

CRUSADER

MAGAZINE

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Bergen Catholic Crusaders

Watros Business Center
**BUSINESS IS
BOOMING
AT BC**





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BERGEN CATHOLIC CRUSADER MAGAZINE

is a publication of Bergen Catholic High School, a college preparatory school for young men, grades 9-12. It is published by Christian Brothers (NJ) Institute under the direction of Dr. Brian Mahoney, President.

Upcoming EVENTS

NOVEMBER 2023

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10

6:30 pm
2023 Crusader Gala
The Venetian, Garfield

DECEMBER 2023

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3

10:00 am – 1:00 pm
Grandparents Mass and Brunch
Hoehl Gymnasium

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15

7:00 – 10:00 pm
Parents Association
Cookies & Cocktails
Bergen Catholic Library and Courtyard

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20

6:30 – 9:30 pm
Young Alumni Holiday Party
Bacari Grill, Washington Township

JANUARY 2024

THURSDAY, JANUARY 4

6:00 – 9:00 pm
Careers4Crusaders
Hoehl Gymnasium

TUESDAY, JANUARY 14

6:00 pm
Class Chair Letter Signing
Bacari Grill, Washington Township



Brother Ray Vercruysse celebrates his Golden Jubilee



Unless otherwise noted, please contact **Marge Quinn** at **201-634-4142** for event information, RSVPs and payment.

If you would like to schedule your reunion, please contact Marge Quinn at the Alumni Office, 201-634-4142.

We are celebrating years ending in 3 and 8.

Fall 2023

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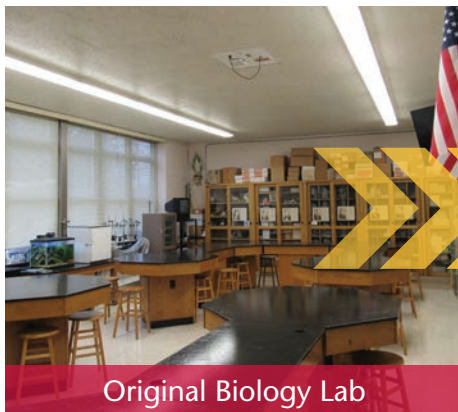
Watros Business Center
Business is Booming at BC

Cover photo by Christian Roche '25

BERGEN CATHOLIC COMMITS TO ITS FUTURE with Renovated Labs

As part of its continued commitment to better the school for generations to come, Bergen Catholic renovated all three science labs on campus, as part of their capital improvements projects over the summers of 2020-2021.

Thanks to a generous donation of over \$100,000 from the Bergen Catholic Alumni Association, current BC students get to enjoy the advanced amenities of state-of-the-art labs, while fulfilling their three-year science requirements.



Original Biology Lab



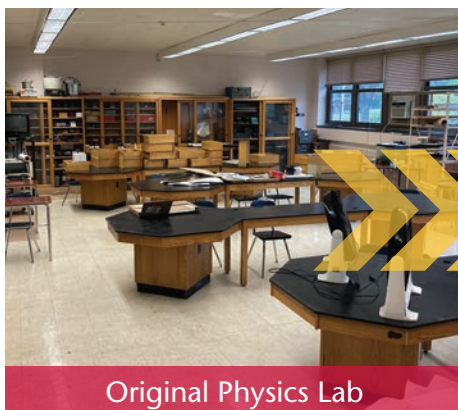
Renovated Biology Lab



Original Chemistry Lab



Renovated Chemistry Lab



Original Physics Lab



Renovated Physics Lab

Message

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Crusader Community,

With great pride, we have relaunched our Crusader Magazine, focusing on campus-wide celebrations, alumni gatherings, and stories that strengthen the Brotherhood. These stories often are rooted in the charism of our founder, Blessed Edmund Rice. The success of students and alumni reflects the perseverance and hard work that has grounded them in a Bergen Catholic education. This magazine also serves as a pathway to improve our communication efforts, ensuring that all school constituencies feel informed and connected. We have a lot to celebrate at Bergen Catholic! I hope you find this magazine valuable and informative.

