

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

ALUMNI

MAGAZINE



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Johnnie Community

Join Us for
Alumni Week 2021

Learn About the
Impact of Alumni
at St. John's



solitary
births, they are the outcome...
...of many years of thinking in common

For masterpieces are not single and
solitary births, they are the outcome...
...of many years of thinking in common

-Virginia Woolf

Letter from St. John's College Alumni Association President



I hope this message finds you well and, like me, seeing the first rays of “the early-born rose-fingered Dawn” of our COVID-subsiding world.

As we begin to look forward, for me, the great privilege of being a Johnnie is the opportunity to look back on the books and ideas I encountered at the college for guidance and inspiration. Remember when Odysseus said, “I long for home, long for the sight of home. If any god marked me out again for shipwreck, my tough heart can undergo it. What hardship have I not long since endured at sea, in battle! Let the trial come.” (Homer, *Odyssey* 5.230-33)? We have all had hardships and trials this year, and I hope our shared experience of the Program continues to give you comfort and strength.

The strength demonstrated by our college community during this challenging time has indeed been inspiring. Despite the difficulties, there were triumphs, like the college’s ability to take the Program into a virtual format and keep the conversation going during the long pandemic. For these efforts, the Alumni Association is forever grateful to our tutors and staff.

We are also grateful for our alumni. Thanks to your support, St. John’s has grown in financial strength. Together, we have completed the Winiarski Family Foundation Challenge this year, securing \$50 million in matching funds toward *Freeing Minds*—bringing our total campaign commitments to \$246 million to date and putting St. John’s on track to double its endowment. We have watched as college leadership has worked hard in effecting St. John’s long-term financial health and we are glad to see the college is expecting a balanced budget for next year. I encourage you to learn more about these accomplishments by reading on in this publication and hearing directly from the folks who are helping our community flourish into the future.

Yet, it seems that one of the most poignant lessons of the past year has been the value of perseverance. The ability to respond adroitly to unforeseen circumstances and the grit to continue forward regardless has proven successful for Johnnies—especially for our recent graduates who, because of their determination, now join us in our almost 200-year-old Alumni Association.

It is in this spirit of perseverance and in celebration of our enduring love for the college and one another that I invite you to St. John’s Alumni Week 2021, Monday, September 27 through Saturday, October 1. Although we are not yet able to reunite in person, let us come together to honor and renew our connections while enjoying a modern take on traditional programming, including seminar with our beloved tutors.

Until then, I leave us with a celebratory moment in the Program to reflect upon—the moment when Odysseus is recognized by his elderly nurse from tracing the old scar on his leg: “Then joy and anguish seized her heart; her eyes filled up with tears; her throat closed, and she whispered, with hand held out to touch his chin: Oh yes! *You are Odysseus!*” (Homer, *Odyssey* 19:546-50).

We look forward to seeing you this fall.

St. John’s Forever!

Mark Parenti (AGI92)
President
St. John’s College Alumni Association

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MAGAZINE

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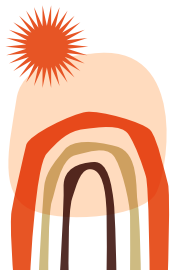
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About the Cover and Illustrator
Caitlin Cass (SF09) is a cartoonist, illustrator, and installation artist. She was a 2020 recipient of a National Endowment of the Arts Artworks grant and a 2018 NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellow in Fiction. Her cartoons appear in *The New Yorker* and in her self-published comic periodical, *The Great Moments in Western Civilization Postal Constituent*. When asked about what inspired the cover design, she shared: “My class read Virginia Woolf’s *A Room of One’s Own* for our homecoming seminar and this quote stuck with me. There’s a revolutionary aspect to it, which I think reflects St. John’s efforts to continue evolving.” In addition to working on a graphic novel about women’s suffrage and civil rights history, she is an assistant professor at the University of Nebraska Omaha. View her work at caitlincass.com.

Pritzker Promise Bridge Program Approaches Second Year Serving Johnnies



**PRITZKER BRIDGE
SCHOLARS PROGRAM**

The Pritzker Promise Bridge Program is gearing up for its second incoming class of Johnnies this summer, ready to prepare St. John’s newest students for the college by helping them develop academic skills and study habits, providing guidance and support, and building relationships with faculty and peers prior to their opening seminars.

Launched in summer 2020, the program seeks to equip Pell Grant recipients and underrepresented incoming students with the tools, skills, and resources they need to succeed at the college, thanks to a generous grant from The Jay Pritzker Foundation in connection with Board of Visitors and Governors member Karen Pritzker.

The program—the first cross-campus initiative of its kind at St. John has—originated in response to feedback from Johnnies past. According to Santa Fe Dean Walter Sterling (A93), surveys have shown that graduating seniors leave the college with predominantly positive feelings about the Program. However, about half of graduating seniors also said they didn’t feel academically prepared when they arrived at the college, with those numbers rising even higher for underrepresented groups. The bridge program is specifically designed to increase retention and counter the issues with which these students struggle.

It accomplishes this through a variety of preparatory workshops led by faculty and staff targeted to financial aid recipients, first-generation students, and international students alike. Topics for such sessions include learning the basics of federal and college work study, how to manage time and money, how to find a campus job and student employment, how to prioritize personal wellness, and other aspects of life at the college.

For Danielle Lico, executive director of campus health and wellness in Annapolis, the program is about engagement. “Engagement with the community, and engagement with each other—in the spirit of trying to build a ‘bridge’ into the community for incoming students.”

While many sessions have a pragmatic focus, others aim to introduce students to the academic side of the college. As Caroline Randall, director of admissions in Santa Fe, points out: Johnnies come to the college from all over the world, but few are coming from schools with the same academic culture as St. John’s. “Some of our students are nervous about seminar-style classes or the amount of reading expected, or about certain subjects,” she explains. “The bridge program is the perfect answer for these concerns.”

Entering its second year of implementation, the program is facilitated by Jennifer Cline, coordinator of student services in Annapolis, and Nanette Phillips, student support coordinator in Santa Fe. According to Phillips, similar bridge and peer-mentoring programs have been successfully implemented at many other colleges and universities. She points to studies demonstrating that such initiatives have been shown to lead to better academic outcomes; she sees the St. John’s bridge program as part of “the initial stages in what will be more robust structures for students” at St. John’s in the future.

Faculty and staff in both Annapolis and Santa Fe share Phillips’ outlook anticipating that with each new class of Johnnies, the program will grow more nuanced and intentional to meet the needs of its target population—a process that can only serve to further help St. John’s students this year and in years to come.

Update from St. John's College Vice President of Enrollment

Greetings, St. John's alumni! As the college looks ahead to the new academic year, I am happy to share with you some exciting news regarding our enrollment to date.

This is a record-breaking year for enrollment on both campuses. St. John's has received more than 1,470 undergraduate applications. In Annapolis, we continue our multi-year trend of full freshman classes—between 140 and 150 students. In Santa Fe, we will have more than 125 fall freshmen—the first time in more than 10 years that the college will enroll a class of this size. Furthermore, the students attending this fall are remarkably diverse. Thirteen percent of freshmen are international students from 21 countries. This year's domestic students are from 30 states, plus Washington, DC. Twelve percent are the first in their families to attend college; 21 percent are Pell Grant recipients; and 28 percent are students of color.



In the Graduate Institute, we are also expecting record-breaking fall enrollment as students apply for either the traditional on-campus degree programs or the new low-residency program. Alumni can return to campus for the Master of Arts in Liberal Arts in Annapolis or the Master of Arts in Eastern Classics in Santa Fe, or can conveniently take classes for either program online as well.

As we look toward the future, we know that Summer Academy is essential. The Summer Academy program introduces interested high school students to the Great Books and life at the college. This year's sessions hosted more than 200 students, in person and online, many of whom were the children of alumni.

All this success is attributable to many new tools employed by the Admissions Office over the course of the last year, but it is also attributable to alumni. Word of mouth continues to be one of the largest sources of prospective student inquiries for the college, with 11 percent of our freshmen being children of Johnnies.

I invite you to take part in the excitement in Admissions by continuing to encourage family and friends to learn more about our offerings (or inquire for yourself). For application information, to schedule a visit, or even to register for Summer Academy 2022, please contact us at admissions@sjc.edu or visit us at sjc.edu/admissions. Thank you for sharing your Johnnie pride with others!

Benjamin Baum
Vice President of Enrollment

Alumni Volunteerism Remains Strong Despite Pandemic

Come rain, shine, or pandemic, JohnnieCorps alumni volunteers stood together in support of the college throughout the duration of St. John's 2020–21 academic year. So much so that, in the annual Alumni Engagement Metrics report released at the end of May 2021 by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), the alumni volunteer participation rate at St. John's for the 2020 fiscal year exceeded the average among other higher education institutions globally.

While many institutions saw dramatic drops in their volunteer rates in 2020, St. John's instead experienced a minor dip—only 6/10ths of a percentage point, to be exact—a figure illustrating how well Johnnies adapted to a virtual volunteer landscape.

JohnnieCorps is the college's recently expanded volunteer program offering interested alumni tailored opportunities in an easy online format. Due to the dedication of program participants, prospective and current students alike benefitted from alumni volunteer support despite the COVID-19 pandemic. For this, JohnnieCorps coordinators and the college are grateful for the continuous commitment of its volunteers.

