



# wavelength

Alumni Magazine

Volume 9 • 2020-2021



## **Year of St. Joseph A Year of Service**

*Mission & Ministry*

## **CCSJ's 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

*Timeline of Major Milestones*

## **Alumni Spotlights**

*Leaders in Service*



*Still*  
**You Belong!**  
ccsj.edu



***“Give Your Hands to Serve and Your Hearts to Love.”***  
***- Mother Teresa***

Dear Alumni,

The quote above by Mother Teresa is one that I recently incorporated into our new mission sculpture, *Fire and Water*, which greets visitors and students at the front door. This quote seems so fitting for a magazine that focuses on the Year of Saint Joseph and Calumet College of St. Joseph’s (CCSJ) Year of Service. Another one of my favorite quotes by St. Catherine of Siena, also incorporated into the sculpture, speaks to the impact our alumni have on their communities and their passion for their work.

***“Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire.”***

These quotes are two of the seven that represent our seven decades of serving the community, and speak to the five pillars of a CCSJ education in the tradition of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood (C.P.P.S). The stories and articles you will read are about impact and making a difference for others. I read these stories of alumni, and I am so grateful to be leading an institution that is committed to mission and making higher education accessible and affordable so that students can become who they are meant to be, serving others with great care and passion.

Calumet College of St. Joseph, by its various names, has served the area for 70 years, and we are at a transformational time where we can become stronger and even more relevant when higher education is under great pressure, but has never been more important. You know the difference that CCSJ or Cal College or St. Joseph-Calumet has made for you and/or someone you know. Read about the difference Calumet College has made for alumni and others. If you’re like me, you can actually feel in your heart (and maybe in your throat or eyes) the incredible blessing CCSJ has been to so many.

The people you will read about also embrace an important sculpture quote that I hope current and future students take the time to reflect upon. St. Oscar Romero said, “Aspire not to have more, but to be more.” Your continued support of CCSJ is instrumental in allowing students to be the best version of themselves and to make a difference in their families, communities, and the world.



It is a privilege to be the first female president of an institution that has a long history and a bright future. Stay tuned, stay connected, and stay committed!

With gratitude,

Dr. Amy McCormack  
President

**Contact us >**

We welcome your feedback on this issue and your letters/comments for future publications. Please contact us at 219-473-4254 or email: [alumni@ccsj.edu](mailto:alumni@ccsj.edu).

Find this issue (and back issues) of the magazine on our website: [www.ccsj.edu/institutionaladvancement/](http://www.ccsj.edu/institutionaladvancement/). Bookmark and save this link for future use!

# Wavelength

Volume 9  
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*Wavelength is published annually and serves its readers by providing information about the activities of CCSJ and its Alumni. Text, photographs, and artwork may not be reprinted without the written permission of the Director of Communication and Public Relations at CCSJ.*

*Designed by Angela Hughes*

*Calumet College of St. Joseph  
Alumni Association*

## BOARD NOMINATIONS OPEN



*Interested in investing your time, talent, treasure, and ideas and serving as a representative of the College?*

Our Alumni Association is currently seeking nominations for the Alumni Board of Directors. As graduates of CCSJ, you are all members of the Association and eligible to nominate fellow alumni and/or yourself.

Please submit nominations to [alumni@ccsj.edu](mailto:alumni@ccsj.edu).

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# Year of St. Joseph 2021 Year of Service

On December 8, 2020, Pope Francis declared 2021 the “Year of St. Joseph.” The year would be focused in part on the importance of ordinary people, who by their everyday work resemble Saint Joseph in his fortitude, dignity, and selfless love of God’s family. It also would offer hope, especially during this time of COVID-19, according to Vatican News.

Given this framework and the College’s own connection to the Patron Saint of Workers, former Director of Mission and Ministry Fr. Kevin Scalf, C.P.P.S., and Campus Ministry Intern Larry Cubalchini sought ways of continuing to provide service opportunities and involve students, making it a “Year of Service.”

One opportunity that emerged brought a “rye” new ministry to the table.... Sandwich-making. Mindful of health and safety concerns still stacked high with the pandemic, the Ministry pair welcomed campus groups to participate in the weekly project, which began in January 2021. Athletic teams and coaches, faculty and staff prepare up to 200 sandwiches that are then included in bagged lunches and distributed to underprivileged families in Chicago’s Back of the Yards neighborhood by Port Ministries through their “bread truck” program.

“It was a natural [and safe] transition,” Cubalchini said of the meaningful and efficient setup and service. “We work here on campus, but the food is going out into the community.”

Involvement, though, goes deeper than making sandwiches. Cubalchini sees it as a way of planting seeds of faith or further developing a connection to God in a person’s heart.

“Service is an entry point to get them to reflect on themselves and others and hopefully God, too,” Cubalchini stated. “It exemplifies the Great Command: Love God with all your heart, mind, and soul, and love your neighbor as yourself.”

For Cubalchini, his Catholic faith took seed through an invitation by his seventh-grade religious education teacher to attend a charismatic prayer session—with the promise of pizza, of course. When his faith was challenged during a difficult time later in life, Sunday Mass and church ministry drew him closer, leading him to become more involved and to transition this volunteer work into a third career.

“Now it’s time for me to give back to God by helping others. ‘To whom much is given, much is expected,’ Cubalchini said, quoting Scripture (Luke 12:48) and reflecting on his life. “The fun side of this is I’m enjoying each day of this new adventure.”

Cubalchini is a student at the Institute of Pastoral Studies at Loyola University Chicago, pursuing a second master’s degree. He earned the first, a Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies (MAPS) with an emphasis on Religious Education, in May 2021 and is expected to complete the second, a Master of Divinity (MDiv), in spring 2022.

In addition to his internship at CCSJ, Cubalchini is teaching two classes as an adjunct professor. Heading into the fall, he intends to expand outreach and to provide more diverse works of service as well.

“We hope to continue beyond this Year of Service and connect service back to the community as much as possible,” Cubalchini affirmed.

**“Service is an entry point to get [students] to reflect on themselves and others and hopefully God, too.... It exemplifies the Great Command: Love God with all your heart, mind, and soul, and love your neighbor as yourself.”**

**- Larry Cubalchini, Intern  
Campus Ministry**



## Heart & Hand: New Service Award

Service is intertwined in the DNA of the College. It’s at the heart of CCSJ’s mission, extending across curriculums\* and finding a place in clubs and sports teams. The CCSJ family at all levels exhibits works of service. Throughout this Year of St. Joseph – Year of Service, the Office of Mission and Ministry set a campus-wide goal of achieving 5,000 service hours and is recognizing individuals and groups who are contributing to this goal through on- or off-campus outreach efforts.

*\* Special thanks to Fr. Kevin Scalf, C.P.P.S., former Director of Mission and Ministry, for his dedicated efforts in establishing the Five Pillars, which detail the characteristics we expect our graduates to display after having attended a Catholic college in the tradition of the Missionaries of the Precious Blood.*

# Mission & Ministry



*Welcome, Father Jim*



The College welcomes a familiar face to the Office of Mission and Ministry. Fr. Timothy McFarland, C.P.P.S., who served on the Board of Trustees for 22 years, joins the College family now as Director of Mission and Ministry and chair of the Theology program. Fr. McFarland anticipates a positive academic year.

“I’m really looking forward to being back in the classroom. After teaching for 32 years, it’s just kind of in your blood,” Fr. McFarland says, referring to his years on the faculty at St. Joseph’s College, Rensselaer. “What I am hoping to do, too, in combination with ministry, is to be visible both to faculty and staff and to students.”

Fr. McFarland intends to “waste time” in the commons area, athletics facility, and at events around campus and “just be present.” In doing so, he hopes to form connections with the College family, observing and listening to their needs and responding in kind, whether it’s school- or ministry-related.

“For traditional college students, especially, this is the time when they’re questioning a lot of things,” Fr. McFarland explains. “If you’re there, present and visible, you provide that avenue to ask questions...they feel comfortable approaching you.”

This subtle but insightful approach to ministry is rooted in Fr. McFarland’s own spirituality in how he interacts with God. His favorite Scripture passage, 1 Kings 19: 11-13, depicts it well by describing traditional ways God made His presence known (e.g. a strong wind, earthquake, fire) and revealing another possibility (i.e. “a light silent sound”). “It’s in the everyday experiences that we see God,” Fr. McFarland says, adding that we have to be open to it. “If we ignore that, we’re going to miss God.”

Currently, Fr. McFarland is teaching two courses: The Search for Ultimate Meaning and Social Justice. His goal in each of these is to spur students to think. “Students would come out of my class and say, ‘Padre, my head hurts from thinking too much.’ And I used to tell them, ‘Well, then I’m doing my job.’”



“It’s amazing what our students [and others] do in some of the oddest places. Things you’d never think of,” said Larry Cubalchini, Campus Ministry intern, listing beach cleanup, tutoring, coaching, and sandwich-making as examples. “We recognize people each month because by doing that, it encourages others to get involved, or inspires curiosity in how they can do it, too.”

In the first four months, six individuals and six separate groups were nominated and selected by the CCSJ Mission Committee to receive the newly-established Heart & Hand Award. Winners receive a plaque, t-shirt(s), and an additional prize: a \$20 gift card for individuals and a pizza party for groups.

## Award Recipients

### *Individuals*

Linda Gajewski  
Theresa (Ross) Riehm  
Julia Fugger  
Carina Bolanos  
John Mackowicz  
Gracia Martinez

### *Groups*

Women’s Volleyball  
Men’s Volleyball  
Women’s Softball  
Honors Learning Community  
CCSJ Dance Team  
G.I.V.E.

## Submissions

Alumni are encouraged to submit nominations of CCSJ family members, including fellow alumni, who honor the spirit of service. Service can be past or ongoing.

Nominations should include a brief description of the person being nominated and the service performed. Please provide contact information for the nominee, as well as yourself. Send nominations to [service@ccsj.edu](mailto:service@ccsj.edu).

# Listen to the Experiences of Alumni Working in Service



## DAVID HEIN

Class of '05 & '21

*Town Manager - Dyer, IN*

Former Chief of Police and current Town Manager of Dyer, IN, David Hein—two-time CCSJ alum, Class of '05 & '21—has dedicated his life and nearly 30-year career to serving the Dyer community, protecting citizens, and improving the quality of life for residents. His drive and strong commitment are led by a sense of duty and pride in his hometown.