A significant accomplishment last year was the installation of the Watros Business Center. As you will read in the coming pages, this best-in-class business center offers students opportunities to learn about finance and investing, business law, economics, and entrepreneurship. These experiences and curriculum will help students gain access to some of the best business schools at colleges and universities throughout the country.

Our before and after pictures of campus renovation projects will pleasantly surprise those away from campus. All three science labs and our locker room, field, and track on our lower campus have been renovated. The best is yet to come, so please stay tuned for more exciting facilities changes and ways your support can help transform our campus, creating an exciting place to teach, learn, and gather.

One of the most vital parts of our school is our faculty. Their steadfast commitment to teaching excellence, coupled with the use of technology, creates a vibrant teaching and learning environment for our students. That formula leads to an outstanding college placement program that helps students gain multiple acceptances to top schools, including the Ivy League. In the Class of 2023, 91% of the graduates were awarded a merit-based scholarship; total awards for this class amounted to \$37.2MM. On the pages ahead, I hope you enjoy reading about the success of our students and the colleges they are attending.

As we begin our 2023-2024 school year, we welcome 200 students to the Class of 2027. They join a strong group of upperclassmen eager to introduce them to the Brotherhood and help them strive to become the best versions of themselves.

Thank you for your support, and may God bless you and your family.

Deus Vult!



Brian Mahoney, Ed.D.
President
Bergen Catholic High School



CRUSADER COLLEGE COUNSELING EXPERIENCE

Bergen Catholic's Roadmap to College



Bergen Catholic's interactive and comprehensive approach to college counseling begins in grade 9. Grade level meetings with students are held by experienced counselors to assist students in getting an early start in the college planning process. All students upon entering grade 9 will be assigned both a college counselor and a guidance counselor who will guide them socially, emotionally and educationally through their time as a Bergen Catholic student.

GRADE 9

Activity & Academic resumes are created with the college counseling office to include an interactive document on Naviance that student, parent and counselor can all access. Students begin developing goals to participate in each areas of concentration: academic, athletic or extra-curricular activities, community service based experiences and attending a summer program. Counselors will meet with freshman multiple times throughout grade 9 to ensure all college preparation goals are met.

GRADE 10

Sophomores will continue building an outstanding academic profile that reflects all of their student accolades. Sophomores will be encouraged to start attending college fairs and college campus visits, take PSATs, learn with a BC teacher in an SAT/ACT prep course, participate in City as a Classroom cultural experience, attend a Crusader Mission-based summer trip, and volunteer locally in the community.

GRADE 11

Juniors will take PSAT/ ACT practice tests, take the SAT/ ACT/SAT II, receive counsel on scores, attend Junior parent/student meetings to develop individualized list of schools to apply, participate in AP testing program, attend college open houses, attend the JET tour at BC, College Panel and organized College Fairs.

GRADE 12

Seniors will receive assistance with the college application process: creating, preparing and sending a common and coalition application, assisting with teacher recommendation letter procurement, resume building and essay and supplement completion.

The Crusader College Counseling Experience helps alleviate the stress associated with the college process for all Bergen Catholic students and parents, and helps guide Crusaders to their exciting futures.



Class of 2023 Schools Attending



12 STUDENTS

ATTENDING IVY LEAGUE
SCHOOLS



\$37.2 M

IN MERIT-BASED
SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

Arizona State University
Bates College
Boston College
Brown University
Bucknell University
Cabrini University
Champlain College
Clemson University
Colgate University
Cornell University
College of the Holy Cross
Columbia University
Dartmouth College
Denison University
Dickinson College
Drew University
Fairfield University
Florida Atlantic University
Florida International University
Fordham University
Franklin & Marshall College
George Washington University
Georgetown University
Hamilton College
Harvard University
High Point University

Hillsdale College
Hofstra University
Howard University
Iona University
Johns Hopkins University
Johnson & Wales University
Lafayette College
Leeds Beckett University
Lehigh University
Loyola University Maryland
Morgan State University
Muhlenberg College
New England Conservatory
of Music
New York University
Northeastern University
Northwestern University
Penn State University
Penn State University Park
Presbyterian College
Princeton University
Purdue University
Quinnipiac University
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Rowan University
Rutgers University