"Thank you to our amazing alumni community for keeping volunteerism at St. John's alive and strong throughout the height of pandemic," says Kelsey Miller (A10), alumni transitions and volunteerism program manager. "We look forward to sharing more JohnnieCorps opportunities with you in the new academic year."



A Welcome Banner for First-Gen Students

In recognition of its commitment to improving college experiences and academic outcomes for first-generation students, St. John’s College in Santa Fe received the Center for First-generation Student Success’s First-gen Forward designation, March 2021.

The first institution in New Mexico to receive the designation, St. John’s is one of 157 First-gen Forward designees nationwide—a group that includes Carnegie Mellon, Emory, and Wellesley, to name just a few—with access to the center’s research and resources, including established best practices, professional development, and community-building tools.



Nanette Phillips

“For an institution of [our] size, it’s significant that we have designated resources and personnel and employed evidence-based practices that specifically further first-gen persistence,”

Santa Fe Student Support Coordinator Nanette Phillips says. She estimates that roughly 12 percent of Johnnie undergraduates belong to the program’s relevant demographic. “Historically, public schools have tended to serve larger populations of first-gen students, and private schools are often perceived as financially and culturally inaccessible by comparison. It’s extremely important for first-gen students to know that they are going to be supported in their unique needs.”

Phillips is responsible for spearheading the college’s acceptance and participation in the program. It was in December 2020 that the center—an initiative of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators and the Suder Foundation—invited her to apply for the designation on behalf of the college. She promptly completed it with the help of colleagues from various departments.

Founded in 2017, First-gen Forward is the nation’s first program to recognize institutions dedicated to the continued success of first-generation college students.

“A welcome banner” is how Phillips characterizes the designation—a big draw for prospective Johnnies who “will be looking for evidence that indicates that a school has resources specific to their needs.”



Johnnies Run the World

During fall 2020, St. John’s athletics in Annapolis and Santa Fe collaborated on the launch of a global exercise initiative encouraging Johnnies to log enough miles to travel the circumference of the earth, virtually. Aptly entitled “Johnnies Run the World,” the exercise challenge was a great success, with a total of 24,901 miles completed in just over five months.

A creative engagement initiative allowing Johnnies to connect and persevere together through COVID-19, the challenge counted any mileage-accumulating exercise, with participants like Santa Fe alum Martha (Mackey) Pendleton (SF74) diligently tracking their results. In the end, Pendleton achieved the third most miles among all alumni, faculty, and staff who participated, with 302 miles logged. During the challenge, she regularly walked five miles at least six days a week, and at one point was up to eight miles daily.

“I am no athlete,” says Pendleton, “but when I saw the invitation to join St. John’s faculty, staff, students, and alumni in an endeavor to circle the globe, I thought, ‘Why not?’ It was fun to calculate the miles I walk each day and have it count for something other than my health.”



Martha (Mackey) Pendleton (SF74)

Alumni Help Shatter Expectations on GivingTuesday



Since 2012, the Tuesday after Thanksgiving has been known in popular culture as GivingTuesday—a rallying day in which communities gather around their favorite organizations and give for the greater good.

This proved true for St. John's in December 2020, when the Johnnie community defied all expectations in support of current and future students at the college—not only reaching its goal of

350 donors, but also outpacing previous years' record-setting totals by midday.

Of the resulting 762 donors, 75 percent were St. John's alumni, signifying their deep affinity and care for the college and the Johnnie community. Rounding out the remaining 25 percent were parents, faculty, staff, friends, and even students.

Given the unprecedented nature of the year, with the country and world suffering from COVID-19 and its economic fallout, it was impossible to predict how the day would go. Yet, by the time GivingTuesday ended, approximately \$230,000 was raised, providing crucial support for the college and its students. Donations came from 47 states in the United States, and on a global level spanned South America, Africa, Europe, Asia, and Australia.

The successful day, which joined so many members of the college community in the effort of making small-but-mighty gifts, left St. John's better positioned to face the immediate challenges presented by COVID-19 and thrive during a most uncertain time.

Jobs for Johnnies: Helping Alumni Take On the Workforce Two Years in a Row



Luke Olson (A20)

May 2021 marked the start of the second cycle of Jobs for Johnnies, a program pairing recent graduates from both campuses with alumni volunteers for career mentorship and networking.

Piloted last spring with enthusiastic support from the Board of Visitors and Governors' Visiting Committee, the program is jointly coordinated by Career Services in Annapolis and the Office of Personal and Professional Development in Santa Fe.

This year's program, which will run through end of summer, boasts 20 alumni pairs with a host of professional interests ranging from neuroscience and information technology to communications and environmental advocacy.

According to Annapolis Director of Career Services Jaime Dunn, the goal of the program is not solely for new graduates to secure a job, but also to connect with an alum or board member to "receive feedback on their job search tools and learn the skills of networking and job searching that they'll need to use throughout their professional careers."

For example, past Jobs for Johnnies participant Luke Olson (A20) had struggled to turn his experience into a legal career. After applying for hundreds of legal-related positions around Washington, DC, Chicago, and Boston, he was paired with Alumni Association President Mark Parenti (AGI92).

Olson says conversations with Parenti opened a new way of thinking about the paths he might take. "He understood that I was committed to certain ideals," Olson says. "That might be unique to the Johnnie experience, but he also balanced that kind of Johnnie idealism with real world professional and practical experience that he had decades of."

Together, they worked out that Olson's ideals could be upheld in a teaching environment just as well as in a court of law. Today, Olson teaches at a private school in Fairfax, Virginia—a position that he loves and also satisfies his personal ideals.

Like in the example of Olson and Parenti, "alumni can play an especially valuable role in showing grads how the St. John's experience provides a great foundation for a satisfying career in a wide variety of fields," says Charles Bergman, director of Personal and Professional Development.

To find out about how alumni can further support recent graduates of St. John's, visit sjc.edu/career-success/for-employers.

Tutor Zena Hitz (A95) Wins Hiett Prize in the Humanities



The Dallas Institute of Humanities and Culture honored tutor Zena Hitz (A95) with the 2020 Hiett Prize in the Humanities award during its 16th annual gala on November 11, 2020. As described by the institute, Hitz was recognized for her viewpoints on defending the intellectual life—learning for its own sake, rather than in service of economic or political goals—as explored in her recent book, *Lost in Thought: The Hidden Pleasures of an Intellectual Life*.

Aimed at furthering the humanities in the urban world, The Dallas Institute awards the Hiett Prize to those in the early stages of a career devoted to the humanities and whose work shows extraordinary promise to have a significant impact on contemporary culture.

Hitz joined the college's faculty in 2015 and holds degrees from St. John's (BA, 1995), Cambridge University (MPhil, 1996), and Princeton University (PhD, 2005). Previously, she served as assistant professor at Auburn University and UMBC, among other roles and distinctions.



Simran Thapa (SF22) and Bryn Frye-Mason (SF23) Win Projects for Peace Fellowship

In early March 2021, students Simran Thapa (SF22) and Bryn Frye-Mason (SF23) were awarded a Projects for Peace fellowship. Founded in 2007 by the late philanthropist Kathryn W. Davis, the initiative invites students at Davis United World College Scholars Program partner schools—a group that includes St. John's—to formulate a project that promotes peace anywhere in the world.

The two Johnnies' winning proposal, "Securing Peace in Bardiya, Nepal: Freeing Women for Civic Engagement," links improvements in maternal health with women's abilities to participate fully in their communities, simultaneously laying out a plan for achieving both.

To implement their proposal, which involves creating medical kits that will be delivered to five villages in Bardiya, Thapa and Frye-Mason are partnering with the Women Security Pressure Group (WSPG), a Nepalese organization founded by Thapa's grandmother that works to increase literacy rates and political engagement among women. The kits themselves, which aim to mitigate eclampsia and other risks of pregnancy, are being designed through a collaboration with La Familia Medical Center in Las Lunas, New Mexico, and assembled in Nepal. The project plan also involves hiring a local WSPG chapter member to help distribute those kits and establish a health co-op "for women to pool money to help each other buy necessities for better health," Thapa says.

Thapa and Frye-Mason are energized by all the support they have received, including that provided by St. John's. "We are both extremely excited to have the opportunity to implement this project on the ground in Nepal. We will be working hands-on with every aspect," Thapa says, adding: "This project wouldn't have happened without our friendship."

Melanie Santiago-Mosier (A00) Named One of Maryland's Top 100 Women

In the summer of 2020, The Daily Record named Annapolis alum Melanie Santiago-Mosier (A00) as one of Maryland's Top 100 Women, an acknowledgement



of "outstanding achievements of women through professional accomplishments, community leadership, and mentoring" for her work on state-level clean energy policies.

Santiago-Mosier currently serves as the managing director of access and equity for Vote Solar, where her work centers on implementing the organization's vision for diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice. She is an attorney licensed to practice law in Maryland and has worked to advance clean energy policy for more than a decade, leading regulatory and legislative affairs at a number of organizations. Among other publications, she is a co-author of *Low-Income Solar Policy Guide* (lowincomesolar.org), a compre-

hensive tool for policymakers, community leaders, and others who are working to make solar accessible and equitable.

