chief Seattle's prophecy about invisible, returning hosts who will not leave the latest iteration of the settlers alone has maybe come to pass. If you're like Albert." ❁

**...BECAUSE YOU KNOW THE
SACRED AND THE SECULAR
ARE MISMATCHED RAMS...**

Engineering A Dynasty

An Oral History Of An International Championship

Last April, the Xavier Engineering team spent its spring vacation in Washington, D.C. When the students returned, they had won the school's first international championship and the second national championship in three years at the Real World Design Challenge in Washington, D.C. The team has won the national championship four times (2011, 2012, 2016, 2018).

As part of the competition, the group designed an efficient low-cost unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) capable of spraying pesticide over 10 percent of a two mile by two-mile cornfield. In an 80 page technical report, the team had to prove the viability of this design, the theory of operation and the business case. The team outscored the Commonwealth of the Mariana Islands to win the U.S. National Championship and defeated the Chinese National Championship team for the international title after an intense presentation.

Before the team (Roham Hussain '18, Noah McGuinness '18, Vincent Salabarría '18, Anthony Tedeschi '18, Akshay Khunte '20, Alex Pralea '20 and Carter Chase '20) went their separate ways last year, we got them together to find out how they engineered this remarkable achievement.

The Motivation

Pralea: "I think because there's a lot to live up to we want to try to replicate the success. To an extent, we don't want to let the school down and people down. But also we want to win ourselves. We're all really highly motivated so that influences us."

Salabarría: "I think the thing we have to mention is because it is a club here at Xavier as opposed to a class I think we're inherently more motivated to do it. There's nothing making us do it."

The Design Choice

Salabarría: "I think the judges look for two things in designs: you can either have something that is really creative or have something that is practical. We always strive for the more practical option where other teams go the other route."

McGuinness: "Sure our design doesn't look like something from outer space, but at the same time it is still four times more efficient than the current market one."

The Group Dynamics

Khunte: "We all appreciate humor. There is nobody on the team that is super serious, which helps with the flow."

McGuinness: "If you sat in on one of our meetings, I'm sure you would be like how did these guys win. We're not the most organized. We don't communicate the best. But we all know what we have to do. When there is work that needs to be done, we get it done."

Hussain: "We're also not afraid to call each other out. [Khunte] is the master of calling people out. If he has a problem he will be like 'this is wrong.' And we'll all be like 'let's do this.' We're all considered equals and we all have a voice."

The Presentation

Khunte: "We were all content with what we did. We all walked out [from the presentation] and we were like we just put the best foot forward possible."

On Recent Run of Success

McGuinness: "I was wondering that recently. What is it that makes Xavier so successful in this challenge? We're going up against specifically STEM magnet schools, engineering magnet schools, schools where kids have been fed engineering their entire lives pretty much and yet we still have a track record of being pretty successful. And I think the main thing that it comes down to is the well-roundedness and the motivation to get the work done."

Khunte: "By knowing it was possible is what really drove us. It is not something that is out of reach."

The Lasting Impact

McGuinness: "Hands down, some of my best memories are from this team. The best relationships are forged through a common experience."

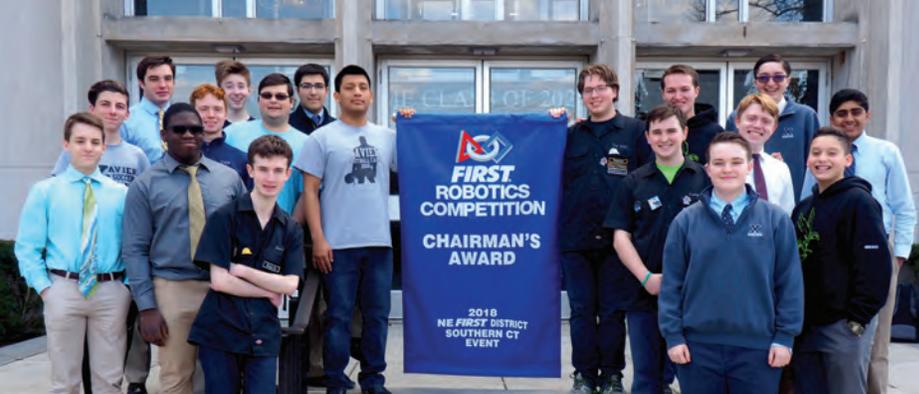
Tedeschi: "It has just been an incredible experience. It has been surreal. I'm going to miss it."

Chase: "We're like a family. We all have each other's back."

Salabarría: "Part of what this team really proves is that if you're the best person you can be, it really does pay off."

Hussain: "I think our success is a testament to what Xavier represents. Xavier encourages dedicated people to band together and communicate with each other and do something amazing." **X**





FIRST AND 10

What You Need To Know About Robotics

Ten things you may or may not know about Xavier robotics and robotics in general.

- 1 The Xavier robotics team started in 2013 and is named the FullMetal Falcons. The team's robot for the 2018 season was named Maratus Speciosus or "Mara" for short. After the robot is built this year, the name will follow.
- 2 Colleges are after students who participate in robotics, as are businesses. FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) reports that it has 200 scholarship providers offering a potential total of \$80 million. According to FIRST, 15 percent of the incoming 2017 class at WPI were FIRST alumni. Some colleges attended by Xavier robotics alumni include Yale, MIT, RPI, WPI, Penn State, Brown and UConn.
- 3 Last season the team won the Chairman's Award, which is the highest honor, at a district event in Fairfield University. The Falcons won the Engineering Inspiration Award at an event in Waterbury, and the Imagery Award at the New England championships in Boston. And to top it off, the team went to the world championships in Detroit and finished the season as semifinalists in the Archimedes Division.
- 4 There are four seasons to robotics. The preseason is from the start of school into December. The team will have booths at fairs, get new members involved, raise funds. The build season is the six weeks spent building the robot, writing essays for the various awards, explaining who the team is and what makes it unique. The competition season is about seven weeks starting March 9 and culminating with the world championships, which will be in Detroit April 24-27. The offseason is late spring and summer, during which there are robotics camps, and one was at Xavier this year.
- 5 Robotics is also about outreach. Beyond school events and fairs to spread the word, the team gets involved with volunteer opportunities. Last season the team worked with a raptor bird sanctuary in Killingworth and will again this season. They also have worked with Mercy Ships (hospital ships).

- 6 There are mentors from various occupations but the team is run by the students. "You can have your little portion of the team and make it your own," 2018 captain Marty Wall explained. Among the roles, engineering, business, programming and the doodle squad that does graphic design.
- 7 Robotics often is referred to as the "sport for the mind." As Wall said, "We joke it is a secret society that you've never heard about unless you're part of it. But it is giant worldwide."
- 8 Wall said robotics is a combination of different sports. It has an auto racing feel in that the pits in a robotics competition are basically the garage where you work on things, while the competition itself has the feel of a basketball game with cheering for both sides. Some helpful web sites: thebluealliance.com, to scout, watch and gain information about teams worldwide. At firstinspires.org, you can learn such things as the levels of FIRST and scholarship opportunities.
- 9 FIRST was started in 1989 by Dean Kamen to help inspire young minds in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math). Kamen once wrote: "There's a better chance at winning the state lottery than becoming an NFL star. But what students can surely bank on is turning an interest in science and technology, through a sport like robotics, into a lifelong career that creates personal wealth and economic growth."