“There are generations of residents and employees that came before me and will be here after I am gone. I want to be remembered as making a difference and leaving the place better than the day I started,” Hein said.

Hein’s roots in Dyer run deep. He’s lived in the growing town since his family moved in 1975 when he was three years old. He went to the

same schools his kids attended, played and later coached Dyer little league, and delivered pizzas as a teenager throughout the neighborhood.

When he was senior in high school, Hein was in a car accident. That incident and his interaction with the local Dyer police officer, who helped him and those involved through the situation, sparked his interest in law enforcement. The only roadblock to this career path was the age requirement. “You have to be 21. That was 3 years away, and at that point in your life, that’s a lifetime,” Hein explained. The question became “What can I do now?” He found his answer with the Dyer Fire Department.

At 18, Hein joined the volunteer firefighters and worked with them for almost five years—a validating experience, which aptly thrust him into a first responder role. At 21, he was hired with the Dyer Police Department (DPD) as a part-time dispatcher. “That’s when I really knew it. That this is the job for me,” Hein said. “There’s no cut and dry day, no status quo. Every day you can expect something different, and I knew that’s how I had to be, how I wanted my career to be.” At 23, Hein fulfilled his dream of becoming a police officer.

Even with shift work and a demanding family life at home, Hein saw the importance of a college education and chose to pursue his bachelor’s and most recently master’s degrees at CCSJ. “I never wanted to go up for a career [promotion] and

have to compete with other people and be lacking the education part because you can’t go out and get that overnight,” Hein noted. “I wanted to prepare myself for those opportunities.” And those opportunities arose as he took on supervisory roles with DPD, ultimately becoming Chief of Police in 2012.

This summer Hein transitioned to townhall, closing his 25 years with DPD and opening the next chapter of his career. “I’m really excited about my transition to Town Manager,” Hein said, pleased to be continuing service to his lifelong community. “I am enthusiastic about the future of Dyer. We have a lot of development looking at our town.” In particular, he mentioned a train station that will be under construction on the Dyer-Munster border.

Hein also looks forward to assisting all of the departments in town such as Parks, Public Works, and the Fire and Police departments and being involved in a lot more projects and community activities. The greatest challenge Hein anticipates is not being able to please everyone; yet, with both exciting and tough decisions, his approach is the same: “You have to make the right decision for the betterment of the town.” ♦



## ROSA M. PEÑA

Class of '04

*Foundations of East Chicago  
Executive Director*

Throughout her educational and professional career, Rosa M. Peña, Class of '04, has found the blessings in life. Guided by faith and a mission that’s close to her heart, Peña gives back to her hometown community in serving as Executive Director of Foundations of East Chicago (FEC), a nonprofit organization that seeks to affect positive change by supporting local charities, nonprofit agencies, and individual residents of East Chicago (EC) through grants and scholarships.

“To me, it’s so rewarding to make a difference and impact in someone’s life,” Peña said. “FEC is here to assist this community when it needs it the most. And I’m blessed to be where I’m at now.”

Peña has been working to advance FEC’s mission since the Foundation’s inception in 1997, when it emerged from a development agreement through the Indiana Gaming Commission. FEC receives funding from Ameristar’s Hotel and Casino for the purpose of reinvesting into the community to support local schools, churches, and nonprofit organizations.

Together with a caring board of directors and staff—who, like her, are committed to improving the quality of life in East Chicago—Peña evaluates program grant applications and assesses an agency’s needs with respect to how it fits FEC’s mission and the impact on the community. “A program that’s needed and will benefit EC residents, the board doesn’t hesitate to consider. If we have the funds to support them all, then we will,” Peña noted. For instance, when a fire destroyed the St. Joseph’s Carmelite Home in May 2021, the FEC Board immediately approved a \$150,000 grant to help

provide some temporary relief to the Carmelite Sisters of the Divine Heart of Jesus.

This past year-plus, FEC saw the need grow even more present, yet its mission proved “stronger than ever,” as Peña stated. She explained that in addition to the regular grants and scholarship awards released yearly, approximately \$600,000 in COVID relief grants were awarded to nonprofits that address the basic needs of EC residents impacted by the pandemic. These relief grants supported various projects such as providing funding to the East Chicago Health Department to address staffing needs to assist with vaccination distributions, giving additional funds to food pantries, supporting rental assistance and utility assistance programs through the Salvation Army and Catholic Charities, and providing funding to many faith-based organizations struggling to meet general operating expenses.

Also an advocate for education, Peña is especially proud of FEC’s annual scholarship program, which awards four- and two-year scholarships to college-bound East Chicago high schoolers, and its financial assistance program for adults who decide to go back to school or seek a trade.



## Laura Smith-Wynn Class of '09

*Indiana Parenting Institute - Gary, IN  
Founder and CEO*

Children are a mirror of their parents, reflecting the attitudes and behaviors they see—whether that’s positive or negative—and returning the affection and attention they receive. This understanding of parenting is only one of the concepts that Laura Smith-Wynn, Class of ‘09, teaches at the Indiana Parenting Institute (IPI), a nonprofit organization she founded in 2007, where she continues to serve as Chief Executive Officer.

“Our job as parents is to present the best possible side of ourselves because our children learn from us. We instill a sense of self-worth and so much more,” Smith-Wynn states. In raising her own child, Jená, her pride and joy, Smith-Wynn always made sure that her daughter understood that she was important and felt secure, heard, respected, and valued. It’s this type of parent-child bond that Smith-Wynn hopes to establish and develop in those IPI assists.

“The Foundation is an organization that believes everyone has a right to education,” Peña said. “If we remove those financial barriers, educational goals can be achieved,” and speaking from experience, she added, “It’s never too late to go back and reach your goals.”

For Peña, that goal was finishing her bachelor’s degree, and CCSJ had the “perfect program” to allow her the flexibility of juggling a full-time job and family, while working towards an education. “The intensive [Organization Management] program wasn’t easy, but I had a great support system at home, and instructors were always there to assist,” Peña said. She found working in cohorts particularly helpful, too, as it taught her to appreciate different views and emphasized the benefits of teamwork, aspects she put into practice and highly values at FEC.

Earning her degree from “an institution that believes in you” was a gratifying moment. “The year I graduated from CCSJ, my son graduated from high school and my daughter from junior high! I saw myself as example to my family that anything can be accomplished if you just work hard enough.” ♦

Through IPI’s programs, Smith-Wynn and her staff help set a foundation for creating a healthy, safe, family-oriented home environment in which the wellbeing of each child is protected and families can thrive, not just survive. This is expressed in IPI’s motto: “Help a parent. Save a Child.” Often, the families whom they support have been impacted by trauma, such as incarceration, poverty, homelessness, physical or emotional abuse, substance abuse, or partner abandonment through separation, divorce, or death.

“Trauma transcends childhood into adulthood,” Smith-Wynn states, adding that sometimes, it also presents as outward displays of a deeper, inner tension. Especially in youth, for instance, they might show signs of antisocial behaviors or act out with violence, rebellion, or other juvenile delinquent tendencies, resulting in poor academic performance, truancy, or teen pregnancy.

To Smith-Wynn, education is the key to preventing these behaviors and strengthening families. “Parenting education should be in every school, [where we] teach kids about the responsibility of parenting, of thinking beyond yourself,” she says. “We will see a much better society when we are able to understand how our behavior impacts the future of our children.”

Smith-Wynn often points out to parents that they’re raising adults, not children—there are childhood years, but ultimately, they should learn to be adults, to go out and be successful in life. How to do that, she emphasizes, is in teaching proper social and life skills, instilling values, setting parameters, encouraging hard work and responsibility, and providing for both physical and emotional needs.

In IPI’s parenting classes, Smith-Wynn incorporates responsible parenting approaches that support the holistic development of both parents and their child(ren), as well as personal experiences from her life as a single mother—things she did instinctively and validated through research as she trained to be a certified parenting educator. In one particular group exercise, Smith-Wynn helps parents identify aspects of a healthy relationship. Together, they fill a white board with things like care, understanding, encouragement, reassurance, unconditional love, etc., and she tells parents: “A child needs all of these! The same things you want are the same things your kids want.”

Smith-Wynn also relates to parents in a way that shows respect and understanding without judgement of their circumstances. Having grown up in a family of eight in the Jim Crow South, she knows the realities of poverty and the importance of a strong family unit—one built on love, gratitude, and Christian values—which she had. She understands the difficulties of coping with the separation and later loss of a spouse and the trauma another abusive partner can leave.

She also knows the joys of being in a happy, healthy marriage for 35 years (and counting) and of seeing her daughter mature into a successful adult, one who came to work alongside her at IPI as the chief operating officer for 11 years.

Though group sessions were temporarily suspended because of Covid, instruction continued with private house visits and one-on-one Zoom classes. Smith-Wynn calls it “concentrated training,” since for that hour or two, she is totally focused on that one parent, discussing “whatever is a concern for them” and figuring out a plan to address it specifically and individually. She enjoys this time with them, the progress and successes they’ve had, and looks forward to when she can resume in-person sessions, where parents have the opportunity to interact with and learn from each other again in the free-flowing environment.

“I really do love working with families,” Smith-Wynn says. “I love being with the kids and seeing the joy on the faces of parents when they achieve a goal they’ve set for themselves.” Even with some of the more challenging parents, she finds enjoyment in helping them better themselves and improve their situations. “You don’t give up,” she insists. “You stay the course and find a way to open them up, so they understand how beneficial [what they’re learning] is to the future of their children. All parents want their kids to be successful, but it’s the knowledge and skills they need to make that happen.”

In addition to parenting education, Smith-Wynn and her team provide further support services to parents and caregivers through IPI’s extensive Community Resource Network (CRN). This network includes state and local agencies, nonprofit organizations, school corporations, faith- and family-based groups, and other community partners and leaders. She’s very grateful for these collaborations and the services and provisions they are able to provide together.

Running a nonprofit that supports the community, as IPI does, is a commitment—one that’s undoubtedly worthwhile, according to Smith-Wynn. “The people we serve, they’re good people,” she says. “You can’t turn them away, they just need help. . . . Sometimes, it’s a phone call or referral [to one of our CRN partners], or sometimes it’s a process [of helping] with multiple issues,” such as basic needs like food, clothing, housing and transportation or resources related to legal aid, relationship or financial help.