Joan Haratani (SF79) Wins 2021 Margaret Brent Award

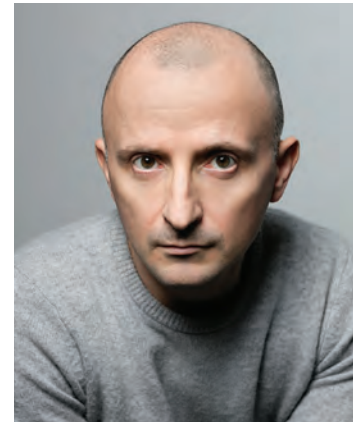


Each year, the American Bar Association recognizes up to five recipients of the Margaret Brent Award, which honors "outstanding women lawyers who have achieved professional excellence and paved the way for other women in the legal profession." As of April 2021, one of those lawyers—joining the likes of former Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton—is Joan Haratani (SF79): St. John's Santa Fe alum and secretary of the college's Board of Visitors and Governors.

The Brent award is the most recent in a streak of honors for Haratani, who will receive St. John's College Alumni Association's Volunteer Service Award during Alumni Week this fall. Over the last

two years, she has also received the global Amel Zenoune-Zouani Rights & Leadership Award and the Chambers Award for Outstanding Contribution to Diversity in the Legal Industry.

After graduating from St. John's in 1979, Haratani earned her JD from the UC Davis School of Law in 1984. Currently, she is a partner with Morgan Lewis San Francisco office, where she has worked on a variety of high-profile cases spanning state and federal law in the commercial litigation context, including national mortgage issues. She also facilitates relationships between the firm and its clientele, bringing in new clients and helping maintain a strong bond with firm clients. Additionally, she is a member of the Morgan Lewis Advisory Board as well as a board member of Asian Americans Advancing Justice (AAJC). She has also served as a former president of the Bar Association of San Francisco.



Salvatore Scibona (SF97) Named 2021 Literature Award Winner

The American Academy of Arts and Letters recognized Santa Fe alum Salvatore Scibona (SF97) as one of 18 literature award winners at its annual ceremony, held virtually May 19, 2021.

The literature prizes, totaling \$600,000, honored both established and emerging writers of fiction, non-fiction, drama, and poetry.

Also a 2008 National Book Award finalist, Scibona is the author of two critically acclaimed novels, *The Volunteer* (2019) and *The End* (2009). He serves as the director of the Center for Scholars and Writers at the New York Public Library (NYPL). As director, he cultivates and supports the work of internationally renowned writers and thinkers and creates programming that enriches the broader NYPL community. As a novelist, he continues to write exceptional works of fiction.



Alumnus Applies Foundational Theory in Finance; an Easy Task After the Rigors of the Program

Given the one-of-a-kind nature of St. John's, many Johnnies end up at the college via surprisingly traditional means: they receive an admissions mailer and grow intrigued with the Program, for example, or they find out about the college from a teacher or family friend. Anant Vashi (SF96) was not one of those Johnnies.

“I transferred to St. John's after one year at Georgetown University,” he recalls. Prior to his freshman year in Washington, DC, he had grown up in the private school system; an “overachieving” student on what he describes as a “myopic, career-focused path” that left him burnt out and intellectually dissatisfied.

“I was yearning for a more expansive perspective,” Vashi says. “I had always had a philosophical bent with a strong interest in history and economics. I decided that if any formal education was right for me, that it would be at a place like St. Johns.”

To complete the paradigm shift, he applied to the Santa Fe campus instead of nearby Annapolis; by fall, he was seated around the seminar table.

More than two decades after graduating, the decision to transfer has paid off in more ways than one. On an individual level, Vashi says, “St. John's College was a transformative personal and intellectual experience for me, and I would not be the person I am today had I attended another school.” While he loved reading the works of political philosophers like Machiavelli, Hobbes, Kant, Hegel, and Marx, the books and classes represented the spark—not the flame.

“The real learning at St. Johns occurs through interacting with and being challenged by your peers, whose backgrounds and attitudes can be very different than your own,” he notes.

Furthermore, Vashi suggests that his St. John's education has helped him develop a kind of mindfulness that enables him to produce high-quality work under duress, whether as director in the transportation and logistics group at Capstone Headwaters—the independent middle market investment bank where he worked until January 2021—or as the vice president of finance at Neat Capital, a Boulder, Colorado-based growth stage mortgage lender.

Stereotypically, investment banking and home financing sound like fields for graduates with business and economics majors, not liberal arts degrees. Vashi is proof that's not the case. In fact, he contends, his Johnnie education has helped him at every step of the way.

“At least to my observation, many people who go to college go through life in a sequential way, without taking the time to understand how it all fits together for them as a person,” he says. “St. Johns provided me with the tools and confidence to create an intellectual space between myself and the world whizzing by.”

Vashi explains that the ability to create that intellectual space—to pause, reconsider basic assumptions, adapt to unforeseen circumstances, and ask “why”—offers a sense

of thoughtfulness and clarity that proves immensely beneficial.

“[At Capstone Headwaters], clients repeatedly described how my abilities to step back, be measured, appreciate other perspectives, and be deliberate were qualities that really helped them through the transaction process,” he recalls. “Negotiating transactions worth tens of millions of dollars can be very tenuous and stressful, but I believe that the space that St. John's taught me to make [was]

critical to successful outcomes.”

Vashi now puts the same skills to use at Neat Capital, a venture-backed mortgage lender that aims to simplify the home financing process. As the leader of the finance team, Vashi relies on his experience with a variety of transactions and corporate finance to help spur the company's growth within the industry.

It all sounds very nuts-and-bolts—and intense. But for Vashi, the “intellectually rigorous” work that has defined his career connects deeply with his time at St. John's. “[My job] is the real-world application of financial and economic theory,” he explains. Putting foundational theory into practice: the practice of a true Johnnie.

“The real learning at St. Johns occurs through interacting with and being challenged by your peers, whose backgrounds and attitudes can be very different than your own.”

SHEBA DELANEY (A22)



Student's Path of Lifelong Learning Leads to St. John's

Sheba Delaney shares how, at 66 years old, her pursuit of the examined life brought her to the college.

Like most Johnnies, the last three semesters presented Sheba Delaney (A22) with extraordinary challenges—from the sudden transition to online learning to hybrid classes and masked conversations.

Unlike most Johnnies, though, Delaney has a bit more life experience to lean on during hard times: She began her freshman year at 66 years old.

In 2017, Delaney says, “I was living in New York City, my home for more than 40 years, spending five hours a day in my studio, painting, and working at Trader Joe’s. The years of raising and educating my children were almost over.” As she emerged from several significant life changes, she realized that the rest of her life might not play out exactly how she’d imagined.

“Dostoevsky said the second half of life is nothing but the habits we acquire in the first half,” she explains. “I didn’t want that.”

So that year, Delaney traveled to Spain and walked the 500-mile El Camino de Santiago. When she got back, she applied to St. John’s—the college she’d first heard of while studying illustration at the Pratt Institute decades earlier.

“I never considered applying anywhere else,” she says. “Although I’ve read widely over my lifetime, I wanted to go through the history of Western culture in a systematic way.”

Delaney arrived at St. John’s in 2018 and immediately encountered obstacles. She hadn’t studied basic math in decades, let alone demonstrated a Euclidean proposition. Despite her excitement for seminar, she was a lifelong solitary reader and found the idea of diving into conversation somewhat intimidating. Most difficult, she says, was time management. Referencing her “touch-and-go” first two years at the college, Delaney says she felt exhausted and stretched to her limit on more than one occasion.

“My lifelong work habit has been obsessive monotasking,” she explains, “which works well for an artist but isn’t so great when you’re trying to keep up with three challenging tutorials and a massive amount of reading.”

Importantly, though, she instantly felt welcomed into the Johnnie community, and—together with her classmates—she’s been able to surmount such challenges, including arduous music theory and algebra tests.

“I was one of the first people to go to the board to do a Euclid proposition,” Delaney recalls. “I was shaking, but at least I never had to do it for the first time again.”

Perhaps the biggest challenge emerged in March 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic forced the St. John’s

Program online. It was extremely difficult, Delaney says, to transition overnight from gathering together around a table to conversing via Zoom.

Nonetheless, the St. John’s community rallied to make things work. Delaney, her classmates, and her tutors persisted with tenacity and good humor, trading Johnnie chairs and seminar tables for at-home desks and computer screens—a testament to the Program itself. Even in times of difficulty, the study of Great Books endures, and the conversation it elicits continues.

For Delaney, persevering through the demands of everyday life and the famously rigorous St. John’s Program is nothing new. During her first couple of years at the college, she reflects, “I was constantly worried that I just wasn’t going to make it.” But the experience has been worth it—“there has been so much to enjoy.” She calls the opportunity

“I’m able to think about the things I am interested in in a much richer way and with a better sense both of context and of how things are connected.”

to work through the Great Books a “luxury.” Similar to most alumni, in spite of initial butterflies, she adores seminar—and the ongoing conversation that often spills from the classroom to the quad and beyond. The Program has even inspired Delaney to try humorous writing, and she cherishes the Johnnie tradition of taking tutors to lunch or coffee.

Most of all, “Everything I’ve learned so far is absolutely affecting my whole life,” she notes. “I’m able to think

about the things I am interested in in a much richer way and with a better sense both of context and of how things are connected.”

After graduating, Delaney hopes to earn a master’s degree in theological studies; having written for religious publications in the past, she’d like to continue exploring humanity through religion (and religion through humanity). In other words, the journey of lifelong learning she resumed at the college has only just begun.

“At St. John’s, we engage with the slow unfolding of human beings trying to understand themselves,” Delaney says. “I hope that I can, in some small way, be part of that conversation.”



Longtime Annapolis Tutor Wins Prestigious Faculty Award

Tutor David Townsend joined St. John's College's faculty in 1974.