10

Robotics by the numbers, according to FIRST 2017-2018 season	\$80 Million In scholarships from ~ 200 providers.	530,000 Number of students involved worldwide.
61,000 Teams Worldwide.	44,900 Number of robots developed.	1989 FIRST was founded in Manchester, N.H.

An Ordination

44 YEARS LATER

Father Frank Gilbert, serving as an altar boy at St. Mary's Church in Portland, will never forget this image.

"I remember at an early age my mother getting up at 4 a.m. to iron our altar boy cassocks and making sure our shoes were shined," Rev. Gilbert said in a personal essay he wrote. "She always wanted her boys to be presentable to the Lord. My mother served the Lord by her caring motherhood."

Rev. Gilbert came back to Xavier High School, from which he graduated in 1974, on an autumn day for an interview. The school was one place where he grew in his faith.

"All the spiritual direction, the masses, it was very meaningful in maintaining a Christian perspective," Rev. Gilbert said after walking the hallways he had strolled through in the early '70s.

And now, 44 years later, he is a priest, having been ordained June 30 at St. Patrick Cathedral in Norwich.

He is centered now but at one time was literally all over the map. He was on the open seas for nine years as a Merchant Marine officer in various oil tankers, freighters and container ships.

"I wanted to get out of the neighborhood and see the world," Rev. Gilbert said.

Then he took a job at Millstone Nuclear Power Plant. But the calling to serve the Lord, which has always been a part of who he is, became stronger.

By 1999, he had completed the Norwich Diocesan Program of Lay Ministry and professed as a Secular Carmelite in 2006.

One day as he was driving out of Millstone, Rev. Gilbert took a detour. He went to see Rev. Joseph Whittel at St. Paul Church in Waterford, knowing that Father Whittel had been married with children. At one point Rev. Gilbert had been married, and he has a son Justin, a 2011 Xavier graduate. That visit helped encourage Rev. Gilbert to enter the seminary, from which he graduated last May.

Becoming a priest is not only meaningful to Father Frank but to his mother, who witnessed the ordination. She always wanted one of the boys to become a priest. All 10 went to Xavier High and, at one point, Xavier gave her an honorary diploma.

"My mother was strong in her love for God, and strong in her Catholic, religious practices," Rev. Gilbert said. "That cascaded down to some of us."

Of his late father, Rev. Gilbert said, "He had a heart of gold and often helped people in difficult times."

Rev. Gilbert serves as the parochial vicar at St. Bridget Church in Moodus and St. Patrick Church in East Hampton, working with Rev. Greg Galvin, a former Xavier chaplain.

His days vary. Up around 5:30 a.m. and done about 8 p.m., he has one constant, praying at various times throughout the day. A day also might hold a funeral, for which he carefully constructs as personal a homily as it can be. There are pastoral visits, other homilies to craft and various Masses to say.



Father Frank Gilbert with Bishop Michael Cote. Photo courtesy of the Norwich Diocese

"The spiritual depth of the Mass is profound," Rev. Gilbert said. "One can never uncover in totality its richness or its beauty. I enjoy as well bringing the other sacraments to the faithful."

Each Monday he generally can be found working on his homily for the following Sunday, and the rest of the week "my mind is always working on it."

His mother lives in Portland with his brother David and David's wife Terry. His son lives in Middletown. He has siblings all over the area. As he says, "Twenty minutes in every direction and I can be at someone's house or they can come see me, and they sometimes come to my Masses. It is a blessing being so close." ❀

Bill Nadeau '94

TEAMMATES FOR LIFE

Xavier offers 18 varsity sports, more than 60 clubs a student can join and various intramural opportunities. Seeking an opportunity at Xavier? It will be there.

And when you talk to an alumni, two years removed or 42 years removed, the days and hours spent participating with others, often create bonds that last forever. You may or may not remember a certain class, but a teammate or a big moment in a big event, a teacher or a coach who impacted your life, these stay in the mind and get played out time and again.

Bill Nadeau, Class of 1994, still hangs out with various former track and cross country teammates.

"We share the same values and passions, and the love and trust built while at Xavier created lifelong bonds," Nadeau said. "We also have kids of a similar age, and get together for



Bill Nadeau



Dan Davenport with Nadeau.

trips to the beach, skiing adventures and wine dinners. Essentially, we are all family."

The track at Xavier is named after Coach Bob Michalski, and with good reason. He spent a lifetime building winners on and off the track and trails. He was inducted into the Connecticut High School Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 2010. He coached from 1967-2005 and his cross country teams won 21 State Open titles; his outdoor track teams won 169 dual meets in a row from 1974-1985.

"Coach Michalski always told us that we could do three things well in life, and while at Xavier, we heeded his advice and focused first on the development of our character, followed by our education and then our athletics," Nadeau said. "It was pretty good advice - this man nurtured thousands of boys into true gentlemen during his tenure at Xavier."

Nadeau said his "moral compass developed at Xavier" has been something he has clung to in his personal and professional life.

Nadeau is on the Xavier board of directors. It all started with last year's cross country banquet celebrating the team's achievements. He met Headmaster David Eustis. Nadeau says he is thrilled to join the board, "bringing perspective from the class of 1994 to decisions being made today that are driving the future of Xavier High School."

Some of his classmates/teammates that he remains friendly with are Dan Davenport, John Mashia and Ben Piecuch.



The Nadeau Family

Nadeau and his family live in Franklin, Mass. He is global director in medical affairs for Cardinal Health, working in Mansfield, Mass.

His wife Janelle is a high school cross country coach.

"We met through mutual running friends," Nadeau said. "She was living and running professionally in Providence. Dan's wife, Marie, was also a professional runner, and we met through them and the Marie/Janelle friendship."

So running has been the thread that holds together various stages of his life.

As Nadeau looks back on 1994, he does not need much prodding to realize what his best memories are nearly 25 years later.

"Hands down, the successes, friendships and permanent bonds formed by being a part of the cross-country and track teams," Nadeau

said. "Those of us fortunate enough to have been bred in a Xavier institution, such as the cross country and track teams, carry those memories forever. I'll never forget our underdog win at the 1993 New England cross country championships, the thousands of miles run through Middletown and the person I developed into after four years in Middletown at Xavier."

Mashia, president and CEO of IMS, Inc., in Liverpool, N.Y., agrees. He ran cross country and track at Providence College.

"Bob Michalski and the cross country and track teams were certainly a foundation of who we all are today," Mashia said. "Xavier was a great place for me and I believe the lessons learned helped all of us be successful in our careers." **X**



L-R: Sinead Davenport, Rhys Nadeau, Josie Nadeau, Ciara Davenport



L-R: Janelle Nadeau (green visor), Michelle Mashia (pink dress), John Mashia, Marie Davenport. Each holding legs of their own kids (Josie, Elizabeth, Emma, Sinead)

Tim Boyle '13 signed an NFL contract with the Green Bay Packers on Saturday, April 28, 2018.

About 48 hours later, he was back in a familiar spot: the weight room at Xavier High School.