Sacred Heart University
Saint Elizabeth University
Santa Clara University
Seton Hall University
Springfield College
St. John's University
State University of New York
Oswego
Stevens Institute of Technology
Stonehill College
Syracuse University
The College of New Jersey
The Ohio State University
Trinity College
Tulane University
United States Naval Academy
United States Naval Academy
Foundation
University of Colorado Boulder
University of Connecticut
University of Florida
University of Glasgow, Scotland
University of Indiana
University of Kentucky
University of Miami
University of Michigan
– Ann Arbor

University of Mississippi
University of New Hampshire
University of North Carolina
at Chapel Hill
University of Notre Dame
University of Pennsylvania
University of Pittsburgh
University of Rhode Island
University of Scranton
University of South Carolina
University of Southern California
University of Tampa
University of Tennessee
University of Wisconsin – Madison
Vanderbilt University
Villanova University
Virginia Tech
Wake Forest University
Washington College
Wilkes University
William and Mary
Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Yale University



WATROS BUSINESS CENTER

BC's New Center for Excellence

For over six decades, Bergen Catholic has helped mentor and launch successful careers for their students and alumni in a plethora of fields including education, law, medicine, athletics, performing arts and business. While over the years Crusaders have been prepared to cultivate future careers in business and finance by taking a business law class, or participating in extracurriculars such as the Stock Market Club, there weren't as many hands-on opportunities for BC students to develop and cultivate business mentorship and networking relationships during their time as students in Oradell. But that all changed in the 2022-2023 school year, with the creation of the state-of-the-art Watros Business Center and the founding of the Finance & Investment Club at Bergen Catholic.



Thanks in part to the generous donations made by Bergen Catholic Class of 2023 alumni parents Donald Watros and his wife Benedetta Casamento, Bergen Catholic has a new home for students interested in pursuing a potential career in business. The beautiful Watros Business Center is located near the McKenna-Lawrence Chapel, closest to the Forest Avenue side of campus. The center accommodates large classroom space, a comfortable lounge area, and a state-of-the-art financial stock ticker which is elevated above the students in the middle of the classroom with updated stock prices and even sports scores.

“We are grateful for the generosity of Benedetta and Don Watros, who were instrumental in helping our vision for a business center for excellence become a reality. We are excited about the state-of-the-art center with modern furniture, breakout areas, and real-time stock ticker,” said Bergen Catholic president Dr. Brian Mahoney. “The Watros Business Center will allow students to excel in business, finance, and entrepreneurship and use the skills they learn to gain admission to top business schools throughout the county.”

The Watros Business Center has quickly emerged as a favorite destination for BC students, not only because of its elite amenities, but because of the designed environment that it was intended to promote. “I would hope that it’s a club and a room where when the students are in it, they feel a sense of excitement studying and being interested in business, and that the environment stimulates them. And that was the goal: the environment, to be different and not just your average classroom,” said co-founder Benedetta Casamento AP ’23.

In conjunction with the creation of the Watros Business Center, the new Finance & Investment Club was established by DJ Watros ’23 at the beginning of the 2022-2023 academic year. The club had interest from over 30 students in its inaugural year of existence, and the Crusaders were visited by a steady stream of guest speakers from the business world, many of which were successful Bergen Catholic alumni, who wanted to give back to their alma mater by helping the next generation of business-centric Crusaders.

“I feel kids may not understand all the networking opportunities that this BC Brotherhood has, and I definitely think a Finance & Investments club expands on it,” said DJ Watros ’23, who served on the club’s founding board

alongside Jack Staff ’23, Andrew Mosco ’23 and Luke Macejka ’23.

Recent Bergen Catholic Hall of Fame inductee Brian Tramontozzi ’90 served as the club’s mentor and helped to set-up guest speakers from the business world in order to help foster networking and mentorship possibilities for the BC students.

“Most of my responsibility has been helping arrange presenters in the financial services space as well as host what will become an annual event for the club – ‘a day on Wall Street,’ which last year involved about a dozen presenters from different disciplines within commercial and investment banking, as well as their first power lunch at Bobby Vans Steakhouse,” said Tramontozzi, who serves as Head of North American Leveraged Finance Capital Markets with JPMorgan Securities Inc.