During the course of his career at the college, he has become a beloved facilitator of learning and exploration—admired not just by current and former students, but also by the Association of Graduate and Liberal Studies (AGLSP).

At a gala held in October 2020, the association formally honored Townsend with its annual faculty award: a recognition of superb faculty who teach and inspire students both within and outside the classroom. With his dedication to the liberal arts and his devotion to becoming what Stringfellow Barr called a “citizen of the world,” Townsend certainly meets the criteria. Fittingly, he considers the recipient—himself—the least important part of the deal.

The AGLSP describes itself as “deeply committed to the value of interdisciplinary education in the liberal arts and sciences.” That holistic focus on liberal arts is what makes the faculty award meaningful to Townsend. Rather than a glamorous recognition of his lengthy career, he hopes the award functions as an acknowledgement of the deeper goals of true education. “The original movement at St. John's in the '30s was that we had a mission not just to be a little college, but to be emblematic of a way that a society, a community, could improve,” Townsend says.

“Our mission is to teach the capabilities of the liberal arts to give us what we aim for in life,” he adds. “So, what do we live for the sake of? We live for the sake of the good, the true, and the beautiful; not just for instrumental goals like wealth or honor or fame. I think the liberal arts are at the heart of what we do at St. John's.”

Townsend's belief in the liberal arts manifests itself beyond St. John's. He teaches adult education offerings in both Santa Fe and Annapolis, including recently, an examination of the fearless pursuit of love and intellect depicted in Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*. He has also taught liberal arts seminars in local prisons, Baltimore police departments, and to the chief financial officers of PepsiCo, as well as been involved with the Touchstones Discussion Project—which brings the seminar model to elementary, middle, and high schools across the world—for more than 30 years. With every group of learners, the St. John's seminar pedagogy proves invaluable.

“I think the method works, whether I'm teaching in a community seminar, whether I'm doing a year of classics,” he says. “It's an aspect of the human soul; people are hungry for this kind of endeavor.”

Townsend suggests that the rigorous dialogue that defines seminar provides the foundation for any functioning

democratic society. On a similar note, he rejects the idea that the purpose of education is purely pragmatic; that any and all learning exists only in pursuit of material gain. He acknowledges that American society necessitates a certain amount of financial success, and he maintains that prosperity isn't something to avoid. But, he adds, “Everything that we're doing [in life] is not for the sake of more profit or more wealth. It's to elevate the human spirit; to think about, as Du Bois says, the soul. That's what the liberal arts are all about.”

Importantly, Townsend notes, a liberal arts education benefits tutors and students alike. The equal exchange of varying perspectives, ideas, and beliefs that seminar affords is transformative for everyone involved. There's

“Nevertheless, there is a path to achieve greatness,” he says. “If we move forward with honesty, vision, integrity, and effective hard work, St. John's can be more than we might imagine.”

nothing like the mind-blowing moment when a student or teacher genuinely considers an idea that challenges, changes, or elevates their point of view. “It's universal,” Townsend contends.

Despite that universality, the economic climate in the United States causes a constant “crisis in the humanities” rhetoric that, some fear, drives students away from schools like St. John's. Partly in response to those concerns, Townsend is constantly searching for ways to bring more people to the liberal

arts. In addition to teaching and community education, he has conceived of two potential master's programs that he believes could broaden the appeal of the St. John's Graduate Institute. The more people engaged in the liberal arts, he reasons, the better for St. John's.

“The survival of St. John's is at stake at a time when many small colleges will fail. Nevertheless, there is a path to achieve greatness,” he says. “If we move forward with honesty, vision, integrity, and effective hard work, St. John's can be more than we might imagine. For St. John's to live up to its untapped potential, we must, to paraphrase Frederick Douglass, be true to our past, true to our present, and bind ourselves to be true to the future.”

Q&A with Alumni Relations Working Group Co-chairs: Caroline Gorman (SF11) and Ken Resnick (SFGI19)

In the beginning of 2020, St. John's embarked on an effort to better understand how alumni want to engage with the college. After months of alumni focus groups and surveys, and an audit of current programs, a working group of the Advancement Committee of the Board of Visitors and Governors was formed to help evaluate findings and generate guidance on how to reinforce a strong and meaningful connection between alumni and the college. Get to know the Alumni Relations Working Group Co-chairs Caroline Gorman (SF11) and Ken Resnick (SFGI19), and the significance of this work and alumni at St. John's, through their reflections below.

What prompted you to attend St. John's College?

Gorman: I attended almost on a whim; I saw the old marketing materials that said, "This year, the following teachers will be returning (then listing Program authors)," and I just knew St. John's was the place for me.

Resnick: I moved to Santa Fe in 2014, and to be honest, did not know anything about St. John's. I experimented with the Summer Classics program, and then I was hooked. I enrolled in the Graduate Institute (GI) program in 2017 and graduated two years later. For me, the Great Books were an attraction—original texts, original thinking and writing about the texts, and, most important to me, civil discourse with friends and strangers. This is what I love about the college—I've not found anything else quite like it anywhere.

How has the college affected your professional pursuits?

Gorman: As a trial attorney, St. John's has been an enormous benefit in terms of reading, writing, and analyzing. I went into law school more accustomed to deep reading and analysis of the written word, which has helped immeasurably. I also found that the conversational skills I gained at St. John's are good for interviewing clients and witnesses.

Resnick: I retired from General Electric in 2014 after serving as the general counsel for its global oil and gas business based in Florence, Italy, and currently consult in the areas of corporate governance, ethics, and compliance programs. I also teach a course on international business ethics at Syracuse University in Florence. The GI program has improved my critical reading skills and helped me discern some of the ethical principles that are often deeply embedded in business decision-making, yet are rarely discussed. Helping my students understand the values they choose when making so-called "strictly business" decisions has been a good area for classroom discussion.

What roles do you serve at the college?

Gorman: I am an alumni-elected member of the Board of Visitors and Governors and co-chair of its Alumni Relations Working Group (ARWG).

Resnick: In addition to co-chairing the ARWG, I am a regular member of the board and serve on the Finance, Advancement, and Trustee and Governance Committees.

What is most satisfying to you about serving on the board?

Gorman: The most satisfying part is twofold:

1. Seeing how many people, including many non-alumni who found the college later in life, deeply love the college.

2. Seeing how many people are constantly working to improve the college in every way.

Resnick: The board is a collaborative body, and each member cares deeply about St. John's and its distinctive Program, mission, and pedagogy. What this translates into is a board that passionately desires to be active in service to the college. The formal meetings are the veritable "tip of the iceberg" in terms of board activity. Between meetings, the members are busy in committees and working groups to address various policy issues and other matters related to the college. I think this is the most gratifying aspect of my board experience.

Why is the work of the ARWG important?

Gorman: There are a number of big objectives that the college has successfully completed or is in the middle of—such as the tuition decrease, eliminating the deficit, and the *Freeing Minds* capital campaign. But amid all that, the board realized it is also time to examine how to reinforce a meaningful connection to alumni and strong support of the college. The college's Alumni Relations Office has already taken a number of steps to critically examine itself, and the ARWG, with representation from the Alumni Association, discussed the issue from all angles.

Resnick: During our benchmarking of other small colleges, we learned that successful alumni engagement strategies create a sort of "virtuous circle" for the alumni and the college in terms of volunteerism, philanthropy, and participation in alumni events. For example, we know that alumni who volunteer or become engaged with their college are many times more likely to promote, donate, and express satisfaction with their relationship to the school. We want to build our own virtuous circle at St. John's that creates lifelong connections among Johnnies—and between Johnnies and the college.

How will the outcomes of the ARWG influence the future of St. John's?

Gorman: I hope that we'll take what the ARWG discovered after talking to staff, volunteers, and alumni, and find better ways to encourage volunteers and strengthen ties between alumni and the college.

Resnick: We hope that the results of our working group will positively influence the culture at St. John's for alumni

engagement. Ultimately, we will measure our progress in terms of expanded alumni engagement and participation in the college's alumni communications, volunteerism, philanthropy, and events. One positive development from COVID-19 is the use of technology to convene people from around the world to engage in communal learning, events, seminars, and such. I was a doubting Thomas, but then I participated in several online events and seminars and found that the discussions and personal connections to the other participants were rich despite our distance. So we hope that the programming for alumni events and communications will include both in-person and online opportunities going forward.



What encourages you to engage with the college?

Gorman: I love that you can approach any Johnnie—anywhere, any time—and ask: "What have you been reading lately?" and an amazing conversation follows. I've never found another community so free with ideas, and that keeps me returning to the college and alumni.

Resnick: I continue to engage with the college because I feel like it is an endangered species. St. John's offers to students of all types and ages—from all around the world—the unique opportunity to engage directly with some of the best thinkers, scientists, philosophers, artists, and musicians of all time, and discuss their works in a reasoned and civil manner. We are slowly losing such precious learning environments, and once they're gone, they're gone. We can't let that happen to St. John's.



What do you hope for the future of St. John's?

Gorman: My hope is that St. John's continues to be a place where people with a deep love of learning and thinking gather—while also providing better support for a more diverse group of students than we traditionally have.

Resnick: I hope for the revitalization of alumni relations at St. John's. If you are an alum who perhaps has not been engaged with the school recently, I would ask that you consider getting involved in some way to support the college—through the Alumni Association, seminar offerings, donations, volunteerism. What I have learned through my participation in the ARWG and on the board is that alumni support of the college, regardless of the amount of time or money involved, is so critical to its continued success.