As Boyle pursued his lifelong goal of playing quarterback against the best in his sport this year, he stuck to what always worked.

For a few hours every day, wherever he was working out, he was just a kid who wanted to prove himself again.

"I didn't have a very easy path to get here," Boyle said. "It was a lot of up and downs, most of the time it was downs. But I believed in myself through the years."

Boyle, who matured as a player and a person through stops at UConn and Eastern Kentucky in college, never stopped working for his dream. And this summer, he made good on a promise to himself and his family and friends, by winning one of the quarterback spots on the 53-man roster.

With his college football stops at UConn and later Eastern Kentucky fresh in his memory, Boyle was hungry to show he had more left in him.

"The fact that Tim was able to overcome challenges throughout his college career speaks a great deal to his character," Xavier offensive coordinator and friend Greg Jaskot said. "No matter what situation he was faced with he always worked hard and never stopped learning and preparing."

After helping the Falcons win three straight championships, Boyle went to UConn, where he had some tough years. He then transferred to Eastern Kentucky.

"I think I'm a good example that even if you don't do well at a school and you transfer and you think things are down you always have a shot," Boyle said.

On the morning of the NFL Draft, Boyle did his best to distract himself from the significance of the day with a round of golf. But eventually he traveled to New Haven with his agent.

DREAM ACHIEVED

From Palmer To Lambeau, Tim Boyle Has Done It The Right Way

Around the seventh round, his agent received a call.

"When the Packers called my agent it hit me," Boyle said. "I was just overwhelmed with excitement and I was truly humbled."

It was a moment he had been dreaming about his whole life.

"Being a little kid growing up and playing quarterback you look at the Tom Bradys and even the Aaron Rodgers," Boyle said. "I remember [Rodgers] sitting behind Brett Favre. It was just a dream come true."

Boyle told his parents he had a deal, but he didn't tell them where he was headed until he got back to his family's home.

"I had a lot of friends and family there, which meant a lot to me," Boyle said. "I got home and everyone was going to crazy. I kind of settled everyone down and announced I was going to be a Green Bay Packer. The moment will be with me forever."

It was a crazy 24 hours.

Still, the Boyle family, who remain extremely close, were able to get away briefly to the family's office to soak in what just happened.

"I had a moment with my parents and I was on the phone with my two sisters where we were able to appreciate the moment after all the ups and downs I've been through and how I persevered," Boyle said. "I thanked them from the bottom of my heart for being there, no matter what, through thick and thin."

The contract lifted a weight off his shoulders, but he still had work to do to make the 53-man roster.

After a brief celebration, he didn't waste any time getting back to work. Boyle came on strong at camp and in the first preseason game. And he didn't stop. People in Green Bay were taking notice. But for his legion of supporters back home in Connecticut it was no surprise.

He was playing the same way he always did.

"Tim has never let anything get in the way of him achieving his dream of playing in the NFL," Jaskot said. **X**

"I didn't have a very easy path to get here. But I believed in myself through the years."





“Don’t let someone tell you that you can’t,” Preece said. “If you’re willing to put in the work ... nothing can stop you. **The only person stopping you is yourself.**”

ON THE FAST TRACK

Ryan Preece, '09, At NASCAR's Highest Level

In the 2009 Xavier yearbook, each senior had a quote under his name. Fittingly, Ryan Preece chose, “I wanna go fast,” from the movie “Talladega Nights.”

In the back of the yearbook were family messages. The Preece family had a page with photos of Ryan doing what he has done for years, racing cars.

“The very young age of eight, you set a goal for yourself and you haven’t looked back,” wrote the family. “Don’t ever give up on your dreams! It is you who decides your destiny. Good luck and reach for the stars!”

He has been doing just that. Preece, 28, has continually moved up on the racing circuit, and in 2019, he will have touched the stars. Preece will race in the Monster Energy Series, NASCAR’s highest level, for JTG Daugherty Racing.

As Preece said, there are tens of thousands of racers in the

country and only 39 at the highest level, so he is grateful for the opportunity. One of them also has a Middletown connection, Joey Logano having grown up here. Preece and Logano have known each other for years, both starting in quarter midget cars in Meriden.

Preece’s father raced at the local tracks, so Ryan grew up around the sport and was racing by the age of six. When he got to Xavier, he spent just about every weekend racing.

“Xavier was a good foundation to teach you hard work and a work ethic,” Preece said. “And I had some good teachers at Xavier that instilled in you that ‘don’t quit’ attitude.”

Preece made a name for himself shortly after graduating. He was the 2011 Stafford Motor Speedway SK Modified champion, and the 2012 and 2014 Thompson Speedway Sunoco Modified champion. In 2013

he was the NASCAR Whelan Modified Tour champion and the NASCAR Whelan All-American Series Modified champion at New Smyrna Speedweeks from 2015-2017.

This year he had an April to remember, winning in Bristol, Tenn., earning the NASCAR Xfinity Series Dash 4 Cash \$100,000 bonus. Two weeks later he won the Spring Sizzler at Stafford for the second year in a row.

Preece was married in May 2017. He met his wife, Heather, at Stafford. She was racing cars, too. Did she ever beat him?

“She might have,” he said with a laugh, “maybe once.”

There is so much more that goes into being a race car driver than what happens the day of the race.

There are calls, meetings, debriefings, simulations. In fact, the day before Preece was interviewed for this story he was in a simulator for six hours,

driving courses of upcoming races. As he says, it’s like an expensive video game.

The intensity of a real race is daunting, at least to an outsider. At Las Vegas in September, the temperature was 102; inside the car it approached 150. Preece lost seven pounds of water weight. He also wore a heart monitor and his rate averaged 155, peaking at 199.

But he would not trade his world for another in a heartbeat. He said he loves all aspects of racing, even if it can be mentally demanding in the heat when you’re dehydrated, exhausted and trying to stay focused.

It’s in those times he must draw on all that he has learned. In there is a message he would give to Xavier students.

“Don’t let someone tell you that you can’t,” he said. “If you’re willing to put in the work ... nothing can stop you. The only person stopping you is yourself.” **X**

XAVIER
HIGH
SCHOOL

Hitting All The Marks

C.J. Sokol '19 Is Never Afraid To Learn Something New

C.J. Sokol earned nine more merit badges than he needed for his Eagle Scout badge this summer, but that's not a surprise.

He likes to stay busy.

Sokol, who is one of the top sharpshooters in the state with the Xavier rifle team, is constantly trying new things.

Whether it be a new change-up for the baseball diamond, a poem for his English class or a new piece on the piano, he's always willing to give it a try.

"I like to have fun and enjoy myself," he said. "I learn a lot by doing something and learning about it myself."

His inquisitive nature was apparent when he chose his Eagle Scout project.

On his way to school one day, he drove by the Durham Fire Department and decided to erect a monument for his town's volunteer firefighters.

"I looked over [on my drive] and there was the firehouse and I was like Oh yeah, they're great, and they don't get credit for anything – I want to do a monument," Sokol said. "I told my mom, 'Let's do this.'"

His vision: a black granite monument with two benches.

"I wanted to honor all the firefighters who have served over

the years," Sokol said. "We came up with some wording to thank everyone and then we put the list of chiefs on there."