Each of these additions have helped lay the groundwork for burgeoning business opportunities and academic concentrations at the school. Beginning in the current 2023-2024 school year, Bergen Catholic freshmen have the option to take an “Intro to Business” course throughout the academic trimester, while courses such as AP Economics and Entrepreneurship are offered to seniors.

“I see this center as a competitive advantage for our boys for getting into college, making decisions in college, and then onto their careers by creating a network,” said Casamento. “It allows our boys, the students at Bergen Catholic, to then turn around while they are in college, and give back to BC by participating in the programs that this business center provides.”

Now as a young alum studying business at the University of Miami, DJ Watros reflects back on what these new business additions to Bergen Catholic meant not only to himself and his classmates, but what they may also mean for future Crusaders who will benefit from the school’s enhanced commitment to business.

“There are so many successful people who graduated from Bergen Catholic, but they had to find their own way by going to college and getting their internships. But if BC students could get one step closer, one step earlier, then they can find their success and find what they like to do.”

Thanks to the Watros Family, business is booming at BC.

A Long Chat With **BROTHER BEN MCDONOUGH, CFC**

Bergen Catholic's rich tradition and history is built upon the shoulders of the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers, the religious order that founded and staffed Bergen Catholic since 1955. We honor our past in the present, by taking time to introduce to the Crusader community Brother Ben McDonough, cfc, the Campus Minister at BC:

Tell us about yourself, where you grew up, where you went to school, and do you come from a big family?

I was born in Brooklyn, New York and we moved to Staten Island, New York when I was in first grade. I am the third child of four. I went to Our Lady Star of the Sea School and Monsignor Farrell High School both in Staten Island.

What inspired you to join the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers?

While I was a student at Farrell, I was intrigued by the different personalities of the 15 Brothers who were on staff. Somehow God tugged at my heart and I wanted to do what they were doing. I entered the Christian Brothers with 16 other young men when I graduated in 1974.

What are the blessings and challenges involved in working in an all-boys school environment?

Over the years I have taught grades 6-12 in various schools. I have been Dean of a high school and Principal of an elementary school and a high school. My last teaching experience, other than a brief return here last spring, was in Roxbury, MA sixteen years ago.

One of the hardest things to do was to leave school ministry and do something different. I was asked to work with migrants in Southwest Florida. After nine amazing years there, I returned to NYC to do outreach to the poor and those who minister to them in East Harlem.

As the school's campus minister, how do you help to educate and spread the Good News, while also welcoming others of different faiths at BC?

I have been here at Bergen for a year and involved with Father Sam Monaco in Campus Ministry. We've developed a retreat program for each year and all students have the opportunity to spend a day examining their relationships with God, themselves and others. It has been wonderful to hear from students how they see Edmund Rice and his charism lived out in the faculty, students, staff and

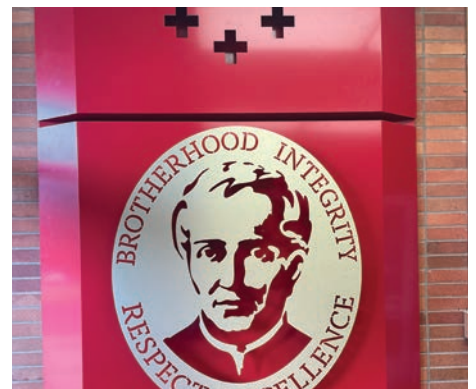




administration here. All of us are called to grow in our relationship with the God we know and understand. I am impressed at the faith I've seen in some of our non-Catholic students. We also help to make our liturgical celebrations prayerful. We work with the Senior Eucharistic Ministers, the lectors and the servers at mass.

So now having been at Bergen Catholic for over a year, what are your thoughts about being a part of this unique BC community?

Being in such an active school has made my head spin. I am not used to all of the activity. I am in awe of the dedicated people who tirelessly mentor and guide these young men. Bergen is an amazing place with such great outreach! May God and Blessed Edmund continue to bless us and our ministry here.