Campaign Chair Reflects on Success of Freeing Minds



Warren Spector (A81)

Warren Spector (A81) speaks on the Alumni-fueled completion of the Winiarski Family Foundation Challenge amid year of his 40th Reunion

Warren Spector (A81) never doubted that St. John's alumni would meet the Winiarski Family Foundation Challenge, raising \$50 million toward the *Freeing Minds* campaign and securing another \$50 million in matching funds.

"I was confident from the beginning that alumni would step up and meet the Challenge, I always believed it," says Spector, a member of the St. John's Board of Visitors and Governors and campaign chair. "Our alumni base cares very deeply about the college and wants to see it flourish, wants to see it maintain its values."

What he didn't anticipate was just how quickly it would happen: alumni and friends completed the Winiarski Family Foundation Challenge in only two and a half years, crossing the finish line this spring.

"Had this Challenge been offered five to 10 years ago, I think it might have taken twice as long to achieve it."

Back then, Spector says, there was simply less confidence in the financial stability and direction of the college.

As recently as 2016, St. John's structural deficit had reached \$12 million. The college was balancing its books, but only by applying every dollar toward operating costs, at the expense of building a base of support for the future.

Enrollment, conversely, was declining, hampered by a tuition price that, when combined with ancillary expenses, put the total cost of a St. John's education at close to \$70,000 a year.

"We needed to get our fiscal house in order, that was a priority, but we didn't like being so expensive that only a few families could afford us," says Spector. "The more the board talked about it, the more we realized that St. John's needed to make a strong statement about its values."

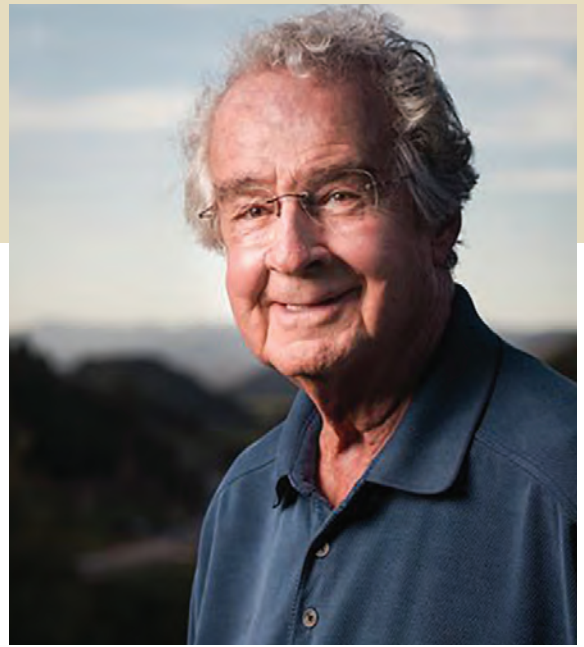
By the time the *Freeing Minds* campaign went public in the fall of 2018, the college had lowered tuition by a third, approved a plan to balance the budget, switched to a philanthropy-centered financial model, and raised more than \$100 million in support.

Those results attracted the attention of winemaker Warren Winiarski (Class of 1952), founder of Napa, California-based Stag's Leap Wine Cellars, and Barbara Winiarski (Class of 1955), a member of the first class of women at St. John's.

Inspired by the steps the college was taking to achieve financial stability, the Winiarski Family Foundation issued a challenge: if alumni and friends could raise another \$50 million in cash gifts, the Foundation would match those gifts, dollar for dollar, with a \$50 million contribution to the St. John's endowment.



Barbara Winiarski (Class of 1955)



Warren Winiarski (Class of 1952)

The Winiarski Family Foundation Challenge came with a stipulation: the gifts that had already been made to the campaign would be ineligible for the match, including Spector’s own pledge, one of the largest in St. John’s history.

The Winiarski Family Foundation, Spector explains, was adamant that the Challenge would not be met through a few large gifts but by thousands of supporters who were willing to stretch themselves and make gifts they would not otherwise have considered.

Nearly 5,000 alumni and friends responded, offering more than 17,000 individual gifts, of which 96 percent were gifts of less than \$5,000.

“I think it goes to show that if people see the college doing the right thing, they will support it, and support it enthusiastically,” says Spector.

Now that St. John’s is no longer operating with a deficit, Spector says the college can invest campaign gifts in the student experience—and afford to build for the future.

Of the \$300 million being raised for *Freeing Minds*, \$225 million, or 75 percent, will go toward academic and student support, an area that includes health and wellness programming, career services, and improvements that foster lively, welcoming communities.

“I think it goes to show that if people see the college doing the right thing, they will support it, and support it enthusiastically.”

What these plans won’t include, Spector cautions, are facilities that come with ultra-luxurious price tags that students inevitably have to pay. “When you make a gift to *Freeing Minds*, you are delivering a St. John’s education

at a price that is defensible. We aren’t spending money on luxuries but on the small classroom experience that is being abandoned by other colleges.”

It is clear to Spector that his fellow alumni care passionately about the values that distinguish St. John’s from its peers, and he’s convinced their passion will drive the campaign to its next big achievement: the \$300 million campaign goal. As of June 2021, total commitments to the *Freeing Minds* campaign had reached \$246 million.

“The campaign, and all that has gone with it, highlights the difference between St. John’s and other schools. Our alumni are excited to support that, and I think the college can be in a strong position for a very long time.”

JOIN US
FOR
ALUMNI
WEEK
2021



Monday, September 27
through
Saturday, October 2



REGISTRATION IS OPEN NOW
THROUGH SEPTEMBER 19 AT
[SJC.EDU/ALUMNI-WEEK](https://sjc.edu/alumni-week)

SCHEDULE AND REGISTRATION



Alumni are invited to join classmates and members of the college community for St. John's second annual Alumni Week—a weeklong series of your favorite Homecoming activities offered in an online format. Renew your lifelong connection to St. John's and experience what it means to be part of our Johnnie community by joining us this fall.

SCHEDULE

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

Welcome
Alumni Association Awards
Q&A with College Leaders

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

Return to the Classroom: *How to Read a Painting*
and *Lab Revisited*

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

JohnnieTalks

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

Breaking Barriers Panel Presentation with some of
St. John's first women students (live event)

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1

What Did Einstein Predict?
Annual All Alumni Meeting and Alumni Association
Election (live event)
Friday Night Lecture (live event)

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 2

Seminar (live event)
Toast and Tributes with Alumni Association Board
(live event)

All live programming will be recorded and made available post event at sjc.edu/Alumni-Week. Alumni Week programming subject to change. See webpage for details, or contact the Alumni Relations Office for assistance at alumni@sjc.edu.

REGISTRATION AND PRICING

Live Events: must be registered for in advance in order to provide login credentials on the dates of programming.

Pre-recorded Activities: will be posted at sjc.edu/Alumni-Week on the date of their occurrence and are open to all participants. To receive links to pre-recorded content via email, registration is recommended.

PRICING

Payment, along with registration, is required for participation in virtual seminars only.

Price per seminar: \$50

CANCELLATION POLICIES

- Due to the limited availability of virtual seminars, spaces are nontransferable and nonrefundable.
- Seminars with fewer than five participants are subject to cancelation. If a seminar is canceled due to low attendance, registrants may choose to transfer to an open seminar or request a refund.

SEMINARS

GRADUATE INSTITUTE

Class	Reading	Tutor
GI	TBD	Kenneth Wolfe (SF94)

GOLDEN YEARS

Class	Reading	Tutor
Golden	John Stuart Mill's "The Subjection of Women"	Tom May

ANNAPOLIS

Class	Reading	Tutor
2016	William Shakespeare's <i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	Hannah Hintze
2006	Aristotle's <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i>	Peter Kalkavage
1996	F. Scott Fitzgerald's <i>The Great Gatsby</i>	Walter Sterling (A93)
1991	Frederick Douglass' "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July;" Declaration of Independence	Chester Burke (A74)
1986	Anthology for Sophomore Language Poems	Jonathan Tuck (H14)
1981	W.E.B. Du Bois' <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i>	Joan Silver (A76)
1976	Michel de Montaigne's "Of Experience," "Of Cannibals"	Steven Crockett
1971	William Shakespeare's <i>The Tempest</i>	Nick Maistrellis (H15)
1960s	Plato's <i>Symposium</i>	Joe Macfarland (A87)



SANTA FE

Class	Reading	Tutor
2016	James Baldwin's "Many Thousands Gone," <i>Nothing Personal</i>	Sarah Davis
2011	Sophocles' <i>Antigone</i>	Andy Kingston
2006	Emily Dickinson's <i>Final Harvest</i> : 66, 87, 122, 202	Claudia Hauer
2001	Plato's <i>Republic</i> : Book 2	Krishnan Venkatesh
1996	TBD	Frank Hunt (A75)
1991	William Shakespeare's <i>The Tempest</i>	Nancy Buchenauer (H16)
1986	Michel Foucault's <i>The Order of Things</i> : Preface, Chapter 1 "Las Meninas"	Llyd Wells
1981	Franz Kafka's "Josephine the Singer, or the Mouse Folk"	Peter Pesic (H17)
1976	Arundhati Roy's <i>The God of Small Things</i>	Don Cook (H97)
1971	Plato's <i>The Apology of Socrates</i>	Michael Golluber

OPEN

Class	Reading	Tutor
OPEN	Fyodor Dostoevsky's <i>The Eternal Husband</i>	Louis Petrich
OPEN	Euripides' <i>The Bacchae</i>	Gregory Recco
OPEN	Wallace Stevens' "Connoisseur of Chaos"	Jim Beall
OPEN	Ibn Tufayl's <i>Hayy Ibn Yaqzan</i>	Brendan Boyle



ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AWARDS

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION HONOREES 2021

Alumni Association honorees are selected annually by the board in recognition for their pursuit of and successes in leading examined lives, as well as their steadfast commitment to the St. John's College community. Following are this year's recipients of the Award of Merit and Honorary Alumni designations to be commemorated during Alumni Week 2021.