“These people need help, and we’re here to help them,” Smith-Wynn reiterates. ♦

# Celebrating

## Timeline of Major Milestones

**1951** Saint Joseph's College Calumet Center (SJCCC) extension opens its doors, becoming the first Catholic Church-affiliated institution of higher learning in Northwest Indiana and serving 124 students, who enrolled in classes held weekday evenings and Saturday mornings at Bishop Noll High School in Hammond, IN.

**1967** Fr. John Lefko became the first president of SJCCC. In his tenure, enrollment grew significantly, reaching almost 1,700 students.



**1976** Calumet College moves to its permanent home, the Amoco-donated 2400 building on New York Avenue in Whiting, IN, laying the groundwork for further growth and expansion.



SJCCC offers four-year degrees, making it the first to grant baccalaureate degrees in the Calumet Region. Enrollment increases to 525 students, and the extension finds space in East Chicago, IN, operating out of storefronts on Indianapolis Boulevard.

**1960**

The extension campus becomes its own independent institution, known as Calumet College.



**1973**



The College is renamed, Calumet College of St. Joseph (CCSJ), and appoints its first lay president, Dr. Dennis Rittenmeyer. The College also establishes the first accelerated four-year degree completion program, Organization Management (now Business Management Fast Track), in Northwest Indiana, growing enrollment even more.

**1987**



## COMMITMENT : An Investment in Students' Futures

There exists a widening education gap for young adults—particularly among low-income, first-generation college students and students of color. Just in 2020, undergraduate enrollment declined 3.6 percent, according to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center.

In light of this and in keeping with its mission, Calumet College of St. Joseph presents a new institutional scholarship, the Calumet Commitment. “We are excited to bring the scholarship forward this fall and share it in the high schools,” says Senior Vice President of Enrollment, Marketing and Athletics Johnny Craig. “We feel it has a compelling message.”

### What is the Calumet Commitment?

Meant to boost new student enrollment and retention, the Calumet Commitment offers

incoming traditional freshman the opportunity to have their senior year tuition paid in full. To earn it, students must reach their senior year by the 7<sup>th</sup> semester with a minimum 3.3 GPA and have the current FAFSA on file. External financial aid applies first, then CCSJ covers the rest.

### More than an incentive—it's a promise.

With financial support on the horizon, the Calumet Commitment pushes students to finish what they start—and to do so with assurance that the College backs their futures and will “go the extra mile” to see them succeed.

“We’re not changing the approach we have with students,” Craig explains. “We are continuing the personal and academic support that we already do.... When people describe CCSJ, they talk about



# Our

# 70 ANNIVERSARY



## 2000

CCSJ began its first intercollegiate athletics program, permanently changing the composition of the student body and campus atmosphere as it grew to welcome more traditional and international student-athletes.



## 2005



CCSJ introduces the Buy-A-Brick program, allowing CCSJ alumni, faculty, staff, and friends of the College to purchase a brick and have it engraved and placed in Alumni Park.

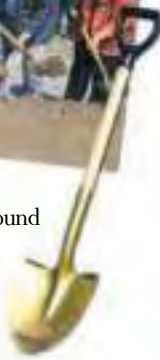
## 2012

The College constructs a 21,000 square-foot addition to the main building, creating ample space for state-of-the-art science labs, expanded fine arts rooms, and a new student commons area.



## 2021

The College breaks ground on its first on-campus housing. The first Living and Learning Residential House is expected to accommodate 63 students beginning fall 2022.



The College starts up its first master's degree program in Public Safety Administration, raising the school's prestige and leading to other master's degree programs in Teaching, Management, and Psychology.



## 2002



CCSJ opens its first new building, the Athletic Center, home to the Crimson Wave.

## 2009

Dr. Amy McCormack becomes the first female president of CCSJ. Charismatic and caring, she connects well with the community, business leaders, CCSJ alumni, faculty, and students.



## 2017

the small-campus-family feel—when the president of the College and faculty and staff know you by name—that's what we're talking about. That nurturing, one-on-one approach resonates with students."

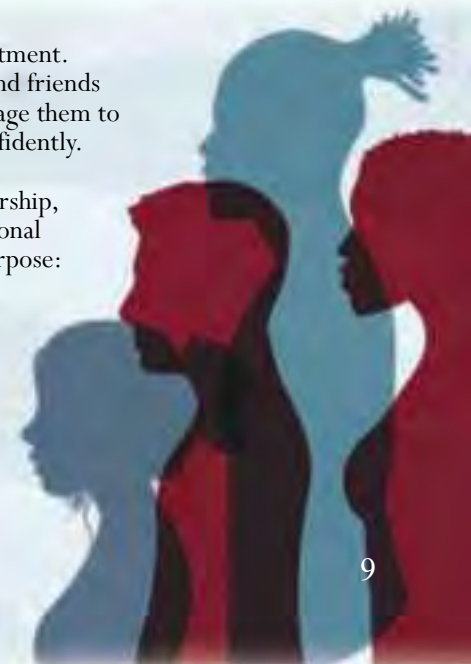
Academic support for students includes access to free tutoring through the Student Success Center, internship planning and assistance through Career Services, along with mentorship opportunities with faculty and staff. Personal support encompasses physical and mental health with an on-campus food pantry, disability services, and free counseling available through Crown Counseling.

"We are willing to invest in these students, if they're willing to invest in themselves," Craig notes. "That's the key really."

### How can alumni help?

Spread the word about the Calumet Commitment. Share your college experience with family and friends who have high-school-age students. Encourage them to enroll at CCSJ and invest in their future confidently.

If you want to financially support this scholarship, send your donation to Ester Diaz in Institutional Advancement with a note of its intended purpose: To fund the Calumet Commitment.





“Forty-six years ago, I graduated from CCSJ,” Herb Yekel, Class of ‘75, said. “It’s with much pride and excitement that I watched my grandson graduate.... I am proud of him and his achievement at CCSJ.”

Yekel’s grandson, Addison Barnhill, is one of 204 graduates of the Class of 2021, who, with having completed course requirements, participated in the College’s unique, two-day Graduate Celebration on May 21 - 22, 2021. The nontraditional event gave graduates the opportunity to walk across a mock stage and receive their diplomas in person, while still respecting social-distancing guidelines on campus and keeping everyone safe.

“We tried to put as much care and intentionality about what we were doing [with graduation],” commented Dr. Dionne Jones-Malone, Vice President of Student Engagement and Retention and head of the Graduation Committee. “We were able to bring grads here with their families... and have that graduate moment,” which proved meaningful and more personal for graduates, faculty, and administration alike.

“It was such a wonderful experience!” expressed Dr. Ginger Rodriguez, former Vice President of Academic Affairs. “[President] Amy and I greeted all the graduates and presented them their degrees and had pictures taken. We also got to meet and talk to their families. That’s really an experience that I am going to treasure looking back.”

Leslie and Angela Carter—mother and daughter graduates, respectively—cherished the moment to cross the stage together and receive their bachelor’s degrees.

“The journey that I had getting here the last year, it’s emotional,” L. Carter said, pausing to wipe away tears. “I was out of school for twenty years, and [my daughter] talked me into going back to college. I finally finished with her, and it’s nice, really nice.”

### Picture the Moment, the Memories

In addition to the grand stage moment and photo-ops with faculty and administration, graduates had the opportunity to take pictures at one of the several selfie stations set up throughout the building. They could pose with their besties on stage or under beautiful balloon arrangements, take a snapshot with Crimson Joe, or capture the moment in a nostalgic way by finding their name on the Class of 2021 banner they had signed four years ago at new-student orientation. Also available to graduates was professional photography by Grad Images, and the College provided a free 5”x7” commemorative photo.

High school sweethearts and now CCSJ graduates, Elise and Louis Padilla used the opportunity to take a proud family photo. It’s the long-awaited accomplishment, according to Mr. Padilla, his wife agreeing.

“We had kids. We focused on them, making sure they got through college,” she shared. “Now, they’re college graduates and in their fields of study, so we decided it was time to complete what we started.”



### CONGRATULATIONS, GRADUATES!

Now that you’re officially alumni, it’s time to order a CCSJ Alumni t-shirt that you can wear with pride! Get yours today—call: 219-473-4388. For other CCSJ apparel, visit our online store at [www.ccsj.edu](http://www.ccsj.edu).

# Class of 2021



Master's graduate David Hein recreated a photo from over a decade ago in which he's holding his six-month-old infant alongside his well-earned CCSJ bachelor's degree. Sixteen years later, with a public safety master's hood draped over his neck, Hein stands a head shorter beside his now-teenage son, gripping his leg for the humorous recreation.

"I always made my family a huge part of my career and my life," Hein mentioned. And these photos show just that.

## Embrace the Future with Grace, Ambition & Gratitude

Video screens ran pre-filmed speeches on loop both days, giving graduates a chance to listen to keynote speakers, such as CCSJ President Amy McCormack and co-valedictorians, Richard Sullivan and Theresa (Ross) Riehm.

In her remarks, Dr. McCormack congratulated the 2021 Class for making it "to the finish line," to graduation—a major accomplishment, especially given the last 18 months of facing a global pandemic.

"You didn't give up...you didn't let the unknowns get the best of you, and for that you should give yourself a big hug or a pat on the back," she encouraged. "You will begin this next phase of your life where there is the unknown, where all outcomes are possible, so enter it with grace."

Sullivan—who earned a Bachelor of Science in Public Safety Management, Summa Cum Laude—spoke of a sense of pride he shares with his fellow graduates.

"It is a testament to our hard work, commitment, and sacrifice we have all made," he noted, honored to be one of the 2021 valedictorians. "I am much more honored to be graduating with such an admirable group of people, a group that wields enormous amounts of potential ambition, giving us all the opportunity to be whatever we want to be and fulfill our dreams."

A lifelong Chicagoan, Sullivan has been with the Chicago Police Department for 27 years. He is currently a detective and certified Lead Homicide Investigator and Criminal Interviewer as well. He plans on continuing his education at CCSJ to earn his master's in Public Safety Administration.

An Education major, Theology minor, and the newest fourth-grade teacher at St. Stanislaus Kostka School in Michigan City, IN, Riehm is achieving her elementary-school-teacher dream and giving thanks for CCSJ.