After driving by the fire department his whole life, the project was a way for him to show his appreciation and give back to those that have helped his town.

"I wanted to say thank you to the firefighters and really reflect because firefighters do a lot for their community and may not get credited for it," Sokol said. "I wanted the Durham firefighters to get the right attention because they do a lot. They are always up. ... I really wanted to leave something with the town."

With help from his family, friends and neighbors, he was able to accomplish this project.

"I organized a letter writing campaign to everyone I know and that brought in about \$4,000," Sokol said. "It was fantastic what people gave. I was so thankful."

He unveiled the monument in November of 2017.

"It just gave me a newfound respect for what everyone does," Sokol said. "People do a lot to keep you safe and the community safe. I hope people can reflect on that."

Sokol is one of several Eagle Scouts at the school this year. But like his classmates, he will also leave plenty behind when he graduates from Xavier in the spring.

As one of the most talented shooters in Connecticut, he has helped Xavier contend with



"I wanted to say thank you to the firefighters"



the best teams in the state the last four years. And with his teammate and friend Brandon Hawke, the team will try to challenge again in the winter. He also wants to help the baseball team get back on track. With just a few months left, he wants to give back to the community that has offered him so much.

Xavier has been the perfect fit for the versatile Sokol.

For the last four years, he's been able to bounce from topic to topic and never be bored.

"After I had my shadow day [when I was in middle school], I got in my car with my mom and I was like 'I want to go here,'" Sokol said. "It was fantastic. I was able to see the environment it was. And I wanted to go here." **X**



Brother John Sullivan's Passions *Of Flowers, Photos And Fenway*

Here's a lens into Brother John Sullivan's world: on any given day he can be seen teaching a Latin class, taking photos for the yearbook, manning the bookstore, and watering the many flowers, shrubs and plants that beautify the campus.

And let's not forget talking about his beloved Red Sox. After all, he did grow up outside of Boston, in Somerville, Mass., and teach at various Catholic high schools in the Bay State.

"Successes and failures," he says of this year's gardening experience.

Isn't that always the way? One year something does well, the next year it might not. The plight of a gardener.

In the summer, you might find him tending to the various plots around campus, including the Sandy Hook Garden, for a few hours in the morning, trying to beat the sun's heat. His goal: have the grounds looking great when the school year starts. Goal accomplished.

From elephant ears to grasses, from coleus to canna lilies, from geraniums to red sunflowers, a stroll through the grounds is colorful and peaceful, a reminder of God's many creations.

"Successes and failures," of course, applies to his favorite baseball team, too. So, 2004 was especially meaningful when the Red Sox ended their curse and won the World Series for the first time since 1918. To get to the World Series, they came back from a 3-0 deficit in the American League Championship Series to beat the Yankees in seven games. For someone who grew up with Yankee dominance, this was about as good as it gets.

At the time, Brother John was working at Malden Catholic High School. That year, he said with a smile, the yearbook had a couple of pages devoted to the Sox as the kids, too, were great fans, wearing team gear.

Brother John has taught at three Catholic high schools in Massachusetts: Xaverian Brothers in Westwood, St. John's in Shrewsbury, and Malden Catholic. He had all but retired from Malden Catholic about eight years ago. But Brother Brian Davis, C.F.X., then the headmaster at Xavier who knew Brother John from their Malden days, wanted him to come to Middletown to teach Latin. So Brother John did, also getting involved in another passion, photography and the yearbook.

He had done yearbooks at various places in his career and started out here helping with the photography. Last year he produced his first yearbook here.

Camera in hand, he is ever present at all sorts of Xavier events. In the days of film, he said he'd tell himself, "Be careful. You've got 36 shots here ... now I can take 36 shots in five minutes."

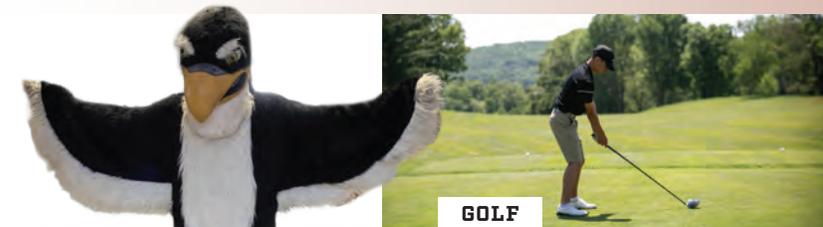
Film was expensive, then there was the processing. In today's digital world he can – and does – snap away. He might take 100 photos at an athletic event and figures over the course of a year he might take 10,000 at the various Xavier events, which in some sense are never-ending.

With the advent of desktop publishing, Brother John also can do much more with the yearbook before it goes off to the publisher.

"I used to say I'd spend about an hour per page [the 2018 yearbook is 188 pages], but it's probably more now," he said. "It doesn't matter. It's something I enjoy doing." 🌸



The FALCONS' Nest



GOLF

A First On The Links

With a 4-under par round of 67 at Black Hall Club in Old Lyme, Chris Fosdick '19 became the first State Open champion in the history of high school golf in Connecticut.

After finishing in the top three at the Division I Championship the last three years, Fosdick had

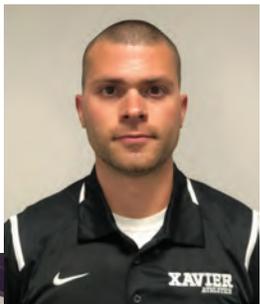
his best performance in a championship for Xavier. He started his round with two bogeys, but came back strong to beat Tyler Hahn of Avon by four strokes. He was the only player under par at the event. Fosdick also helped the Falcons win the SCC championship for the fifth time this season. Fosdick tied for the SCC title and finished second at the Division I championship.

HOCKEY

Changing Of The Guard

In May, former North Haven coach and Yale assistant Nick Costanzo (below) took over as the fifth head coach in the history of the hockey program.

After leading Xavier Hockey to the best run program in history the last five years, including the program's second semifinal appearance in four years in 2018, coach Dan DeConti stepped down at the end of the season. Costanzo helped lead a resurgence at North Haven and was a volunteer assistant coach with Yale hockey from 2015 to 2017. DeConti was part of the program for 15 years and won 67 games in his five years as head coach.



TRACK and CROSS COUNTRY Record Breakers

It was a record-breaking 2018 for the 4x800-meter relay team.

The team, which swept the State Open titles during the indoor and outdoor seasons, ran 7:50.22 at New Balance Nationals to leave its mark on the program for future generations.

Pierre Sylvain, Owen Lally, Trevor Christie and Peter Schulten brought home the championship during the outdoor season and William Curran, Christie, Sylvain and Lally represented Xavier during the winter. The Falcons finished second and third at the New England Championships during the winter and spring, respectively.

A year after the **CROSS COUNTRY** team needed a tiebreaker to win the State Open title, the Falcons left no doubt at the 2018 championship.

With four runners inside the top 14, the team beat Hall High of West Hartford by 46 points for the program's 13th state open title. The victory completed another dominating season in Connecticut for the team. The Falcons won the SCC championship (third straight) and scored 26 points to win the Class L title (19th class title). Seniors Peter Schulten, Dillon Selfors, William Curran and junior Robbie Cozean all made All State.