AWARD OF MERIT



Robert George (A85) – for achievement in the field of journalism and distinguished service to the college and its alumni

Robert George (A85) has served both the college and its alumni through extensive volunteer activity, including service on the Alumni Association Board and its committees, the Board of Visitors and Governors, and volunteering as a DJ for nearly every Annapolis homecoming over the past three decades. His distinguished career in politics and journalism, where he has quietly championed civility and served as a model for civil discourse, displays how we hope Johnnies might contribute to society. George currently writes editorials on education and other policy issues for Bloomberg Opinion. He was previously a member of the editorial boards of the *New York Daily News* and *New York Post*. He began his career in politics working for the Republican National Committee and as senior writer and special assistant for then-Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Newt Gingrich. He was involved in election monitoring in Nigeria, reported on slavery in Sudan, and has participated in fact-finding missions to Israel and China. Over the course of his career, George has appeared on MSNBC, CNN, Fox News, and many other political affairs outlets, and has written for *National Review*, *Reason*, *HuffPost*, and a variety of other print and online publications.



John Sifton (A96) – for achievement in the field of human rights advocacy

John Sifton (A96) has devoted most of his career to human rights. After focusing on international humanitarian law in law school (NYU 2000), he worked for Refugees International in the Balkans, and then as a researcher and later advocate at Human Rights Watch. In an interview last year with the college about human rights work, he described human rights research and advocacy as “a relentless pursuit of the truth and a constant but often unrewarding effort to bring abusers to justice.” In addition to advocacy, Sifton is a writer, starting with a *New York Times* article published after 9/11 and leading up to his 2015 book, *Violence All Around*. Praised by *The New Yorker*, *HuffPost*, and other outlets, *Violence All Around* offers insights into human rights work as well as meditations on the nature of violence. Using his work on atrocities and war crimes as a springboard, Sifton explores the reluctance of historians and philosophers to analyze violence itself, not just as moral or immoral activity or as means to an end, but as a set of independent phenomena that condition human existence. According to Sifton, few observers, perpetrators, or victims are given an opportunity to consider these contexts. “I just don’t get the sense that a lot of the people who work in human rights think about that.”

William Fischer, PhD (SF86) – for achievement in the field of evolutionary biology and bioinformatics

Will Fischer, PhD, (SF86) is a scientist who works at the interface of viral evolution, vaccine development, and pandemic prevention. His work has contributed to mitigation efforts against HIV, filovirus diseases (Ebola and Marburg), Hepatitis C, Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease, and COVID-19. He played a vital role in the development of the mosaic vaccine design concept, which enables construction of vaccines for previously intractable pathogens. Since 2005, his work at the Los Alamos National Laboratory has been focused primarily on HIV. In 2020, he turned his attention to tracking the molecular evolution of SARS-CoV-2, the virus responsible for the COVID-19 pandemic. His recent work has significantly contributed to a better understanding of SARS-CoV-2 variants, and ways to apply this understanding to ensure continuing success with vaccines and antibody therapeutics. Fischer's deep biological knowledge, computational skills, and ability to design visual presentations of complex data—a skill he began to develop at the chalkboard in the St. John's classroom—have significantly contributed to vaccine design strategies and have helped save lives around the globe. He is a well-rounded, deep-thinking scientist, and his insights have benefited many issues relating to public health.



Natalie Goldberg (SFGI74) – for achievement in the field of arts and literature

Natalie Goldberg (SFGI74) is the author of 15 books (and counting), including *Writing Down the Bones*, which has sold more than one million copies, has been translated into 19 languages, and revolutionized the way we practice writing in this country. Her most recent book, *Three Simple Lines: A Writer's Pilgrimage into the Heart and Homeland of Haiku*, has garnered wide praise—and includes a shout-out to the Santa Fe college bookstore. Her other books include the novel *Banana Rose*, memoir *Long Quiet Highway*, and a collection of essays, *The Great Spring*. For more than 40 years, Goldberg has practiced Zen Buddhism and taught seminars in writing as a practice. People from around the world attend her life-changing workshops, and she has earned a reputation as a great teacher. *The Oprah Winfrey Show* sent a film crew to spend the day with Goldberg for a segment on spirituality that covered her writing, teaching, painting, and walking meditation. She has been a speaker at commencement and other college events, including an event in 2018 where she reflected on the value St. John's College has had in her career as an author, noting that, "[At St. John's] you meet the mind of the author, which is really how you learn to write. The books you love, you study the mind of the authors, they're your teachers. So, me and Socrates and me and Aristotle, we're good friends ... And that's what you need in order to write."



ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AWARDS

HONORARY ALUMNI

Donlin Long, PhD



Donlin M. Long, PhD, is the head of a dedicated family of Johnnies. His wife, Harriet (AGI93), served on the college's Board of Visitors and Governors, his daughter Elisabeth Long (A86) currently serves on the Alumni Association Board, and he himself served on the St. John's College Presidents' Council. He is also the loving father of two other graduates of St. John's, Kimberly Riley (AGI87) and David Long (A90). After completing a PhD in neuroanatomy in 1964, Long served as professor of neurosurgery and chief neurosurgeon at the Johns Hopkins University for 27 years. He was one of the first program directors in the nation to adopt a major interest in chronic pain and developed an infrastructure for patient care at Johns Hopkins while advancing the standards for pain care around the world. During his career, Long has published more than 250 peer-reviewed articles and 100 book chapters, as well as 16 books. He was named a distinguished professor of neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins from 2000 until his official retirement in 2010. In addition to these accomplishments, he and Harriet have been active members of the college community and consistent donors since 1983. In 2019, they established the Long Family Endowment with a leadership-level legacy commitment to the *Freeing Minds* campaign and are sustaining members of the college's Mitchell Gallery.

Mary Anne Burke



Mary Anne Burke has been a member of the St. John's College community for more than 14 years, beginning as a staff member of the Advancement Office before transitioning to the Student Activity Center as fitness and wellness coordinator in Santa Fe. Burke, a known fitness and wellness buff and certified personal trainer, was nominated by current students in recognition of her extraordinary dedication, enthusiasm, and attention to the wellbeing of the college community. To create a more inclusive environment and to increase community engagement, Burke launched the Warrior Women Workouts, designing a fitness program that is welcoming, non-judgmental, and inclusive, and allows for customization by each participant. In response to the isolation caused by the pandemic, Burke organized the "Meta-Ionnathon"—a special race event, inviting Johnnies (including alumni) from all over the globe to log enough miles to travel the circumference of the earth, virtually. She also brought the archery program to the college, in which students compete locally, regionally, and nationally. Whether by student, staff, or faculty, Burke has been described as relationship-focused, maintaining connections with former students even after graduation. As Assistant Dean Michael Golluber notes, "Mary Anne has changed my life. Before she came, all [I] did is study and suffer from stress and anxiety. She helped me to start moving and to remember I had a body. I might be dead now if it weren't for her. I know many feel the same way I do about this."



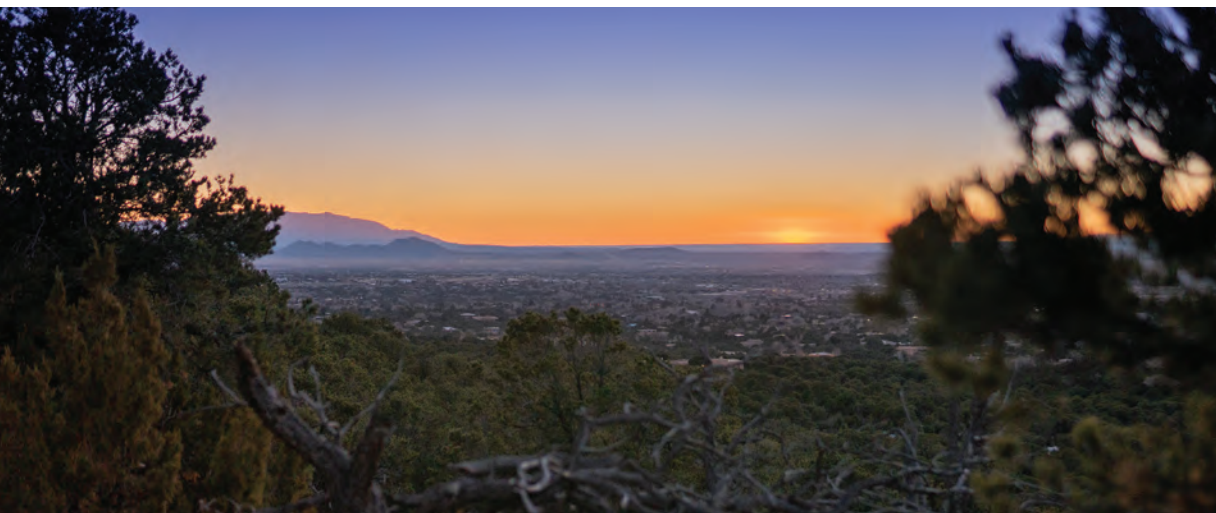
Paul and Cecie Dry

Paul and Cecie Dry's embrace of the St. John's College community and their commitment to the Program have resulted in their ongoing participation in classroom learning and financial support to the college. After reading a small ad in *The New Yorker*, Cecie and Paul first attended Summer Classics in Santa Fe in 1996 and have participated almost every summer since. In 2004, they initiated and funded a twice-yearly seminar in Annapolis led by tutors Eva Brann and Sam Kutler. Cecie attended the Executive Seminar program in Philadelphia and studied in the Graduate Institute in Annapolis. At Paul Dry Books, Paul has published numerous works by St. John's tutors. The Dry Family Foundation supports The Eva Brann Endowed Tutorship and the Southwest Scholars Partners Program, which is designed to benefit enrollment on the Santa Fe campus. Their engagement with the college is generational as Guillermo Bleichmar, their son-in-law, has been a tutor at the Santa Fe campus since 2009. The Drys have truly embraced the spirit of St. John's College and made its health and wellbeing a central part of their lives.