"I'm so grateful for my small, affordable, Catholic college. It not only gave me what I needed, a degree to teach, it enriched my life in ways that I can only begin to thank God for," Riehm said, closing her speech with a personally-written prayer:

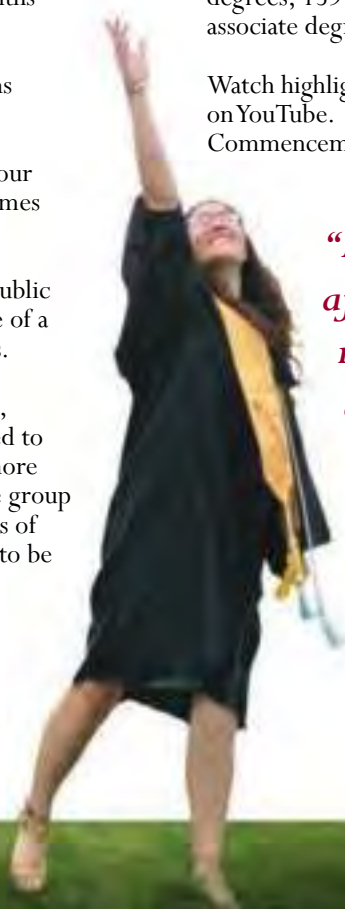
"Lord, we ask you to continue blessing our College, and to bless us all on our journeys. May we live for You and use our gifts and talents to spread your love. Amen."

As the Class of 2021, some 62 graduates achieved master's degrees, 139 earned bachelor's degrees, and 3 received associate degrees. Congratulations to all!

Watch highlights of this year's Graduate Celebration on YouTube. Search "Calumet College of St. Joseph Commencement Recap 2021."

*"I'm so grateful for my small, affordable, Catholic college. It not only gave me what I needed, a degree to teach, it enriched my life in ways that I can only begin to thank God for."*

*- Theresa (Ross) Riehm,  
Education major*





## Alumni Spotlights

# Public Safety & Community Engagement: *An Alum's Career in Blue*

Imagine being a youngster, say 10 years old, growing up in rural Porter County and helping the neighboring farmer bail hay, when all of a sudden, a white police car comes barreling through the field, lights flashing and siren blaring, and stops just short of the tractor. Next thing you know, the officer, sans his gun belt, is working beside you in a plain t-shirt, tossing hay in the tractor wagon for the next half hour or so.

This unforgettable childhood moment secured a desire young Jeff Balon, Class of '12, had on making a career out of law enforcement. "That was the defining moment when I knew," Chief Balon, Valparaiso Police Department (VPD), recalls. "I reached out to that officer when I first became chief, told him that story and thanked him saying, 'You are one of the reasons I became a police officer.'"

Chief Balon continues: "The core of someone wanting to be an officer is all the same—wanting to make a difference and wanting to help others. That's what I wanted to do. I wanted to be out there making a difference in the community that I serve." That community is, and has always been, Valparaiso, IN.

For 30 years, Balon has served with the VPD. Hired in 1992, he spent the first 12 years on the road as a patrolman and ended up making rank to patrol sergeant; then, in 2004 he transferred to the detective bureau, where he investigated major felony crimes. When he began considering police administration, Balon approached his chief at the time who encouraged him to first obtain his bachelor's degree—a prerequisite Chief Balon has carried on with his administration.

"The education aspect is very important to me, and my officers know that," Chief Balon says, mentioning that he's had numerous officers, all whom he's proud of, go back and earn their degrees. "To me, obtaining your

*"I believe that I am here in my position [as chief] because of Calumet College. It prepares you for the gamut of police administration."*

*- Jeff Balon, Class of '12*

degree shows that you can set goals and accomplish those goals. It also gives you a thought preface of seeing big picture topics and enables you to analyze and formulate strategies for any situation put in front

of you." Not only that, Chief Balon adds, but the right program like CCSJ's Public Safety Management program matters.

"I believe that I am here in my position [as chief] because of Calumet College. It prepares you for the gamut of police administration," he says, naming recruitment, employee motivation, budget planning, and a multifaceted approach to leadership as examples. "My college degree, I use it every day."

Within five years of graduating from CCSJ, Balon was promoted from captain of investigations, leading a team of six detectives, to chief in charge of the entire VPD of 59 officers and additional civilian employees. Under his leadership, new partnerships and programs have developed to better support the department and the Valpo community as a whole. For example, VPD's first police social worker is joining the force to work in tandem with officers and act as a liaison for child protective services, adult protective services, schools, and the public in need of services.

Changes to the Officer Wellness program have been initiated to promote the physical and psychological health of VPD officers as well. Chief Balon encourages all of them to utilize the on-site workout facility regularly and also welcomes them to speak with the newly partnered psychoanalyst, who is available to provide further mental and emotional support during particularly difficult times. He, himself, talked with the doctor when he lost his oldest son, who passed away in his sleep due to an epileptic seizure, in March 2021. "It's been hard, but we have a great community and department where the

officers all circle around," Chief Balon says. "[The doctor] gave me the tools and approaches to grieve that helped me and my family, and it's done wonders."





# Experiential Learning at Its Finest

To Chief Balon, community engagement is paramount to public safety. He explains that with strong community engagement from a city’s police department, typically, there are lower crime statistics within that community. Outreach also builds community trust through positive interactions and opens communication for community members and leaders alike to give feedback, which Chief Balon highly values.

Some of the VPD’s outreach programs include the Citizens’ Police Academy, Junior Police Academy, National Night Out, PREP (Police Recruit Engagement Program), Breakfast and Badges, and other educational and social events. Each outreach program—and in Chief Balon’s opinion, you can never have too many of those—provides that opportunity for citizens of all ages to mingle with and get to know VPD officers.

“These programs and the [community] engagement are my motivator every day,” Chief Balon says. “I’ve had satisfaction in everything I’ve done, but this is where I am finding true enjoyment because you are part of making a huge difference in so many lives, our officers’ lives, our citizens’ lives—it’s rewarding.”

## A “Reggie Moment”

Occasionally, Chief Jeff Balon, Valparaiso Police Department, brings his family dog, Reggie, to work. This one-year-old mini goldendoodle is a ball of curly fluff that instantly spreads joy and has become the unofficial mascot of the VPD.

“My wife actually started talking to different people around the department, and they loved the idea,” Chief Balon mentions. “So, we found a calm, person-friendly, animal-friendly combination—and voilá, here’s Reggie.”

Though Reggie is not a certified comfort dog, his soothing nature still takes effect and has led those who interact with him to dub the moment a “Reggie Moment.” Even citizens sometimes ask to pet him.

As far as having a service dog be part of the VPD in an official capacity, Chief Balon says, “It’s something we may explore down the road...but certified, so we can properly help.”

Career-related experiences move students forward in preparedness and present a remarkable, firsthand look at the profession they hope to have. For Criminal Justice major Tre Gibson, Class of ‘21—who describes his unique, on-the-job opportunities as “thrilling” and “eye-opening”—they confirmed his interest in law enforcement.

“It was fun being in that police car,” Gibson says, recalling the nights he rode shotgun on routine patrols with Valparaiso Police Department officers. “[Police work] has always been my passion, and even though I wasn’t able to take any action, I learned a lot.”

Watching from the passenger’s seat, Gibson gained a clearer understanding of how the squad car’s computer system operated for looking up an individual’s information during a traffic stop and how an officer uses discretion to write a ticket—or not. “Not everybody needs a ticket or to go to jail,” Gibson explains of the officer’s advice. “It can be a lesson learned: not to do it again.”

Gibson absorbed the imparted wisdom of his accompanying officers, along with their police academy stories and accounts of past traffic stops and calls for backup. On one occasion, Gibson witnessed a K9 officer perform a narcotics-search around a vehicle and sniff out concealed drugs, giving officers probable cause to enter the vehicle and make an arrest. It was very interesting and tells how smart and how well-trained the police dog is, mentions the thoroughly impressed Gibson.

These experiential learning experiences were coordinated on Gibson’s behalf by CCSJ President Amy McCormack and Class of 2012 alumnus Jeff Balon, Valparaiso Chief of Police. Both played big roles in getting him to where he’s wanted to be, Gibson says.

“Having President McCormack and Chief Balon invested in my college education and career made me feel as if they saw something inside of me.”

“President McCormack could’ve just listened to my dreams and done nothing about it, but she vested her time and gave me an opportunity to meet Chief Balon,” Gibson explains.

“And thanks to Chief Balon for giving me the opportunity to see if this was the line of work I really wanted to do,” he adds, which it is.



Gibson interned with the Indiana State Police in Spring 2020, completing all his required hours before the COVID-19 shutdown in March. He later worked for the Lake County Juvenile Detention Center as a surveillance officer, contacting juveniles on house arrest and their families.

Situational awareness and attention to detail—skills he first observed during the ride-along experiences freshman year—Gibson put into practice in the field and still applies today. “I am careful not to put myself into situations that could lead to a bad outcome,” Gibson notes.

Gibson graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice – Probation, Parole, and Courts concentration. He was hired by the Lake County Sheriff’s Department and sworn in on July 15, 2021. The achievement would make his late grandfather, a former Lake County Sheriff’s deputy from the ‘80s whom he credits for inspiring his career path, very proud.

“An officer should be seen as a role model for the community. Someone to look up to,” Gibson affirms. “I want to be that positive face in the community.”



# Inspired to Serve

## Alumni Follow Their Callings in Social Work

Pamela Key, '95



Sponsored by the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ, Sojourner Truth House (STH) is a ministry of hope and help for homeless and at-risk women and their children and the underserved members of the community. As STH's mission states: through hospitality, advocacy, integrative services and collaboration, participants improve their quality of life and that of the community in a safe, trusting environment.

Gary native Pamela Key, Class of '95, who grew up a block from STH's location on 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue, remembers the building as a simple community center. Seeing the transformation and having worked with the nonprofit for the past 13 years is surreal for her and can only be explained, as she says, "by divine appointment."

"I would have never known to come back to my neighborhood and to be in this building and this space. It's truly amazing," Key states. After serving the State of Indiana for nine years—first with Public Assistance and then with Child Protective Services—Key started with STH in 2008. "I knew in my heart I was supposed to be here, and it's been a blessing ever since."