THE EDMUND RICE MEDALLION

BC's Visual Prayer of Art

Bergen Catholic High School has a brand-new piece of artwork that will captivate the Crusader community for generations to come. The work of art is entitled, Edmund Rice Medallion, a tribute to the founder of the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers, the religious order that founded Bergen Catholic. The medallion is located inside the main office entrance to the school and was created by Bergen Catholic art teacher Nedko Bucev, with assistance from his BC AP art students as well.

The medallion is made of brushed gold Aluminum Composite Material (ACM), the same material used on the current facades of the Manhattan skyscrapers. It was cut with a water laser following a computer-generated line. The background is also ACM fabricated and colored with Bergen Catholic's scarlet and red colors. The three crosses on the top and bottom of the backdrop, in addition to their air ducting function, represent two arrows pointing to Blessed Edmund Rice. One from the sky, meant to symbolize following Blessed Edmund Rice's example through our Christian faith, and the lower arrows symbolizing the Earth, and our following Blessed Edmund Rice in our everyday life.

"It is important to mention that this medallion celebrates Edmund Rice and his example of how students pray his name every morning," said Nedko Bucev. "It should be seen as a visual prayer. For this reason, the medallion vision is ethereal and delicate."

"The Edmund Rice Medallion shares with our school community the values of the life of Blessed Edmund Rice, the gifts that he's given to us, and the teachings he has instilled in us. It's an inspiration for all of us to see this medallion and remember what Blessed Edmund Rice has given, as we share our gifts with others," said Bergen Catholic President Dr. Brian Mahoney.

Jim Jacobsen '66

A Crusader Coaching Legend



Spanning a career of over 40 years, Coach Jake Jacobsen has achieved the epitome of success as the winningest coach in the state of New Jersey with 1,203 wins. Coach Jacobsen was honored recently at the Baccalaureate Mass for the Class of 2023. Following is the speech given by Mr. Timothy McElhinney, Principal of Bergen Catholic, discussing all of Coach Jacobsen's accomplishments.

Coach Jim 'Jake' Jacobsen was born and raised in Bergenfield, NJ. As a child, he and his family were parishioners at St. John The Evangelist Parish also located in Bergenfield. Coach Jake is a proud 1966 graduate of Bergen Catholic High School. During his time at Bergen Catholic, he was a four-year member of the varsity track team, a member of the Debate Club as well as a member of the Chess Club. Please note that Coach Jake entered Bergen Catholic in September 1962. At that point, Bergen Catholic was only beginning its eighth year of existence and its oldest graduate was just 21 years old. In 1970, Coach Jake graduated from St. Leo's University. During his time at St. Leo's, he was a member of the school's soccer team, which was an impressive feat since he did not play soccer while a student at Bergen Catholic High School. Coach Jake was voted Class President and Athlete of the Year while a student at

St. Leo's. He later earned a Master's Degree in Language Arts from William Paterson University.

Coach Jake has had a varied and interesting professional career. He helped build the World Trade Center in New York City – working high in the sky on the buildings. Since heights clearly didn't phase him, his next career choice was that of a Sky Marshall, flying on planes to ensure the safety of the passengers. For those who don't know – the Sky Marshall program was created in 1970 by President Richard Nixon in reaction to a series of coordinated 'skyjackings' of planes, which occurred on September 6, 1970. The mission of the Sky Marshall program was to prevent on-flight piracy. Pretty brave stuff on the part of Coach Jake. Coach Jake then taught in a Catholic elementary school for two years, which was no doubt more dangerous than his previous two professions. Shortly after leaving the rough and tumble world of teaching, he began his professional life's work as an Insurance Claims Investigator. Initially, Coach Jake worked in big companies such as Ohio Casualty Insurance Company. However, he eventually opened his own extremely successful company in the insurance world.

Coach Jake began his term as the head coach of the Bergen Catholic High School varsity golf team in 1983 and he continues in that role today. So, Coach Jake has been the Bergen Catholic varsity golf coach for 41 consecutive years. During those 41 years, his teams have amassed an astonishing record of 1,203 wins, 37 losses and one tie. That means his teams have averaged just over 29 wins every season that he has coached — but more impressively his teams have four less total losses (37) than he has years served as the head coach (41).