(Volunteer Service Award winners to be announced during Alumni Week 2021)

"What is the meaning of life? That was all—a simple question; one that tended to close in on one with years, the great revelation had never come. The great revelation perhaps never did come. Instead, there were little daily miracles, illuminations, matches struck unexpectedly in the dark ..."

— VIRGINIA WOOLF,
TO THE LIGHTHOUSE







College Celebrates Graduates with Poignant Commencement Ceremonies

It was a strange year for Johnnies in both Santa Fe and Annapolis: following an online fall semester, many students returned to campus in spring, combining the Program with similarly rigorous COVID-19 safety protocols. Ultimately, the work paid off—in May, graduating Johnnies celebrated their accomplishments with in-person commencement ceremonies.

May 16 was a beautiful spring day on the back lawn of the Annapolis campus, with socially distanced chairs, a cordoned ceremony area, and a stage set up in view of College Creek.

In his welcome address, Annapolis President Pano Kanelos noted that commencement is an opportunity to look toward the future, simultaneously pointing out the challenges of the immediate past. “We have been a community dispersed, a polity in diaspora ... we have all had to find ways to endure the challenges we’ve faced,” he remarked.

“Without you—your voices, your presence, your minds—there is no college,” Kanelos added. “You are strong, you are tenacious, and we are so proud and grateful that you are Johnnies.”

The ceremony culminated with tutor Chester Burke’s (A74) address to the Class of 2021. As he recounted the last year-plus of college life, Burke cited the determination, humorous missteps, and heartwarming moments he shared with the Class of 2021, connecting the tenacity displayed by Johnnies over the last three semesters to that of the last four years.

“Despite an ultimately inexplicable circumstance that stretched all of us to the limit of despair,” Burke said, “each of you graduating students ... accomplished a genuine version of what it is we do. If Aristotle is right, and he usually is, this serious and pleasurable activity is something available to all human beings at all times; something that under the best of circumstances is difficult to sustain but is nevertheless worth fighting for and falling towards.”

In Santa Fe, more than 40 graduating students and their families celebrated commencement on May 22, narrowly avoiding a rare storm later in the afternoon.

President Mark Roosevelt began by acknowledging the extreme challenge both of the St. John’s education and of the last year. He also noted that graduating students are entering “an increasingly fractured, deeply divided world and country.”

However, “there is reason to hope,” Roosevelt pointed out. “You have what the world needs ... A dedication to listening

that is rare—and a desire to find truth, as nuanced as it may be, rather than a need to be right and to win.”

The Santa Fe commencement speaker was *The Dallas Morning News*’ Alfredo Corchado, an award-winning journalist and nonfiction writer. Corchado, in his speech, told a story of personal perseverance—that of a high-school dropout who, after emigrating from Mexico, worked as a teenage laborer in a California farming town—through the lens of three lessons: Surround yourself with people who believe in you; find your purpose; and take risks.

Through those lessons, Corchado recalled the experiences that shaped his life. First, leaving California and attending college on a promise to his mom. Then, falling in love with journalism. And finally, persevering until he ultimately succeeded, earning positions at news outlets like National Public Radio and the *Wall Street Journal* along the way.

Before repeating his three lessons, Corchado concluded his speech with a tribute to the crowd of graduates:

“You are leading us into the next chapter,” he said. “I couldn’t be more hopeful for this country because in you I see the anger, the passion, the will, tolerance, imagination, and drive to keep the great American experiment, once debated in Philadelphia, going—moving us closer to a more perfect union. The perennial journey.”

In both Annapolis and Santa Fe, the message rang true: As they proved throughout the last year, the newly minted St. John’s alumni have the grit, intellect, and character to persist through any circumstances. Congratulations, Class of 2021!



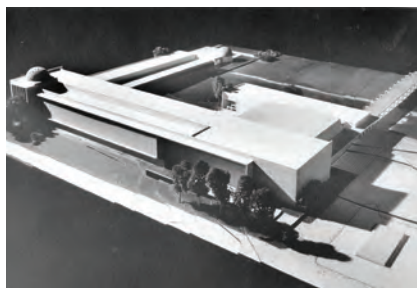
DAVID SCHWARZ (A78)



Renovating the Student Experience, Together



ST. JOHN'S MAKES CAMPUS CULTURE AND SUSTAINABILITY IMPROVEMENTS THANKS TO ALUMNI SUPPORT



Through his Washington, DC-based architect firm, David Schwarz (A78), founder of David M. Schwarz Architects, has worked with projects as varied as the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex in Orlando, Florida, the Texas Rangers Globe Life Park in Arlington, Texas, and the Smith Center for the Performing Arts in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Now he is returning to the college he loves to help update a building he remembers well: Mellon Hall.

Schwarz says that helping St. John's build for the future feels to him like a way of thanking the college for its part in his success.

"What the college did for me was it taught me to think, it taught me to speak, and it taught me to write," Schwarz explains. All skills necessary, he adds, to do a good job in his chosen field.

Mellon Hall stands out among the Colonial architecture that dominates the Annapolis campus, but the mid-century modern building has its own historical significance: famed architect Richard Neutra agreed to design it after visiting the campus.

Dedicated in 1959, the sprawling building houses the 600-seat Francis Scott Key auditorium, many classrooms, the Mitchell Gallery, and a planetarium—but has limited space for socializing.

Schwarz hopes to change that.

"It's not a particularly humane series of spaces. I think I feel best about trying to fix that, which will largely be done with warm, welcoming materials and furnishings."

The feel of home is the goal: Schwarz says the lobby will be furnished with soft, comfortable seating and tables in the fashion of a living room.

St. John's Vice President for Advancement Kelly Brown says the project will have important social and cultural implications for the 325-year-old Annapolis campus. "To create a sense of community, it's really important to have physical spaces where students can relax and engage with one another and with the tutors."

Brown adds that the project will restore Neutra's original vision of Mellon Hall as a center of community life and the arts.

The auditorium's large backstage space will be divided into

two parts for a dance recital studio and a black box theater. Multi-purpose areas will be available and appropriate for other performing arts.

The Mellon Hall project is partly funded by a \$5 million grant from the Maryland Independent College and University Association (MICUA). Every four years, schools can apply for money to support capital improvements; the last grant St. John's received went toward the renovation of McDowell Hall.

The current grant, however, stipulates St. John's raise matching funds to support the project. To date, alumni and friends have contributed \$1.8 million to the Mellon Hall renovation through the *Freeing Minds* campaign.

The renovation comes at a time when the college is looking with enthusiasm toward the future and a return to a fully residential experience for undergraduates.

Brown notes that while some small colleges must now regain their former strength in the wake of the pandemic, St. John's, she says, is in the fortunate position of being able to build on its strengths, with alumni-funded improvements underway on both campuses.

In Santa Fe, sustainability initiatives aim to bring St. John's closer to a carbon-neutral future. The entire campus recently converted to longer-lasting, energy-efficient LED lighting, replacing the outdated fluorescent tube lighting that had previously been used in almost every campus building. A solar power project featuring ground and carport-mounted solar panel arrays is currently in progress and expected to be complete by spring 2022.

The college estimates that the two upgrades will save the college \$150,000 a year and reduce annual electricity usage by 1.67 million kWh.

An anonymous alumni couple funded both projects with a combined \$3.2 million dollar gift to *Freeing Minds*. Those same two donors have also given to the Annapolis campus to renovate the Randall Hall dorm rooms and add energy efficient air conditioning units.

"Our students need and want environmentally sustainable campuses and gathering spaces that facilitate community and creativity," Brown says. "Our alumni have shown that they are committed to making that happen."

REUNION CLASS NOTES

1971

Jay Gold (A) retired in April 2020 and began the Master of Arts in Eastern Classics graduate program at St. John's in August 2020. Gold writes, "It has been such fun, I may continue for the MA in Liberal Arts." Additionally, Gold and wife, Sabrina, will celebrate 25 years together and 18 years of marriage in fall 2021.

1976

Neal Allen (SF) is currently attending the college's Eastern Classics graduate program (2020–21). In May 2021, he published his latest book, *Shapes of Truth: Discover God Inside You*. Allen writes, "It includes a brief sophomore year at St. John's story that references Jon McCracken (SF76) and Hunter Hyde (SF76)." Allen has been married for two years and has one grandchild from four adult children.

Sheri (Rothstein) Brown (A) retired in May 2021 from a career in early childhood education and moved to California to be near two of her three grandchildren. Brown writes, "I stopped to see the Santa Fe campus on our drive west, as I had never been there."