As Director of Client Services, Key oversees all services for homeless clients and transitional outreach program participants, including case management and community resource services; the food and clothing pantries; day shelter; and the new Gateway Supportive Housing program, which permanently places individuals or families in housing. Within these services, further assistance is provided to address additional needs such as obtaining benefits, IDs, birth certificates, and furniture. Basic skills and employment training, counseling, health-care screenings, and transportation to appointments are also offered through STH.

"Homelessness is complex. It's more than just housing," Key says, mentioning that there is always a root cause—worker displacement, an abusive relationship, or other unpleasant situation, for instance.

Key explains that anyone can become homeless at any time, and it often causes a sense of shame and awkwardness for the person. Key and all STH staff and volunteers treat every client with dignity and always that attitude of service. "We try to keep our atmosphere uplifting, inviting, and welcoming. We want each person and family to be successful."

During the pandemic, especially the shutdown early on, housing was particularly challenging to secure. However, Key and her team were able to house eight people from March to August 2020, through "nothing but the grace of God," Key emphasizes. The number of individuals served through the pantries also increased, nearly tripling because of the need due to people losing their jobs and not being able to afford food for their families. On average, STH has served 2,243 clients per month, clothed 2,340, and provided 15,155 meals, according to their website ([sojournertruthhouse.org](http://sojournertruthhouse.org)).

"Every experience I've had has given me a lot of tools to use here," Key says. "If a parent has a case with the Child Services department, I have that knowledge of the process on how to get the kids back."

Social work is clearly Key's God-given calling. She finds her career and work at STH to be incredibly rewarding. The transformation she witnesses in individuals who were homeless and now housed, "it's indescribable," she says.

Key is grateful to have received her associate degree in Human Services from CCSJ, which prompted her to further pursue higher education and earn a Master of Social Work (M.S.W.) from Indiana University Northwest. One CCSJ professor, in particular, Key credits with having inspired her career: Elizabeth Guzman-Arredondo, Class of '86 and Director of Human Services.

*"I knew in my heart I was supposed to be here, and it's been a blessing ever since."*

- Pamela Key, Class of '95

"Ms. Guzman[-Arredondo] was my very first class I had taken, and it was amazing," Key recalls. "Her passion and love of the field and her knowledge were all fantastic. She made it very interesting. Mind you, I was out of school for 10 years, so it wasn't easy. I had to work for it."

## Nonprofit Internship Became a Career

Claire Schapker, '19



Ever since her first Social Justice course, alumna Claire Schapker, Class of '19, has looked for how she fits into

this world, how she can make an impact. Majoring in Business Management with a Psychology minor, Schapker initially thought she'd follow a career in the corporate world, in human resources—until, she discovered her passion for nonprofit work and later came to intern at Lake Area United Way (LAUW).

"The opportunity ignited my desire to serve others and actively help communities grow stronger," Schapker says of the social justice and community involvement opportunities CCSJ provided.

On separate occasions over the past three years, Schapker has worked with LAUW. She first interned during her senior year, then returned part-time when LAUW reached out for help with managing and providing support for their shared case management system, CharityTracker. She also keeps their free online resource directory, *ResourceRoundUp.com*, updated with affordable, low-cost programs and services offered throughout Northwest Indiana. Now, coming on full time as Community Impact Associate, Schapker additionally assists with LAUW's Level Up program. This program helps working families, whose income falls below the basic cost of living, find financial stability through support, such as job training, budgeting, and providing for basic needs.

# Board of Trustees



## New Board of Trustees Members



Susan Scroggins, '88



Mitch Gaffigan, '91



Judge Marissa McDermott



Fr. Kevin Scalf, C.P.P.S.

“I am very proud of Pamela [Key] and all the compassionate work she has engaged in with clients at Sojourner Truth House,” Guzman-Arredondo comments. “As many of my students at CCSJ, Pam has an innate desire to be of service to others.”

In her career, Guzman-Arredondo has likewise followed her calling. Serving as a licensed social worker, she strove to address the needs of the working family, and as a Court Appointed Special Advocate for Abused and Neglected Children, she advocated for at-risk and underserved youth. Since 1991, she has also supported CCSJ students, showing through firsthand experience how to assess and address a variety of human needs, and inspiring them to be compassionate professional helpers. Throughout her 30 years teaching, she has seen her responsibility as a special commitment.

“I am tasked with helping my students to recognize that gift of care and compassion for others and to grow that desire with knowledge and skill that will assist them in making a positive impact on those in need,” Guzman-Arredondo says. “In our line of work the fruits of our labor can take years to manifest. It’s satisfying when we are able to witness the growth and be around for the harvest.”



## Path

Seeing the direct impact that agency assistance and support can have on an individual, especially the impact it’s had on families during the pandemic, is very meaningful for Schapker.

“This work was an expansion on what I had done as an intern [with LAUW],” she says, “but I felt this time around it was having a bigger impact on the community.”

*If you have internship opportunities available for CCSJ students, contact Director of Career Services, Matt Vicars, at 219-473-4253 or [mvicars@ccsj.edu](mailto:mvicars@ccsj.edu).*

CCSJ’s future is promising, and the Board of Trustees (BOT) has vetted four new members who will support the College’s mission and development, as well as enhance the already active and hard-working BOT. Two of these new members are alumni: Susan Scroggins, Class of ‘88, and Mitch Gaffigan, Class of ‘91.

“We are at an exciting point in the planning of the College’s future,” Chairman of the Board Larry Meyers says. “Susan [Scroggins] brings energy and new ideas to help with our President’s [Dr. Amy McCormack’s] vision for the future of the College.” Meyers and the BOT are pleased that she will bring her knowledge and “very strong finance background,” especially as it pertains to higher education.

Scroggins, a financial professional with over 30 years of experience, currently serves Valparaiso University (VU) as Senior Vice President for Finance and Treasurer. As such, she’s a member of VU’s President’s Cabinet, which is responsible for campus operations and strategic initiatives. She provides oversight of property development, investment, and additional financial activities, while also serving as a liaison to several committees of VU’s Board of Directors. Prior to her 20 years at VU, Susan held lead financial positions in the public accounting, manufacturing, and retail sectors.

“I’m looking forward to serving CCSJ in ways that are helpful to the advancement of the institution’s mission and vision,” Scroggins says, thrilled to be joining current BOT members and working with President McCormack on strategic initiatives. “As a first-generation college student, I am honored to serve an institution that provided me opportunity and direction during a critical juncture of my career.”

Scroggins earned her bachelor’s degree in Organization Management from CCSJ and a master’s degree in Business Administration from Valparaiso University.

A financial professional as well, Gaffigan brings with him nearly 20 years of experience in the banking industry, having held financial advisor

and investment executive roles at Merrill Lynch and Fifth Third Securities, respectively. Currently, Gaffigan is Account Vice President at Purdue Federal Credit Union, a financial institution he gravitated toward for its mission-driven culture and commitment to members.

“Mitch [Gaffigan] comes from a family that was involved in banking here locally. His finance and fundraising skill sets will be a benefit to our development team on the Board,” Meyers comments, adding that as an alum Gaffigan has “a head start on what the College has to offer.”

Gaffigan earned his CCSJ bachelor’s degree in Organization Management. He serves on several community organizations, including the Diocese of Gary Finance Council and the Catholic Foundation for Northwest Indiana.

Two other valuable additions to the BOT include Judge Marissa McDermott of the Lake County Circuit Court and Fr. Kevin Scalf, C.P.P.S. Judge McDermott earned her law degree from University of Notre Dame and worked for several law firms in Northwest Indiana, specializing in insurance defense law before switching to the plaintiff side. She ran her own law firm for the past seven years before being elected to the Circuit Court in 2016.

Fr. Scalf, a priest for the Missionaries of the Precious Blood since 2009, served CCSJ on faculty and administration for the past six years, most recently making an impact as Director of Mission and Ministry. Following a calling to be closer to his parents, Fr. Scalf chose reappointment to McNicholas High School in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he is school chaplain and Theology faculty.

With such dedicated and experienced new members, the BOT looks forward to the new heights they will reach in supporting the College, its mission, and core values together.

# 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Trustees' Scholarship Gala

VIRTUAL EVENT

## Visible Impact of Donors' Generosity

The 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Trustees' Gala was unlike any other. The charismatic CCSJ duo, President Amy McCormack and Fr. Kevin Scalf, C.P.P.S., co-hosted and treated guests to a well-scripted and naturally performed show, meant to inspire, entertain, amaze or amuse guests—all from the comfort of their homes. (Hope they stayed for the bloopers reel!)

The special virtual event went live on April 24, 2021. Its program showcased CCSJ through the eyes of its students; highlighted the 2020 award winners; and featured several unique, one-of-a-kind silent auction items like a chance to take on the number one ranked Crimson Wave Bowling team, an opportunity to be famous for a day as a guest on "Off Mic" with Michael Puente, and an aerial tour over the Northwest Indiana and Chicago metropolitan area. Woven throughout the program were expressions of immense appreciation that President McCormack and students have for the continued support and generosity of donors: community leaders, alumni, and great friends of the College.

"Tonight's Gala is about helping unite the power of learning through higher education and enhancing your connection to the College and those we serve," Dr. McCormack said in her welcoming remarks. "It is our hope that CCSJ and our students become what they were meant to be."

For graduate student Charity Gilkey, that's following her education and career training through the US Air Force and eventually working with the FBI—big dreams she credits CCSJ with having inspired her to believe are possible.



"As a kid, I had always been interested in police work...but I didn't know how I was going to pay for college," Gilkey mentioned. "When students like me are offered a scholarship, it motivates them to do better in school and to give back to their community and their school. And I just think about how blessed I am to be one of the students who was awarded scholarships because like I said, if it weren't for the scholarship, I wouldn't be here today."



New alum, Cassie Reed, recipient of a softball scholarship, fell in love with the College's campus and community. Having majored in Criminal Justice with a Human

Services minor, she hopes to focus her efforts on making an impact back in Colorado, her home state.

"I want to advocate for kids and help kids in any way that I can," she said. Reed attributes her internship with CCSJ adjunct professor Monica Lopez—a retired Chicago Police Department patrol officer who founded "I'm Not Just A Name Children's Resource Center" (INJANCRC), an organization dedicated to education, awareness and recovery of missing and exploited children—with having sparked Reed's ultimate goal.