During his coaching career, his teams have won:

- 39 League Championships
- 14 Non Public A North State Championships
- 6 Non Public A State Championships
- 8 New Jersey State Tournament of Champions victories and
- 33 times the Bergen County Coaches Association has named the Bergen Catholic High School Varsity Golf Team as the 'Team of the Year'

Additionally, just this past season, Coach Jake became the all-time winningest high school coach in the State of New Jersey. Meaning, Coach Jacobsen has more career victories in a single sport than any other coach who has ever coached high school sports in the state of

New Jersey. Yes, he passed Coach Bobby Hurley this past season.

Due to his team's great successes, Coach Jake has won numerous Coach of the Year Awards — however, and most impressively — in 2013, Coach Jake was named the Boys Golf National Coach of the Year by the National High School Coaches Association. Certainly, a most deserving honor.

Coach Jake's players enjoy playing for him. Annually, they play the toughest schedule in North Jersey, on the finest courses and he provides detailed reports about every fairway and green of each course they play on. Coach Jake has also been a leader within the Bergen County Coaches Association ensuring that golf receives the appropriate recognition that it deserves.

While tonight we recognize Coach Jacobsen for his years of service as our golf coach, I would be remiss not to recognize his dedication and commitment as an alum of Bergen Catholic High School. He has been an officer in the Bergen Catholic High School Alumni Association, has served on the Bergen Catholic Golf Outing Committee and was the driving force in creating the Bergen Catholic Hall of Fame. And he can be regularly found in the stands and fields supporting our teams, players and coaches.

Coach Jacobsen is married to his lovely wife Linda and is the proud father of his son Derek.

Ladies and Gentlemen, please help me recognize:

- A 1992 Bergen Catholic High School Hall of Fame Member
- A 2007 Bergen Catholic High School Founder's Award Recipient
- A Corona Laurea Award Recipient for 20 years of Service as a Coach at Bergen Catholic High School
- A Fac Omnia Bene Award Recipient for 30 years of service as a Coach at Bergen Catholic High School

And now for the first time in the history of Bergen Catholic High School, Coach Jim Jacobsen is being presented with the Corona Olivae Award for 40 plus years of service to Bergen Catholic High School as a coach.

Ladies and Gentlemen, a true Bergen Catholic High School legend — Coach Jim 'Jake' Jacobsen."



Billy Armstrong, Bergen Catholic class of '94 and the school's current head varsity basketball coach, says that growing up he always considered himself to be "normal and average." Today, with successful high school, college and professional playing careers behind him, a thriving basketball-focused business, and a coaching career that has seen Bergen Catholic basketball emerge as one of the state's powerhouse programs, the "normal and average" description no longer applies.

Armstrong's playing career began when he tried out, along with 120 classmates, for BC's freshman team. He made the team, but as the "8th man", and believed he wasn't anything special. Dedication and hard work – sometimes up until 2 a.m. doing drills in his driveway – brought marked improvement, and by his junior year he had made the BC varsity team. In his senior season, Armstrong helped lead the Crusaders to league, county and state championships, and was named to All-League, All-County and 1990s Bergen County All-Decade teams.

BILLY ARMSTRONG '94

Trust, Care, and Commitment

As senior year captain of his Davidson College team, Armstrong led the Wildcats to the Southern Conference Championship and the school's first NCAA tournament berth in 12 years. After graduating from Davidson, he enjoyed a six-year professional career in Europe, as well as with the United States Basketball League and the American Basketball Association.

Armstrong lives in Westwood with his wife, Lauren, and his three children: April, Summer Rae and Trey William. They live within walking distance of BC — a nice convenience, given Billy's busy work schedule which also includes his position in the Bergen Catholic Advancement Office. In addition to leading BC's basketball program to incredible success in his coaching tenure: (2 state championships, 3 sectional crowns & 3 Bergen County Jamboree titles), Billy and Lauren operate "Hoop Dreamz", (hoopdreamz.org) and together run a number of camps, academies, and additional training initiatives.

Starting about 19 years ago with one young man in his backyard in Oradell, Armstrong said they now have, "probably 2,000 kids come through the door every year, so we've been very fortunate." In addition to the camps and clinics, they operate AAU club teams and have 10 teams for boys in grades 3-9, as well as four teams for girls in grades 5-8. Add to this the after-school programs they call the "Dream Academy," and Armstrong's semi-private and private training sessions, and it's clear basketball truly is his life. And he says he wouldn't have it any other way.