Catching Up With The Xavier Athletic Department

FALL CAPTAINS

Earning the captain's title at Xavier is important. It is a distinction that some of the school's greatest leaders have held. And in the fall of 2018, a new group of captains left their mark on their respective programs.

"To be selected as a captain means you possess the leadership qualities that define the school's motto," Assistant Athletic Director Dan DeConti said.

THE FALL SPORTS CAPTAINS:

CREW: Nick Carso '18, Mitch Macijauskas '19

CROSS COUNTRY: William Curran '19,
Ryan Grochowski '19, Dillon Selfors '19

FOOTBALL: Nick Hasselman '19, Quinn Zdrojeski '19,
Zach Bates '19, Sam Norris '19

SAILING: Francisco Quintana '19, Stewart Gurnell '19

SOCCER: Patrick Sullivan '19, Mike Salley '19,
Nick Roncone '19, Tyler Vitale '19

OTHER NOTABLES

☺ A year after it won just five games, the **SOCCER** team matched its best regular season record in program history, going 15-0-1 in the fall of 2018. With the record season, the Falcons earned the top seed in the SCC Tournament and the Class LL tournament.

☺ Director of Campus Ministry and religion teacher Peter Lyons was the SCC Division II Coach of the Year and Khai Ton '20 was the SCC Division II Player of the Year in Boys **TENNIS**.



☺ The **SAILING** team punched a ticket to the Great Oaks Regatta in New Orleans with a third place finish at the New England Scholastic Sailing Association qualifier in September. The team was skippered by Stewart Gurnell '19 and the crews alternated between Francis Brown '19 and Francisco Quintana '19.



☺ The **LACROSSE** and **VOLLEYBALL** teams returned to the postseason once again in 2018. With a win over East Lyme last spring, the lacrosse team secured its 11th straight trip to the state tournament.

☺ Kyle Powell took over for Peter Belmonte as the **CREW** coach and seniors Mitch Macijauskas and Nick Carso had strong summers, competing at the U.S. Rowing National Club Championships.

☺ **SWIMMING** As a freshman Andrew Mitchill '21 finished fourth in the 500 freestyle and ninth in the 100 breaststroke at the Class L championship. He was also part of two relays (400 yard free and 200 yard medley).

☺ Joe Carbone (Stony Brook), Kevin Lawrence (URI), Griffin Saks (URI), Will Levis (Penn State), Niko Kvietkus (New Hampshire), Shane Kolstad (Salve Regina), Peter Bencivengo (Western Connecticut State), Danny Taylor (Pace), Ryan Cartelli (Sacred Heart) and Glenn Cunningham (Fordham) represented Xavier in the **FOOTBALL** ranks. **X**



ACADEMIC Achievements

COMMENDED STUDENTS

Since 1955, the National Merit Scholarship Program has been recognizing the top high school students in the country.

During the 2018-2019 school year, Xavier once again had a talented group of students named as Commended Students for the 2019 National Merit Scholarship program.

"I am very proud of Xavier's National Merit Commended Students," Principal Brendan Donohue said. *"In addition to earning the recognition of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation, they are all outstanding students who have taken the most rigorous courses offered here at Xavier. They have risen to every academic challenge with which they have been presented and they have excelled. In addition, they are leaders in the school community outside the classroom."*

Seniors **Pier Bos**, **Anthony Caruso**, **Owen Cordes**, **Brendan Donohue**, **Julen Lujambio**, **Laurenz Emmanuel Mosquito**, **Cole Paiva** and **Rohan Patel** were all part of this year's crew of top achievers. More than 1.6 million students entered the competition by taking the 2017 preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship. The eight Xavier students were among the top 50,000 scorers in the 2019 competition.



Pier Bos '19 pictured with Principal Brendan Donohue and his parents.

DISTINGUISHED SCHOLARS

In 2018, Xavier highlighted 30 students at the Honor Societies Induction and Distinguished Scholars Program. These students have taken the most challenging curriculum Xavier has to offer.

The list of seniors: **Dominic Anziano**; **Pier Bos**; **Francis Brown**; **Benjamin Buzzeo**; **Anthony Caruso**; **Owen Cordes**; **Michael Dellaripa**; **Brendan Donohue**; **Connor Dwyer**; **Ian Gelberg**; **Ryan Grochowski**; **Brandon Hawke**; **Jingqing Hu**; **Patrick Kennedy**; **Kacy Lombard**; **Julen Lujambio**; **Mitchell Macijauskas**; **Brendan McKenna**; **Richard Michaud**; **Laurenz Emmanuel Mosquito**; **Eric Myskowski**; **Cole Paiva**; **Rohan Patel**; **Bryce Pill**; **Garrett Prushinski**; **Frank Romeo**; **Michael Salley**; **Aiden Stevens**; **William Stottlemeyer**; **Christian Wade**.

GOVERNOR'S SCHOLAR FINALIST

Pier Bos '19 was recognized as a Governor's Scholar this past spring at the Aqua Turf Club in Southington. Bos, who is also a member of the wrestling team and math team, was selected from a large group of nominees as a finalist based on his outstanding academic record and strength of a written essay.

"From the day Pier walked into Xavier, he has excelled in all areas of Xavier life. Being counted among the top juniors in the state of Connecticut comes as no surprise for such a talented student," Principal Brendan Donohue said recently. *"I am thrilled for Pier that he has received this prestigious recognition."*

BROTHER CELESTINE AWARD WINNERS

The 2018-2019 school year started with a familiar tradition: the Opening of School Mass in the Gymnasium. As part of the annual start to the year, the school announced several academic awards, including the prestigious Brother Celestine award, which a student can receive only once during his four years at Xavier. It is the highest academic tribute the school bestows and it is awarded to students who have an overall final average of A with no final average grade less than an A- in their major subjects.

The award winners for seniors were: **Ryan Cadwell**, **Brandon Hawke**, **Brendan Lenehan**, **Mitchell Macijauskas**, **Daniel McCormack** and **Samuel Norris**. The award winners for the juniors were: **Nathan Barandon**, **Jonathan Ford**,

Joel Quan and **Luke Tischio**. The award winners for the sophomores were: **Zachary Dolan**, **Christopher Drisdelle**, **Ryan Frier**, **Timothy Gagliano**, **William Heher**, **David (Parker) Hunter**, **David Jerman**, **Jake Lion**, **Sebastian LoGiudice**, **Daniel Lyons**, **Peter Mercugliano**, **Trevor Religa**, **Anthony Satrohan**, **Brian Satrohan**, **Eduardo Serrano**, **Michael Stottlemeyer**, **Jack Swierczynski**, **Hayden Tomlin**, **Eoin Wallace** and **Holden Whaley**.

As part of the awards presentation, several other awards were presented, including the Brother Houlihan Scholarship to **Evan Eichhorn '21** and the Brother Harold Academic Scholarship to **Cameron Bartolomeo '22**. **Eric Myskowski '18**, **Alexander Pralea '20** and **Ryan Frier '21** received academic scholarships for earning the highest unweighted grade point average in their class during the 2017-2018 school year.