"[Prof. Lopez] really solidified my dreams and visions of wanting to advocate for

kids... That's why, with my master's degree, I want to lean towards opening the [INJANCRC] center in Colorado," Reed stated.

Gilkey and Reed are among many other students who have greatly valued the family atmosphere at CCSJ, one which extends from administration to grads and undergrads.

"CCSJ is a tight-knit school... We're a tight-knit family here, and I think we live by the [Five] Pillars," Senior Michael Biegel said, emphasizing that one of the core values he's learned here is a commitment to serve. "That's how I see Dr. McCormack and the professors—they're committed to making us better people, to go out into the world and serve others."



Baseball player and announcer at Crimson Wave athletic events, Biegel has started coaching travel baseball and looks to carry the impact CCSJ has had on him to the eighth-graders he coaches. He explained that he hopes they would develop "that sense of being good citizens, good classmates," and simply want to be "respectable people at the end of the day."



Senior Desiree Vega, a Whiting native, also benefitted by CCSJ's small-school environment, which she described as feeling natural, at-home.

"The sense of community is so familiar to what I've experienced my entire life. It feels right. It feels like I'm where I'm supposed to be," Vega said.





# Thank You to our Generous Sponsors!



*Cheers to this year's Gala guests and sponsors!  
Your generosity touches the hearts of many.*

"All my teachers know my name," Vega continued, "and can give me the attention I need, if I need help." One professor, in particular, has made her college experience "worthwhile." Professor Desila Rosetti, Vega mentioned, helped her realize her potential by having high expectations of her and providing immense insight and opportunity in business management.

One-on-one help at CCSJ outspreads beyond faculty mentorship. Additional resources like the Student Success Center and Crown Counseling are available for and utilized by students.

Junior Moises Castillo discovered the importance of seeking help and talking to a professional counselor.



"After a few conversations, it was eye opening to know that you're not supposed to do this alone. That's why we have communities

and why we have people here to help each other," said the Finance and Accounting major. Castillo also sought mentoring help from Dr. McCormack, whose background is in public accounting. She not only welcomed it but—much to Castillo's surprise—also invited him to lunch, an astonishing opportunity he wholly relishes.

"By me being a part of this school, slowly but surely, my life has been changing," Castillo said, explaining that he is open to experiences, confident-driven, and determined to reach personal goals and ambitions. "I feel I have an equal opportunity as at any other high-end college to go find my career in life."

Vega, Castillo, and the other students who gave testimonials shared sentiments of gratitude for donors, stating that they're the ones who make it possible for students to be here—not just at CCSJ, but on their chosen paths in life.

"When someone invests in the school, they're not just investing in the school, they're investing in the students, into actual people. They're making a huge impact," Castillo asserted, adding that the impact is in inspiring students to do great things, and "that's amazing!"

"A couple years ago, I didn't imagine being this person that I am now," Gilkey noted. "It just makes me smile sometimes."

"When you come here, it's quite literally like the motto says, You belong here," Vega emphasized. "I am so thankful, and it's literally because of the people watching this [virtual Gala]. They're helping create this place [CCSJ], and that is so comforting."

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# CCSJ Academics



## CCSJ Academic Programs

# GROW



**Kinesiology** works with Crimson Wave Athletics' trainers to provide practical experience in aspects of human movement, physical conditions, and quality of life, well-positioning

students to move into graduate school for Athletic Training (MAT), Physical Therapy (DPT), and Occupational Therapy (OTD) or to immediately enter the workforce.

"These are real opportunities that give students all the background they need," Dr. Rodriguez notes.

Academic programs at CCSJ are changing: They're growing. They're collaborating to broaden services offered. They're expanding to stay relevant, provide greater career avenues, and better meet students' needs and those of the community.

"It's an ongoing process," says Dr. Ginger Rodriguez, Executive Director of Grants and Strategic Initiatives, formerly Vice President of Academic Affairs. "We're really excited about all the changes."

In the sciences, new programs have emerged as a result of significant partnerships with area hospitals and schools.

**Medical Laboratory Science** incorporates three years of intensive classwork at CCSJ, plus one year of hands-on laboratory experience with Community Healthcare System or Franciscan Health hospitals. Graduates earn a bachelor's degree and can start careers as medical laboratory scientists, veterinary medical technologists, and more.



**Health Science** grants an accelerated associate degree, allowing students to pursue a bachelor's degree in Nursing; if they choose to, they may be able to move seamlessly into Marian University's Leighton School of Nursing in the future. Or students can enter the workforce in a variety of careers such as a medical assistant or pharmacy technician.



"Nursing is a field that has tremendous demand," Dr. Rodriguez says. "Also, there's so much potential for students [with Medical Laboratory Science] because it offers so many job opportunities."

Two additional, well-established science programs have benefited from collaboration as well.



**Forensic Science** is being coordinated with the Criminal Justice program to make it possible for students to earn a minor in Criminal Justice and further prepare them for careers in criminal investigations and scientific research.



**Organization Management**, another longstanding program, has received a name change as its programing shifted to a hybrid format. Now called *Business Management Fast Track*, the accelerated program enables students who have an associate degree, or equivalent 52 credit hours, to earn a bachelor's degree in 14 months, attending classes one night each week in person and via Zoom.

"Students have the best of both worlds," Program Director Dr. Roy Scheive comments. "They're able to learn face to face, to meet their colleagues and to create those bonds with other students, but then for over half the class sessions, they meet online, removing time and space barriers."

**Public Safety** and Business Management faculty have started collaborating to expand the range of public service careers students may pursue, including nonprofit management and government areas.



"We're ensuring that our programs that have long been successful are broadening their offerings to stay relevant and meet community needs," states Dr. Rodriguez. "It's right in line with our mission, which is to serve the public—that's who we are."

**Education** is the final program being revamped with this same emphasis on community needs. According to Dr. Rodriguez, the program is on hiatus until spring 2022 when it will begin accepting students again after an intensive review process is completed.



"We are working with regional K-12 school districts to be certain that our program fits the needs in those regional schools," Dr. Rodriguez says, adding that likewise the aim is to continue to "attract the caliber of students" who have that "passion and drive that's innate."





## Business Management Fast Track

Burnout happens. Even the mere mention of the word produces a level of exhaustion that weighs on a person. Working in healthcare, primarily in intensive care units, CCSJ student Meghan Germek, sees it in her co-workers at Rush University Medical Center and at times faces it, too.

“It’s very common to see burnout in our industry,” Germek says, mentioning the stress that high demand, emergency situations cause. “We’re not completely out of the woods of a respiratory pandemic.”

As a pediatric respiratory therapist who works night shifts, Germek decided making a change and furthering her education would provide relief by opening avenues for career advancement. The program that attracted her? CCSJ’s Business Management Fast Track.

“It was the fastest and most efficient way I could find to get a bachelor’s,” Germek notes. “And affordable. . . For being a private school, I was very impressed with how affordable it is.” Germek explains that she “gave it the good ol’ college try” at another private university whose tuition per credit hour nearly tripled CCSJ’s and whose rigid class schedule consisted largely of in-person classes. CCSJ’s program, however, presented a viable option. Through its hybrid format—where students attend half the courses face to face and half online (via Zoom)—time and space barriers vanish.

“I love the hybrid aspect of things,” Germek confirms. “The responsibility of being in person or live on Zoom is only once a week. It’s very conducive to the already-working, adult life.” Germek especially likes online classes for the simple fact that in a mask-mandated world, she can see her classmates’ faces and work closely with her cohort.

The cohort model, a key part of CCSJ’s regionally accredited program since its establishment in 1987 as a degree completion program, promotes peer support and leads to a higher completion rate, according to Program Director Dr. Roy Scheive.

“We have several professionals and paraprofessionals in our program that network,” Dr. Scheive explains of the connection students from entry-level supervisors to vice presidents and directors form. “They come to know each other very well. They help each other and encourage each other.”

The accelerated nature of the program helps, too, and makes learning from one another’s life and work experiences essential. In doing so, students gain greater understanding of textbook theory based on practical, real-world application and improve critical-thinking and problem-solving skills.

“You want to make sure that when students do graduate, they can be in the competitive business world, so they need a variety of skills,” Dr. Scheive says, mentioning among these communication, technology, and business expertise skills, including management and supervision, economics, accounting, and human resources.

Among the advantages of the hybrid format, Dr. Scheive also identifies students’ ability to prepare and conduct presentations in front of a virtual or live group. They become comfortable with it, he says, because kinks are worked out in class, in a safe environment, designed to give feedback constructively from both the group (their peers) and the professor—all for students’ improvement.

Not only that, Dr. Scheive adds, the program is more than worth it. “For the price of a car,” he emphasizes, “students can make an investment in their future, find a career that they love, and expect to make over one million dollars more, over the course of their lifetime.”

Germek chose CCSJ for the broad, experiential advantage it would provide in exposing her to more than healthcare specifics—and over the 14 months, she’s received just that.

“It’s really cool to see how this one program [the Business Management Fast Track] applies to all of us, all our industries,” Germek says. “It’s a lot of work. There is nothing easy about it, but I love that it is temporary. The weeks are flying by!”

## CCSJ Students On-Air

### *An Internship in English and Media Communications*

An award-winning journalist with three decades of experience, CCSJ adjunct professor and Class of ‘92 alum, Michael Puente involves CCSJ

students in the behind-the-scenes production and on-air hosting of “Off Mic,” his weekly morning discussion and interview show on Lakeshore Public Radio WLRP 89.1 FM.

“I really take great pleasure and pride in teaching Calumet College students because I graduated from here. I’m proud of that,” Puente says. “I want to help the next generation achieve what they want to achieve.”

Through an immersive, semester-long internship, Puente introduces students to a popular type of journalism, called broadcasting, and helps them

build strong, written and verbal communication skills. He emphasizes the importance of conducting thorough research and pre-interviews for assessing a guest’s personability and knowledge for the show—responsibilities which often fall within the wheelhouse of a show’s producer. He also encourages students to host and lead a live interview.

“If a student is shy or hesitant to be on-air, I push them to be on there anyway,” Puente says. “You never know what the experience [on-air] is going to be like for someone.”