Mark Copper (SF) completed constructing and outfitting an astronomical observatory near Magdalena, New Mexico, in March 2021. Copper writes, "If you enjoyed plotting retrograde motions, come take a look!"

Leslie Graves (A) is the CEO of *Ballotpedia.org* and is approaching her 40th wedding anniversary. Graves has 10 grandchildren.

Jon Hustis and Marion Condon Hustis (A) recently celebrated the birth of their first granddaughter, Stella Marion McQuail, with a second grandchild expected in July 2021. They write, "We are splitting time between Dallas and Lucknow, Ontario, Canada, and are now farming in addition to working, caring for family, volunteering, reading, trying to stay fit, and hanging with dogs and kids."

Judy Kistler-Robinson (SF) retired mid-2020, at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Kistler-Robinson writes, "Instead of planned travel to new places and old friends, I gardened, read, sketched my surroundings, and started teaching Tai Chi Chih on Zoom."

David Pex (SF) has been busy building a log cabin in the woods near Mount Hood, Oregon, over the past year. Pex writes, "My carpentry skills have vastly improved!"

1986

Kristen (Baumgardner) Caven (SF) authored *The Reason She Left: and other stories* in 2011, a philosophical comic book exploring cultural dualism through the character-driven narrative of a young woman trying to find her place in the world—a project born from her propensity for sketching and illustrating as a student at St. John's.

She writes, "As a bored, unguided, and pensive high school student, I found that I listened best in class when I was doodling in the margins of my notebooks ... In sophomore lab, my doodles became paper-doll booklets, and I discovered the cult of publication."

In 2020, Caven returned to the creative process by making a full-length animated feature for her neighborhood beer festival, which was transformed into a worldwide virtual Oktoberfest due to COVID-19.

Today, she continues to explore the graphic narrative as a tool for philosophical communication and understanding across a variety of mediums.

1991

Joan (Ross) Crist (A) is happy to be serving as a Title I aide and Latin teacher at a school in her community.

Theresa Duncan's (SF) role as an attorney in the fight to free Guantánamo Bay prisoner Mohamedou Ould Slahi was made into the feature film *The Mauritanian*. Released in spring 2021, the movie stars Jodie Foster, Shailene Woodley (as Duncan), and Tamar Rahim.

2001

David Weiskopf (SF) is living in Sacramento, California, working in climate policy and politics, and welcomed a baby in November 2020.

2016

Samantha Ardoin (SF) graduated in May 2021 from Naropa University with a master's degree in clinical mental health counseling and a concentration in mindfulness-based transpersonal counseling. Ardoin is now working as a psychotherapist at Queer Asterisk Therapeutic Services, offering affordable identity-affirming mental health counseling to queer and trans adults and youth.

Anne Horowitz (SF) recently completed her first year of medical school.

Rebekah McLellan (SF) recently began veterinary studies at Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine.

William Palm (SF) completed a master's degree in special education in spring 2020 and married partner, Isaac, in 2019. Palm writes, "We are happily living together in Salt Lake City."

James Spencer-Zavos (SF) is currently enrolled in an "Umschulung," or training program, in Berlin to become a qualified carpenter, after which he is eligible to train to become a "Meister," or master carpenter.

We'd like to hear from you! Please send correspondence and class notes to alumni@sjc.edu. Address changes and other updates may be submitted at sjc.edu/alumni-contact.

IN MEMORIAM

St. John's College remembers the alumni, faculty, staff, and leadership who have passed away during the 2020-2021 academic year, and celebrates the impact their lives have had on our Johnnie community.

Stephen Benedict (Class of 1947)
Stephen W. Bergen (Class of 1947)
Mary S. Blomberg (Class of 1957)
Katharine Boaz, Santa Fe Faculty Emerita
Ray C. Cave (Class of 1948), Trustee Emeritus
Stefano J. Coaloa (SFGI11)
Gerald D. Cohen (SFGI90)
Sharon S. Cooper, Santa Fe Staff
Richard T. Edelman (Class of 1951)
David J. Freedman (SF76)
Peter Gardiner (A73)
Robert M. Hampton (SF73)
Alan D. Hornstein (AGI86)
H. Gerald Hoxby (Class of 1947)
Susan H. Jones (SFGI71)
Daniel "Bud" T. Kelly, Jr. (H02)
Gertrude Koch (AGI82)
Charles E. Lynch (Class of 1951)
Richard A. Malmgren (SFGI91)
Jake Martinez (SFGI70)
John W. May (SFGI94)
Gerald "Simon" V. McNabb (A88)
Jack S. Moorman (SFGI94)
Robert S. Musgrave (SF90)
Judith Penelope (Class of 1967)
Mark A. Piekarski, Santa Fe Staff
Josephine J. Poe (Class of 1957)
David T. Reiner (A02)
Mara Robinson (SFGI83)
William D. Shafer (Class of 1962)
Thomas K. Simpson (Class of 1950)
David L. Smith (A86)
Leslie E. Starr (A72)
E. Cary Stickney (A75), Santa Fe Faculty
Susan L. Swartzberg (SF70)
George Usdansky (Class of 1950)
Robert J. Wekselblatt (Class of 1963)
John F. White (Class of 1964), Annapolis Faculty
Rebecca M. Wilson (H83)
Michael C. Wood (SF80)
Patrick F. Woods (SF80)

Cary Stickney (A75), Santa Fe Faculty



Beloved Santa Fe tutor Cary Stickney (A75) died peacefully at home on April 7, 2021, of cancer. He was 66 years old.

"Many of us, across our

campuses and across the generations at the college, knew and loved Cary," said Santa Fe Dean Walter Sterling (A93) upon the time of Stickney's passing. He embodied, and improved, the spirit of our college."

After graduating from St. John's in Annapolis in 1975, Stickney joined the Santa Fe faculty in 1980 to live out his life's work as a tutor. Even in his final days, he was close to and reading program books. "It was especially meaningful to him to be involved in reading groups at the college on [*Don Quixote* and on Plato," said Sterling. "He derived great consolation from these experiences." According to Stickney, the great books were safe. They would always be read somewhere in the world by people questing for understanding.

Stickney is survived by his wife, Susan, Santa Fe faculty emerita; his daughters Amelia (SF14) and Sarah (A04), a tutor in Annapolis; and his son-in-law, Jake.

This listing includes those who have passed July 1, 2020 through July 1, 2021. We care deeply for all members of our college community. If you do not see a name listed above, please contact advancement@sjc.edu so we may honor those individuals.

ST. JOHN'S FOREVER

PLANNED GIFTS ARE A WONDERFUL WAY TO SUPPORT ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE AND ACCOMPLISH YOUR OWN PERSONAL, FINANCIAL, ESTATE-PLANNING, AND PHILANTHROPIC GOALS. WHEN YOU DOCUMENT YOUR BEQUEST INTENTIONS, YOU WILL BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE LEGACY SOCIETY OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, WHICH HONORS THOSE WHO HAVE PROVIDED FOR THE COLLEGE IN SUCH A GENEROUS WAY.

Planned giving strategies give you the opportunity to extend the impact of your gift and receive financial benefits. Our development team can help you make your gift to the college—whether it be a gift that can be used right away or a vehicle that produces lifetime income for you and/or others. Examples include designating gifts of property, life insurance policies, charitable trusts or annuities, and bequest intentions.

To learn more about how to provide for the future of St. John's, please visit sjc.giftplans.org. If you have already included a gift to St. John's in your will or living trust, please notify our office at plannedgiving@sjc.edu.



"I learned that when you see something you value in the world, you need to nurture it—not just for yourself, but so others can benefit from it as well. The college changed me, and I want to be sure that many more students can have that same experience, long into the future."

— Elisabeth Long (A86), Alumni Association Board Member and Class of 1986 Gift Leader

JOIN YOUR CLASS IN GIVING BACK

Do you remember what made your St. John's College experience meaningful? Was it the Program, classmates, and tutors? Perhaps it was the special moments shared around the seminar table, or the freedom to think deeply, debate openly, and learn from one another. Maybe it was the feeling of being part of something much larger than you are—a community of individuals brought together by the common pursuit of deeper understanding.

Like Elisabeth, each year more and more alumni commemorate their St. John's experience through philanthropy—building a strong legacy of giving by Johnnies who care deeply for the future of the college. Alumni give back in a myriad of ways: volunteering as a class chair, supporting a class endowment fund, making a gift in honor of their class, and many more.

VISIT [SJC.EDU/REUNIONGIVING](http://sjc.edu/reuniongiving) TO LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW YOU CAN COMMEMORATE YOUR ST. JOHN'S EXPERIENCE.

> Thank you ...

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Give for the good.

A gift to the Fund for St. John's is a gift for the good of the whole college. Your money will be immediately directed to where the need is the greatest, to benefit students and tutors alike. Gifts to this fund are what allow us to operate at our lower tuition cost and still balance our budget year to year. It's the most efficient way of contributing to all that we are.

TO LEARN MORE

about **THE FUND FOR ST. JOHN'S** and give for the good, visit sjc.edu/annual-fund.



NEW DONATION ADDRESS

In addition to Ben Franklin, the Liberty Bell, and cheesesteaks, Philadelphia is now home to one more claim to fame. It's the new mailing address for donations to St. John's College. (The college is not relocating, just our bank's mailroom.)

Please send any future mail donations to:

St. John's College Advancement
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Philadelphia, PA 19171-5905



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