AP SCHOLAR AWARDS

Every year, the College Board recognizes as AP Scholars high school students who have demonstrated outstanding college-level achievement through their performance on AP exams. At the conclusion of the 2017-2018 school year, 55 Xavier students were recognized.

Maxwell Carmichael '18, **Kyle Cook '18**, **William Crawford '18**, **Mark Lavrentyev '18**, **Noah McGuinness '18**, and **Christopher Sacchi '18** were selected as National AP Scholars. They received an average score of at least 4 on all AP exams taken and scores of 4 or higher on eight or more of these exams.

The awards were for the 2017-2018 school year.

The group has gone on to lead Xavier at the next level, too. Carmichael is at Dartmouth, Cook is at Tufts, Crawford is at Illinois, Lavrentyev is at Brown, McGuinness is at Princeton and Sacchi is with the UConn Honors Program. **X**



Front L-R: Julen Lujambio, Anthony Caruso, Laurenz Emmanuel Mosquito, Cole Paiva, Rohan Patel. Back L-R: Owen Cordes, Brendan Donohue, Pier Bos

ALUMNI News



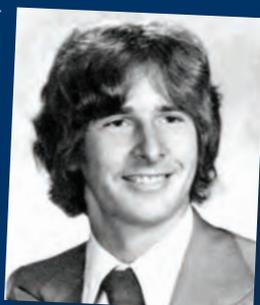
Bill Hannigan '77

In September, Hannigan received the 2018 Lone Sailor Award from the United States Navy Memorial. The award goes to Sea Service veterans who have distinguished themselves in their career

and life while exemplifying the Navy's core values of honor, courage and commitment.

Bill enlisted in the Navy in 1977 and served on the submarine USS JACK. He served six years, achieving the rank of Radioman First Class. Out of that came his distinguished business career. He was Sprint's youngest corporate officer by the time he was 32 years old. At one time he was President and Chief Operating Officer at AT&T. He was appointed to two committees by President George W. Bush, including the National Security Telecommunications Advisory Committee in 2004.

In an announcement of the honor, Hannigan said, "The Navy was a really big deal for me ... I expected to learn a great deal but had no idea how much that would be. The training in technology and telecommunications created the foundation for my civilian career, but the learnings from my ship mates, officers and enlisted, were lessons for a lifetime."



He recently told us in an interview that "Xavier is a very special place. I don't know if there is anything like it." Of his Navy days, he said, "You're doing something that is bigger than yourself. The spirit of service is inspiring."



Tony Jaskot '69 had the new fitness room at Xavier named in his honor this summer. He is retiring as athletic director at the end of the school year.

After helping guide Xavier through the last few years, **Bob Guere '81** ended his term as the Chairman of the Board of Directors. The new chairman is **Bill Wrang '75**.

As the new Associate Director of Advancement, **Greg Jaskot '00** organized a viewing party of the final round of the British Open for over 30 Xavier graduates. The group, which include alumni from the last six decades, caught up at Sliders Bar and Grill in Middletown. Jaskot also was co-chair of the Alumni Golf Classic with former Xavier teacher, coach and alumni director Rich Feitel. The tournament, held in September, at Portland Golf Course, was sold out and raised more than \$57,000 for financial aid for Xavier students.

Jordan Fitzpatrick '12, Mark Micowski '07 and Jeff Brymer '11 are finishing their first year in the police force. They graduated from the Connecticut Police Academy in December 2017 when the Connecticut State Police Officer Standards and Training Council held its 358th graduation ceremony.

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Tim Kohs '85 helped lead the Mercy girls basketball to its third state title and first since 2013 in March. The Tigers beat Hall 49-37 in the final at Mohegan Sun to complete a near perfect season of 27-1. Kohs was also a recipient of the Catherine McAuley award at Mercy earlier this year.

Joe Spatola '03 had never been in a play or musical before he auditioned for the part of Jesus in the 40th Annual St. Thomas Passion play at St. Thomas in Southington, but he won the part. Last April, he made his acting debut in the annual play fulfilling a promise his grandmother Nella Spatola made years ago "She saw it the first night and she said 'I told you one day you would play this part.'"



Sean Marinan '80 and JT Burke '89 were both inducted into the **Middletown Sports Hall of Fame** this year. Marinan led Xavier to five state championships in football, including three straight from 2010-2012. Burke was a two-time New England champion in cross country and one of the best runners in school history. They joined a long line of former Xavier coaches and athletes in the Hall of Fame, including Larry McHugh, Rich Magner, Tony Jaskot, Art Kohs, Bob Michalski and Brian Hetherington.

Sean O'Rourke '98 works for Access Hollywood and used to work on the Tonight Show with Jay Leno until Leno retired. "Standing in the hallway backstage at Leno, bringing Harrison Ford to his dressing room, great memories," O'Rourke said.

Justin Bourassa '04 was a finalist on Jeopardy last year.

Joey Perazella '05 and his wife Johanna opened Perkatory Coffee Roasters on Main Street. The pair took the interior of the old trolley barn in the city's North End and made it a new hangout for coffee connoisseurs.

ALUMNI News

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Matthew DeKoeper '12 had never played rugby before attending Providence College. But he became the youngest coach in the 40-year history of the Providence Rugby team last winter at the age of 23. He helped lead the team to the Rhody Cup and the Hoder Cup in the spring season of 2018.

Ryan Preece '09 will move up to NASCAR's highest level of racing in 2019, the Monster Energy Cup series. Meanwhile, **Joey Ternullo '16** of Middletown moved up to race SK Modifieds this year at the New London-Waterford Speedbowl. Ternullo was a member of the National Honor Society.

Nicholas Lemon '10 ran 2:33:07 to finish 34th in the rain soaked running of the 122nd Boston Marathon in April 2018.

Patrick Lenehan '11 is at Harvard Medical School.

Jovan Santos-Knox '12 is a linebacker for the Winnipeg Blue Bombers of the Canadian Football League. He played at UMass after Xavier.



Check out the newly revamped Alumni & Giving section of our web site (xavierhighschool.org).

Alumni can submit information (**Alumni Update Form**), write a class note (**How To Submit A Class Note**), and read the monthly **Alumni Newsletter**. There's also a **Stories of Giving** section. You'll find the **Xavier Remembrance List** under the **In Memoriam** menu. <https://www.xavierhighschool.org/alumni-giving/in-memoriam>



A group of student volunteers spent their spring break building homes for families in Antigua, Guatemala.

The mission statement for Mission Discovery is: "To serve Jesus Christ by mobilizing believers to meet the physical and spiritual needs of a hurting world."

Ask AWAY

FAVORITE CITY?
DREAM VACATION?
PERFECT MEAL?

This school year we're asking the faculty and staff compelling questions as part of our new Spotlight feature posted on our Instagram page (@XavierHighCT). Do they have good taste in music and food? We want to know and you're going to find out.

HERE'S A TASTE OF WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ...

PAUL KIEDA, Religion Teacher

My dream vacation:

Antarctica ["Just because it's there"].

What my students don't know about me:

I used to work in a funeral home.

Perfect meal:

Steak (medium), sweet potatoes and a good salad.



CHARLES FLOWERS, English Teacher

If I wasn't a teacher, I would have been:

Point guard for the New York Knicks.