Andrea Doughty, Class of ‘21, who interned last spring, described it as “pretty cool,” especially when she and her two classmates had the opportunity to record interviews in the studio. “That made everything

feel even more authentic and radio-like,” she mentioned.

“And the feeling I got with the headset on as I sat in front of the microphone was out of this world.”

Doughty enjoyed taking on both roles of producer and host, and, as she learned from Puente early on, the news moves quickly! She explained that sometimes an idea looked as though it would fall through but, at the last minute, picked right back up.

Doughty conducted one pre-interview with a representative from the Towel Theatre of Hammond, IN, to discuss their plays and how “the show must go on,” so to speak, as the theatre adapted to COVID-19 procedures and introduced an on-demand feature. She also spoke with a representative from the Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago about their “Handfuls of

Love” Valentine’s Day Card Exchange. The annual program gives people the chance to send digital cards with personalized messages for hospitalized kids to brighten their day.

“In the end, I’m proud of what I accomplished with Michael Puente and my classmates,” Doughty affirmed. “This internship was a door I’m glad to have found and opened as I finished my education at CCSJ.”

According to Puente, the internship also opens up wider career possibilities for students. “It’s the experience of presenting themselves and speaking up that comes into play in any profession,” he explains. “Any job you get, in any profession, you will need strong communication skills to be successful, and that’s what I try to teach my students.”



# Meet Dr. Derek Shouba

# Q & A WITH THE NEW VPAA

The Vice President of Academic Affairs (VPAA) Office has line of sight of all educational programs, both graduate and undergraduate, at the College and supports CCSJ faculty in providing leadership and guiding program-development initiatives to promote student success. On August 1, 2021, CCSJ welcomed a new VPAA.

**Q:** How did it feel to accept the VPAA position?

**A:** I was very excited to accept the position of Vice President of Academic Affairs at CCSJ because the College has so much to recommend it: it's inclusive, intimate, affordable, and supportive. I was inspired in the interview process, too, by the individual level of interest President Amy McCormack and the other vice presidents had in the students.

**Q:** What initially drew you to CCSJ?

**A:** I have always been interested in providing first-class educational opportunities to diverse and underprivileged learners. I was attracted to CCSJ because I can see how much of an impact it is having on so many different kinds of students in Illinois, Indiana, and elsewhere. Having lived in Munster, IN, and on the South Side of Chicago for many years, I know how important CCSJ is to local communities, especially considering the economic challenges and gaps that are present. I want to help make sure CCSJ is able to benefit these communities far into the future.

**Q:** Can you share a little about your educational background?

**A:** I received an excellent undergraduate education from another Catholic institution: Georgetown University. I earned a master's degree in history from McGill University in Montreal, Canada, and a doctorate in management from the University of Maryland.

**Q:** Can you talk about your career experience, and how you've transitioned to higher education administration?

**A:** Over the years, I've had the opportunity to manage some of the most important aspects of a college's operations, including faculty development, program development, institutional research, academic support services, and the like. I started my career teaching history and English courses at DePaul University, Loyola University, and other area colleges and universities. I then moved into administration, first at North Park University and then at Roosevelt University. For the past 15 years, I've worked for the College of Lake County and Morton College, most recently as an Associate Provost.

**Q:** What can you see already that is unique about CCSJ?

**A:** CCSJ meets students wherever they are and helps them to get where they would like to go. I have already been greatly impressed with CCSJ's faculty. They are highly qualified, passionate about their subject areas, and well-prepared to help students get ready for the job market and for life in general. I've worked with faculty at many colleges and universities, but I think I can already say that CCSJ's faculty is second to none in its dedication to student success.

**Q:** What is your vision for CCSJ's Academic Affairs?

**A:** CCSJ faculty have already developed a number of marketable new programs in the health sciences and other areas. These new programs will revitalize the College and complement the other stimulating changes that are happening in athletics, student housing, and other areas of the College. I'm eager to scale up these programs, develop new ones, and help get the word out about them. I'm also eager to support faculty effort to improve already successful programs in criminal justice, business, and other areas.

**Q:** How will you be helping to get the word out about CCSJ and its academic programs?

**A:** I want to be engaged in the community as much as possible. So, I will be focused on being increasingly connected to stakeholders in the community: local high schools and community colleges. We need to have high school faculty trust us enough that their students will get the support they need and professional training they need to be successful. We achieve this through more partnerships, building bridges between CCSJ faculty and high school faculty, for example, generating a presence in general at their schools and letting their students see our campus.

**Q:** Do you have any other hopes as you start the VPAA position?

**A:** I am hopeful that my 23 years of administrative experience at North Park University, Roosevelt University, and local community colleges will be beneficial to CCSJ faculty and students. I particularly hope that my background in both the liberal arts and professional degree programs will be helpful to the College's future.

Dr. Shouba brings a wealth of knowledge and years of experience in higher education to CCSJ. He has experience in academic leadership and teaching in a variety of institutions that will help to inform best practices for Calumet College. I am delighted to continue the strong academic leadership of the past and to tap the professional and academic credentials of Dr. Shouba. He joins a strong, committed team of leaders, and I look forward to what we can do together."

– Dr. Amy McCormack, CCSJ President

# Faculty & Staff News



## FACULTY EMERITI

SOME PROFESSORS COME AND GO. OTHERS DEDICATE DECADES TO TEACHING AND ENHANCING THE CCSJ EXPERIENCE FOR STUDENTS ACROSS GENERATIONS. RETIRED, BUT STILL CONNECTED TO THE COLLEGE, THREE PROFESSORS RECEIVED “PROFESSOR EMERITUS” STATUS, A FACULTY- AND BOARD-APPROVED HONOR THAT RECOGNIZES THE MANY YEARS AT AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO CALUMET COLLEGE OF ST. JOSEPH.



**Br. Benjamin Basile, C.P.P.S.**

• 40 YEARS •

Br. Benjamin Basile is a member of the

Missionaries of the Precious Blood, CCSJ’s founding religious order. He joined the College faculty on August 1, 1981, teaching computer science and mathematics—and while 40 years doesn’t seem quite like yesterday to him, it also doesn’t seem that long ago.

“I’ve met and worked with so many wonderful people: students, faculty, and staff. I’m thrilled and humbled to have been able to participate with them all in the College’s (and my religious community’s) mission of enabling people toward achieving their full potential,” he shares. “It has been a blessing for me.”

Br. Basile looks forward to remaining part of the CCSJ family and the academic community, teaching one class each term. He will still have his office, so he’ll “be around,” he says.



**Dr. Ginger Rodriguez**

• 23 YEARS •

Dr. Ginger Rodriguez comes “full circle”

as she transitions to her new role as Executive Director of Grants and Strategic Initiatives. She started at CCSJ in 1998, working part-time on grant development and acquiring a broad knowledge of the College. She became an adjunct professor in 2005, teaching Liberal Studies and Writing and Research classes in Organization Management, and then a full-time faculty member in 2009 in English, adding to her queue many of her favorite liberal arts classes, such as Foundations of Western Literature, Novels, and Shakespeare.

She’s also had the opportunity to develop classes, which she enjoyed a great deal, including the required general education humanities classes that additionally involved collaborating with the Humanities faculty to write a basic textbook, *The Foundations of Western Culture*, for the General Education Humanities class. For the last six years she served as Vice President for Academic Affairs.

“I look forward to writing [grants] and teaching,” Dr. Rodriguez comments. “I’m excited to work in those capacities and play some role at the College. I’ve been here a long time—it’s certainly important to me.”



**Walter Skiba, Class of ‘67**

• 50 YEARS •

Professor Walter Skiba reflects on his 50-year

academic career at CCSJ with quiet, reserved joy at being honored and genuine optimism about the classes he’s continuing to teach each semester: i.e. America Cinema (fall) and World Cinema (spring).

“Every day presents unique challenges,” he says of teaching. “I’m still happy to be doing it and getting good enrollment in those classes.” To promote learning and the achievement of outcomes, his approach is, and has always been, to mold his teaching to fit the uniqueness of each group. “You can’t follow formulas,” he notes.

As College Historian, Skiba also devotes time to researching the College’s past—much of which he’s lived through, having graduated from St. Joseph’s College Calumet Campus in 1967 and teaching as an associate professor in liberal arts since 1971—and compiling his research into a full, comprehensive account, complete with events marking ground-breaking developments and fellow alumni stories.



### REMEMBER HAVING A CLASS WITH ONE OF THESE FACULTY EMERITI?

Perhaps Br. Basile told a math joke that left you smiling; or, Dr. Rodriguez provided support that was essential for your communication skills development. Or maybe Professor Emeritus Skiba inspired your interest in cinema and the arts. Express your appreciation for them, and send in your stories for publication in *Wavelength*. Contact our editor Angela Hughes, Class of ‘11: [ahughes2@ccsj.edu](mailto:ahughes2@ccsj.edu).



# Crimson Wave Athletics

2020-21  
**SEASON  
HIGHLIGHTS**

- **Grace Dwyer, '21** of Women's Track & Field landed a spot in her second championship final with a personal best in the steeple run. At the finals, she finished 5<sup>th</sup> in the steeple run and 12<sup>th</sup> place overall in the 1500m, securing her as the first All-American in the history of the women's program.
- **Deveyon Blacknell** of Men's Track & Field ran a lifetime best in the championship finals. He placed 5<sup>th</sup> overall in the 100m and 6<sup>th</sup> overall in the 200m, securing him as the first double All-American in the program's history and just the second outdoor honor for the program.
- **Jose Molina**, soccer student-athlete from Honduras, was named CCAC All-Conference Second Team. He played in all games for CCSJ, tallying 112 saves on the season, ranking him #2 overall in country and #1 overall in saves per game in the NAIA.
- **Men's Bowling** team finished their season ranked #1 in the country and qualified for the USBC Intercollegiate Team Championships.
- **Petey Vergos, '21** as a senior bowler, won the Intercollegiate Singles Championships, a first national championship brought back to CCSJ.



The newly resurfaced Alumni Court features the Chicago skyline, local industry, waves, and CCSJ's new logos and colors. View a timelapse on YouTube: "REVEAL: Calumet College of St. Joseph's New Athletics Floor."

## Crimson Wave Announces Sprint Football & Names Head Coach

A new intercollegiate sports league comes to the Midwest Region! Beginning fall 2022, the Crimson Wave kicks off its inaugural season of Sprint Football, as Calumet College of St. Joseph joins five other private colleges and universities as charter members of the Midwest Sprint Football League (MSFL).

"Calumet College of St. Joseph is delighted to be a founding member [of MSFL] and very excited about bringing a unique opportunity to engage student-athletes and the community," CCSJ President Dr. Amy McCormack comments.

Leading recruitment efforts and heading the Crimson Wave's Sprint Football team is Jason Novak, the current Offensive Line Coach and Run Game Coordinator at Andean High School in Merrillville, IN.

"Coach Novak is full of excitement and passion for the game of football, and we are proud to have him on the sidelines for the Crimson Wave," Executive Director of Athletics Andy Marks says. "He embodies the mission at CCSJ, and I believe he will incorporate this mission into the program and the young men that it brings."

Unlike typical American football, which emphasizes strength and body weight, sprint football stresses speed and agility in its fast-paced style of play. Each player must weigh no more than 178 pounds and will be expected to weigh-in prior to each game, according to the official press release.

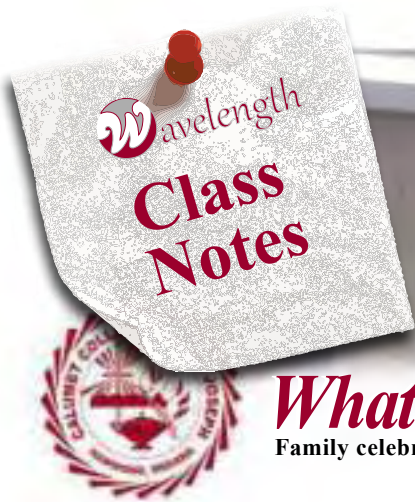
With almost 10 years of coaching experience, Novak has a proficient playbook, offering unique strategies and playcalling that's expected of sprint football's distinctive game. During the 2020 season, Novak helped lead the Andean 59ers to the Northwest Crossroads Conference Championship and an IHSA Class 2A Sectional Championship. He spent the 2019 campaign with Portage High School as the Offensive Line Coach after five seasons as the Head Football Coach at East Chicago Central High School, where he led the Cardinals to their first Great Lakes Athletic Conference Championship (GLAC) and was named the GLAC Coach of the Year.

"We love that Coach Novak has local ties because recruiting in the Region is a primary goal of ours," mentions Johnny Craig, Senior Vice President of Enrollment, Marketing and Athletics. "Sprint football, with Coach Novak at the helm, will open up avenues for those looking to stay close to home for their college education, while playing a sport that they love."

Novak is grateful to have the opportunity to build CCSJ's program from the ground up, and as he begins recruiting, he looks forward to explaining sprint football to high school coaches and players and signing-on student-athletes who are passionate and enthusiastic about the sport and their education.

"This is a huge opportunity for high school athletes from The Region to continue to play football at the next level and receive a superb education, while transforming into great husbands and fathers when they graduate," Novak says. "I knew immediately in our first conversations [with McCormack, Marks, and Craig] that we shared the same passion in helping student-athletes to become the best versions of themselves on and off the field."

For quick Crimson Wave sports news, visit the website: [ccsjathletics.com](http://ccsjathletics.com) or follow us on Facebook, Twitter: @CCSJAthletics, and Instagram: @crimsonwaveathletics.



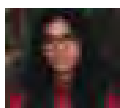
## What's News with You?

Family celebrating a milestone? Share your exciting news with us. New career opportunity? Promotion? Retirement?

➤ Let's celebrate together!

**Kevin Boens, B.S. '12 and M.S. '21** was sworn in as a member of the Dolton Park District Board of Commissioners on June 15, 2021, joining four others in policy-making and carrying out the board's mission of providing recreation and leisure opportunities for the Dolton, IL community.

**Christopher Bove, B.S. '06** was promoted to Chief Compliance Officer at R.J. O'Brien & Associates, the oldest and largest independent futures brokerage and clearing firm in the United States, on April 22, 2021.



**Elena Cortes, B.S. '16** continues to pursue her Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at the University of Chicago. She hopes to one day work in the pharmaceutical industry researching neuropsychiatric disorders, in particular, proteins that are present in synapses involved in autism.

**Kathy Curiel, B.A. '89** was named Director of Medical Imaging for Pella Regional Health Center on March 26, 2021.

**Pete Doherty, B.S. '75** spearheaded a 2015 restoration project at Bishop Noll Institute (BNI). The BNI '71 graduate recently presented the refurbished memorial plaque for Father David E. Hauskins to BNI President Paul Mullaney.

**Katie Fredericksen, B.A. '09** started the 2021-22 school year as the new principal of St. John the Evangelist School in St. John, IN. She is also currently pursuing two master's degrees: a Master of Arts in Catechetics and Evangelization and a Master of Science in Educational Administration from Franciscan University of Steubenville.

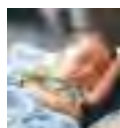
**Zebadiah Hall, B.S. '09** delivered the keynote at SUNY's Global Accessibility Awareness Day (GAAD) on May 20, 2021. As the Director of Student Disability Services at Cornell University and a sought-after speaker/facilitator, he continues to champion topics around access and opportunity for disabled students and oppressed populations.

**Taylor M. Hensley, B.S. '17** was sworn in with the Merrillville Police Department on January 12, 2021, becoming the third female officer of the department's 61-member police force.

**Olympia King, B.S. '16 and M.S. '21** accepted a position as Senior Office Manager of Plant Operations with Sodexo, which holds the facilities contract for Methodist Hospitals, on August 2, 2021.

**Joseph Martinez, B.S. '16** achieved a long-term goal: he became the first Hispanic sergeant with the Kankakee Police Department after serving on the force of his hometown Illinois community for 14 years, most recently as detective for the past 8 years.

**Denise McGrath, B.S. '09** was promoted to Chief of Police of the Homewood Police Department on February 26, 2021 after serving over 25 years with the department. Over her career, she has broken many barriers, including the first female detective, patrol sergeant, detective sergeant, deputy chief, and now, chief.



**Daniel Medina, B.A. '12** and his wife Marie welcomed their first child, Eddy (7lbs. 1oz.), on August 6, 2021. He also started a new job working remotely as a UX Designer with Riot Games, developers of League of Legends and Valorant, in June 2021. Later this year, his family will relocate to Los Angeles, CA, where the company is headquartered.

**Gabriella Mendonca, B.S. '14** was promoted to Assistant State Attorney for Broward County State Attorney's Office—17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit of Florida in April 2021.

**Jim Pint, B.S. '75** is the longtime assistant baseball coach for Kankakee Valley. He was presented with the Indiana High School Baseball Coaches Association District 2 Coach of the Year Award on April 30, 2021.

**Michael Puente, B.A. '92** is one of four journalists awarded the 2021 Studs Terkel Award. This award is given to Chicago media persons who exemplify the values of Studs Terkel's journalism, i.e. by taking risks in covering social issues.

**Justin Rimovsky, B.S. '19** was promoted to sergeant for the Village of Park Forest Police Department on September 27, 2021.



**Theresa (Ross) Riehm, B.A. '21, valedictorian** married her Heaven-sent love, Charles Riehm, on July 3, 2021. Honeymooning in the Smoky Mountains, or bear country of Gatlinburg, TN, they created lasting memories, visiting Ripley's Aquarium, hiking Rainbow Falls Trail, and spending time at Parrot Mountain & Gardens Bird Sanctuary.



**Nicole Schaefer, B.A. '10** and her husband Robbie welcomed identical twin girls, Maggie (4lbs. 13oz.) and Maeve (4lbs. 15oz.), on May 29, 2021 at 1:05 a.m. and 1:12 a.m. Together with their sons, George and Jackson, they're now a beautiful family of six.

**Kellyn Vale, B.A. '20, valedictorian** joined the team at Lee Enterprises, parent company of the Times Media Co., as Quality Control Page Designer in February 2021. She also began writing her first book of poetry, *Pretty Sadness*, which she self-published in June, just six months after inspiration struck.

**Adam Webb, B.A. '19, valedictorian** published his first book of poetry, *A Futile Attempt at Delaying the Inevitable*, from his home in Japan, where he teaches English as a second language.

**Edna Williams, B.S. '16** recently earned a master's in Liberal Arts with a concentration in Ethics and Leadership from the University of Chicago. She also works for U of C as a Senior Patient Advocate in Urban Health.



**Vicki Znavor, B.S. '98, CCSJ Board of Trustee** published her first book, *Authenticity Reawakened: The Path to Owning Your Life's Story and Fulfilling Your Purpose*. In March 2021, she participated in a discussion titled "Women Leaders Leading Change," hosted by the College for Women's History Month.



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## *+ In Memoriam*



**Dr. Dean C. Angelo, Sr.**, age 67, of Chicago, IL, on October 12, 2021.

Dr. Angelo served as a professor and eventually the director of CCSJ's Public Safety Management and Administration program from 2005–2014. He proudly worked for the Chicago Police Department for 37 years and most recently spent several years as president of the Chicago Fraternal Order of Police, Lodge 7. Always upbeat, positive, and willing to give back, he was a major influence for police officers and CCSJ faculty alike.

**George S. Brezene**, Class of '86, age 74, of Whiting, IN, on January 3, 2021.

**Dennis E. Clark**, Class of '95, age 79, of Seymour, IN, on March 18, 2021.

**George J. Dudzik**, Class of '72, age 70, of Munster, IN, on October 14, 2020.

**Stephen E. "Iggy" Ihnat**, Class of '79, age 63, of Whiting, IN, on May 30, 2021.

**Ann Marie Kaminsky**, Class of '73, age 92, of Whiting, IN, on July 12, 2019.

**Thomas W. Kuchta**, Class of '63 and St. Joseph Society member, age 78, of Waukesha, WI, on July 14, 2020.

**Edward C. Lawhead, Jr.**, Class of '73, age 73, of Collierville, TN (as well as Russellville, AL, and Chicago, IL), on November 9, 2020.

**Ralph A. Messina**, Class of '76, age 82, of Portage, IN, on July 20, 2021.

**Kevin G. Poludniak**, Class of '84, age 58, of Whiting, IN, on October 5, 2020.

**William L. Simmons**, Class of '74, age 69, of Valparaiso, IN, on January 7, 2021.

May They  
Rest In Peace