How I like to unwind after a busy day at school:

Kayaking in the bathtub and my stuffed penguin, Sal.

Favorite late night snack:

A book.



MARTA CASTRO-MAGUDER, Spanish Teacher

Where I went to college: I did my undergraduate in Spain and my Masters through a combined program in Connecticut and Spain.

Coollest sporting event, concert or event I've been to: My wedding.

Perfect meal: Something with a lot of vegetables.

ERIK ELLIGERS, Music Teacher

Where I went to college: The UUUUUUU! (University of Miami).

If I wasn't a teacher I would have been: A studio/touring musician.

Three people (dead or alive) I would want to have dinner with: Fred Rogers, John Coltrane, Bill Murray.



BRIAN FITZGERALD '99, Spanish Teacher, Head Soccer Coach

Three people (dead or alive) I would want to have dinner with:

Can it be four? My grandparents.

Team I foot for: Boston Red Sox.

Favorite late night snack: Reese's Pieces.



LISA KEEREWEER, Administrative Assistant, Main Office

Favorite late night snack:

Peanut butter ice cream.

The song that has been stuck in my head recently:

Africa by Toto.

My dream vacation: Italy.

JOHN POPIELASKI, English Teacher

Team I root for the most: Yankees.

If I wasn't a teacher I would have been: A hobo or a lawyer.

Movie I've seen too many times: Lady and the Tramp.



JEREMY FOWLER, Religion Department Chair

What my students don't know about me: I love Halloween.

Perfect meal: Thanksgiving dinner.

ANDREW MULE, Math Teacher

My dream vacation: A week in a tropical locale in one of those huts they build over the water, maybe with a glass floor somewhere so you can see the fish swimming by while you're relaxing on the couch or whatever and they can freak out because some weird guy is starting down at them from above.

My favorite city I've visited: I'd like to go back to Paris and New Orleans but it's hard to top New York City.

What's your favorite part about Xavier: The community atmosphere.

GRADUATION 2018



An Excerpt from Valedictorian Maxwell Carmichael's Address:



Xavier truly is a different place that treats the educational experience from not a purely academic level, but through social and spiritual dimensions as well. Here we not only learn trigonometry and Twain, but also church history and many life lessons along the way. I vividly remember the first week of freshman religion class with Mr. Bell, our teacher, writing in gigantic letters on the white board, "DO MORE." Within those six letters is a lesson for a lifetime. It is a call to vulnerability, a call to experience everything the world has to offer, a call to find our vocation in life, a call to grow."

Loyalty and Service Award:

BENJAMIN CLEMMEY

The most prestigious award that the school offers is presented to a member of the graduating class who is chosen upon the recommendation of the faculty and staff. Loyalty and service are crucial to the fulfillment of the school's mission. The choice is based

on the consistency and quality of the student's service to the Xavier community and the passion and perseverance he has displayed in his commitment to all aspects that make up the experience of a Xavier student. Clemmey helped out at more than 50 admissions events in his four years and also served as a vital member of Xavier's Peer Ministry team, was selected as one of the school's representatives at the XBSS student retreat, and was a top student. One faculty member said, "His spirit of untiring and selfless service has raised the standard for future generations of Xavier students."

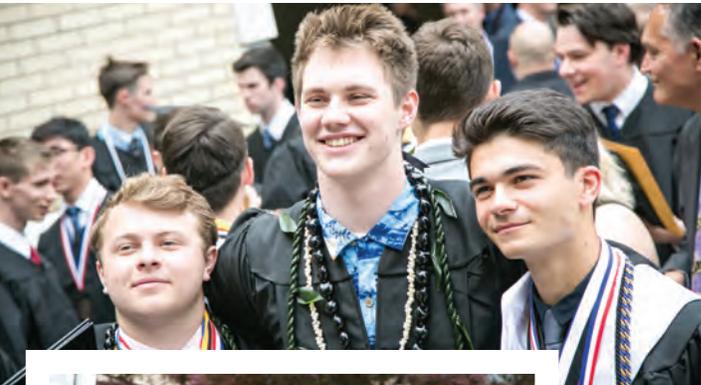
Falcon Achievement Award:

KYLE MACGILLIS

This award recognizes a senior who, during his athletic career, has represented the very best that athletics stand for at Xavier. Chosen upon the recommendation of the faculty and staff, the recipient is a young man who embodies those qualities of loyalty, commitment, sportsmanship and hard work, which characterize Xavier's scholar athletes. MacGillis was a two-sport athlete, who was captain of the football and basketball teams. One of his coaches said: "He truly understands what the word 'team' stands for and leads by example."

Special Recognition:

Science teacher LINDA CHARPENTIER, who came here in 1974, was honored for her work. She retired as a full-time teacher but still teaches a class this school year. A 1985 yearbook dedication written by student editors in part said of Charpentier: "Your dedication to Xavier is a living example for all of us to emulate. By both word and deed you have passed on to all of us your love for all living things and your concern for our environment."



Xavier
By the Numbers

159
Graduates

5/20
Graduation Day 2018

52nd
Commencement
Exercise

9,390
Graduates Over
the Years

\$6.8M
In Educational
Scholarships This Year



Legacy Awards

A special award was presented to the 13 alumni fathers of the graduating seniors. Each alumni father received an engraved medal with his name and his son's name as well as the years of their graduation.

- Mr. STEVEN BERRY, Class of 1983, and his son Matthew '18
- Mr. THOMAS CARTELLI, Class of 1982, and his son Ryan '18
- Mr. SCOTT COLAVITO, Class of 1978, and his son Jonathan '18
- Mr. RICHARD DARIN, Class of 1975, and his son Richard '18
- Mr. BRIAN FARRELL, Class of 1986, and his son Brian '18
- Mr. SALVATORE FAZZINO, Class of 1988, and his son Joshua '18
- Mr. DAVID LEE, Class of 1984, and his son Jacob '18
- Mr. GERALD MALLOY, Class of 1985, and his son Collin '18
- Mr. ROBERT MAZZOTTA, Class of 1984, and his son Christian '18
- Mr. RICHARD MORIN, Class of 1986, and his son Daniel '18
- Mr. JOHN RIZZA, Class of 1968, and his son Brendan '18
- Mr. RICHARD SAKS, Class of 1983, and his son Griffin '18
- Mr. JAMES TRUSCINSKI, Class of 1988, and his son Braden '18



Our Legacy Family Registry represents over six decades of Xavier men. Go to xavierhighschool.org, click on the Alumni & Giving page, then the Legacy Families section to view the list.



We Are XAVIER

19 63

Three Small Words

BE A MAN



John Guinan

If you are part of the Xavier community, you have an understanding of the meaning of the Xavier motto – *Be A Man* - that has been here since the school’s opening in 1963.

If not, you are left to your own devices.

Three small words. No context.

To some, the motto may come off as sexist or outdated.

Donna Jaskot has been here full-time since 1989; her three sons each went to school here. Now she is assistant to the headmaster and principal. And, for her, it’s about principles.

“To be a man means to continually strive to be the best human being you can be and to challenge and nurture others to do the same,” Jaskot said.

“I have seen the Xavier school motto in action by witnessing countless young men, including my own sons, and many faculty and staff, male and female, serving others with love and compassion.”

John Guinan, a religion teacher at Xavier, has crafted a lesson on

the motto for freshmen as a means of a welcome and introduction to the school.

“When I first came to Xavier I was struck by the motto and moved by how it captured the purpose and essence of a Xavier education and a Catholic education in general,” Guinan said. “I was equally taken by how easily and frequently it is misunderstood.”

Part of what he has written for the class is that at first glance the motto “might be understood to form and cultivate in young men the characteristics that may be associated with manhood by the culture at any given time. Upon further reflection, however, it becomes clear that the founding Xaverian Brother of Xavier High School, Br. Robert Sullivan, C.F.X, seems to have had something else in mind, an educational vision that would promise to transform the lives of students for eternity. In fact, the meaning of the motto, properly understood, speaks to the aims, goals, and the promise of Catholic education in general.”

Guinan goes on to say that man refers not the male gender but to the human species.

“It is no coincidence, then, that in the educational vision he proposed for the school, Br. Robert cites the second century saint St. Irenaeus when he wrote, ‘The glory of God is the human person fully alive.’ The inclusion of this quote might serve to affirm this interpretation of the word ‘man.’”

In the 1965 student handbook, there was this: *Xavier High School challenges you to be a man ... to perfect your mind by studying diligently, your will by doing good,*

your senses by appreciating things beautiful, your whole being by uniting yourself to God ... the one, the true, the good, the beautiful.

Br. Lawrence Harvey, who was leaving Xavier after 12 years, six as principal, had a sense the motto is one that can easily come under attack, when he spoke at the 1998 graduation.

“You have graduated from a school whose motto, ‘Be a Man,’ can be thought of as anachronistic to those unfamiliar with Xavier,” he told the class in a story published in The Hartford Courant. “How outdated that can seem. How sexist that appears at first glance. How politically incorrect that sounds in an age when everything has to be P.C. If you have learned anything during your time at Xavier, however, I hope and pray that you’ve learned what it is to be a man. Our expectation for you is that you live up to your school motto, for to be a man is to be the person God has created you to be, without excuse, without hesitation. To be a Xavier man is to be a man of service to others, to be a Xavier man is to be a person of compassion, to be a Xavier man is to be a person of integrity. Underlying all this is to be a person of faith ...”

“At the same time,” Guinan adds, “we must not shy away from the fact that it is also a call to be a real man, as in ‘male.’ But the point is this: the ideal of manhood Br. Sullivan was proposing is not one held by the culture at any given time, past or present. Rather, the motto points to Christ, the perfect human -- and yes, the perfect man. A man who strives to courageously live and speak the truths of the Gospel

message even when it is unpopular to do so, and who inspires and leads others to do the same, and one who loves unconditionally is the promise of the motto fulfilled in a Xavier graduate.”

Guinan said he bases the lesson around a section in C.S. Lewis’ classic *Mere Christianity*.

“In it, Lewis likens man to a statue and explains that the offer which Christianity makes is that man can ‘come to life.’ That is to say, he can become Christ-like, fully human and fully alive,” Guinan said. “This is the promise to which Xavier’s motto speaks, and, consequently, which the education aims to make a reality in a student’s life.”

Rich Magner has been a student, teacher, coach and guidance counselor here. To him the motto means, “We want young men to grow up and be accountable for their actions. We hope they are good Christians and appreciate the gifts and talents that they have and share with those less fortunate.”

Three small words. One life lesson.

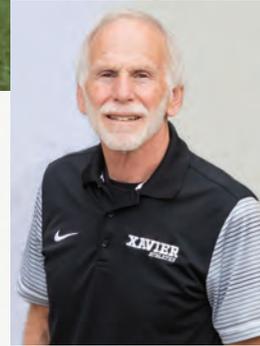
“It is meant to stretch the student, to be a man in fullest sense of what that means,” former Headmaster Br. Brian Davis, C.F.X. said. “You are created in God’s image ... the school would grow you spiritually, academically and physically to really be a man in all senses of the word.”

He goes on to say that no matter your religious background, there would be more of a presence of God in your life. And that it calls you to share your talents with others.

Three small words. So much meaning.

Parting Thoughts

Tony Jaskot



Who would have thought that when I entered Xavier High School back in 1965 that I would spend 44 years of my life at my alma mater as a teacher, coach and athletic director?

Most certainly, not me.

I had a tremendous experience during my four years at Xavier – meeting so many great people and making so many great friends. No doubt, Xavier High School was the right place for me. I realize and really appreciate the teachers and coaches, who taught me in the classroom, guided me in the right direction and spent so much time and energy on me. I’ve experienced being taught and coached by Xavier legends. People like Brother Robert Sullivan, Xavier’s first Principal, Brother James Boyle, Larry McHugh, Art Kohs, Bill McKenna, Brother James Kelly, Brother Lawrence Harvey, Pat Ingellis, Bob Michalski, and so many others ...

It was an honor and privilege being hired as an assistant football coach by Larry McHugh and by Principal Brother John Kerr to teach Physical Education back in 1974. Forty four years later every two weeks in the fall of 2018, I walk out with Mr. Cerreta’s gym class looking forward to working with and having the time of my life teaching, officiating and yes, sometimes participating. Teaching, coaching and being Xavier’s athletic director is who I am and what I am most passionate about; it truly is a tremendous vocation – the best job in the world.

What a tremendous education our school provided me and so many others over the years both in the classroom, out on the fields, the courts, pool, course, and track. I’ve said throughout my career at Xavier that “athletics is the eighth period of the day.” There is a lot of teaching and learning that goes on after school – many life lessons especially are taught. I’m so glad that this tradition is ongoing. Xavier has always been home to legendary coaches like Rich Magner and Sean Marinan, and will continue to be.

Today I work with many coaches who have left their mark on Xavier. Words could never express my appreciation toward our coaching staff for what they do for our athletic program, the student-athletes and especially Xavier. There is no better coaching staff in the state. I would be remiss if I did not mention my two assistant athletic directors, Tim Kohs and Dan DeConti. The time and effort spent by them to help with the day-to-day demands of our athletic program is exemplary.

So many memories: From teaching health and physical education, typing and senior religion to coaching football and starting the freshman baseball program; From Junior Retreat and XLI, which enabled me to “stretch” and go out of my “comfort zone” to being named the varsity football coach; and being named athletic director. From the humbling experience of having the fitness room named after me, to, by far the best memories – the friendships I’ve made throughout the years with faculty, staff, students, student-athletes, parents and administrators.

I learned over the years that Xavier is bigger than any one person or group of people, including the legends. Anything I’ve tried to do was with the intent of being done for the greater good.

At Xavier: I worked and I played; I laughed and I cried; I nurtured and I was nurtured, I won and I lost; I respected and was respected; I was taught and I learned; I trusted and was trusted; I loved and experienced love in return; and I fell in love and raised a family. Yes, what a great place to spend 44 years of my life.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tony Jaskot".

Xavier Athletic Director

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This is **XAVIER**

As you hold this book in your hands, may it bring enrichment. Within each page is a prayer – evidence of lives being well-lived, futures taking flight, memories being made, lessons being taught and learned. May it bring forth a blessing of peace and unity to be carried throughout the world.