When asked how attending, and playing for, Bergen Catholic changed him and impacted his life, Armstrong said that first of all, it took him out of his comfort level. "I saw there were a lot of really smart kids and some really high-level athletes. I wanted to be like those guys. By getting out of my comfort

zone and being 'pushed and stretched' it really impacted me," he said. "I also learned it wasn't just about me. At BC I learned when you help somebody, you help yourself."

And how about the people at BC who had the greatest influence on Armstrong's life and career? "Brother Jensen, for sure," Armstrong replied. "He taught me toughness and compassion. He was on dialysis and would still coach us between going back and forth for treatment. He'd sweep the floor, carry the balls, drive the van. He never complained or made excuses. Even after I graduated and went on to Davidson, he helped me get through the calculus requirement. He tutored me, free of charge, for six weeks. I guess he just thought it was the right thing to do."

Another major influence on Armstrong was Chris Donfield, the longtime Bergen Catholic varsity coach. "The number one way he impacted me was in terms of service. He showed me that the first part of being a leader is through service to others. He showed it through the day-to-day caring for his players. He would do anything for us and was always there for us, on and off the court," Armstrong said.

And the "Trust, Care, and Commitment" motto? Armstrong said those are his core values and how he tries to live his life, both inside and outside of coaching. "Nothing works without trust, I don't believe there's enough caring in our society and I always ask my kids to make a commitment to something bigger than themselves," he added.

"When my players play for me and they go on to graduate, it doesn't end there. They don't just come to Bergen Catholic, help us win some basketball games and that's it. Hopefully, it's a relationship I'll have with them forever."

Sounds a little like Brother Jensen, doesn't it?





A Conversation With **JAMES ROGERS '16**

Bergen Catholic has long been a fertile ground for cultivating the leaders of tomorrow, and setting their students on a pathway to success. This crusade for excellence is seen in so many unique BC alumni stories, and we are always extremely proud to share time with our fellow Crusaders, and hear how Bergen Catholic helped make a difference in their lives.

We had the chance to catch up with an exceptional Bergen Catholic alum, James Rogers '16, who shared with us how his personal crusade to help others grew from his time in Oradell:

What year did you graduate from Bergen Catholic?

I graduated Bergen Catholic in 2016.

What schools have you attended? What degrees do you have?

I obtained my Bachelor of Science in Neuroscience and Psychology (conferred with Departmental Honors) from Tulane University in New Orleans, LA, graduating summa cum laude, Phi Beta Kappa, and in the top 1% of my undergraduate class. During my undergraduate studies, I also completed study abroad experiences at the University of Edinburgh (Scotland) and University of Zürich (Switzerland).

How did Bergen Catholic prepare you for college? How did Bergen help with your career choice?

Bergen Catholic provided me with foundational training to become a Catholic gentleman leader. Influential teachers like Mr. Gerald Goldee and Mr. John G. Pawlyk taught me not only rigorous course content in mathematics and foreign language, but also life lessons about what it means to act with character, respect, and humility. Two teachers had a particular impact on my career trajectory and nascent success in academic medicine: Mrs. Diane Trunfio and Mrs. Eileen Holt. Mrs. Trunfio, my senior Advanced Placement Biology teacher, was an inspiring educator who pushed me to my academic limits and encouraged me to pursue a career in medicine. Mrs. Holt, my sophomore English teacher, instilled in me strong reading and writing skills, powerful tools that have shaped my academic career and enabled me to publish twelve peer-reviewed scientific manuscripts in medical journals. Additionally, as a member of the Bergen Catholic Baseball program for four years, I learned valuable lessons in leadership, determination, and grit that have transcended sports and influenced my college studies and career choice.

Where are you currently working/studying?

I am currently completing a two-year Cancer Research Training Award postbaccalaureate research fellowship in the Neuro-Oncology Branch, Center for Cancer Research, National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health, US Department of Health and Human Services under the mentorship of Drs. Terri Armstrong and Mark Gilbert. I have been working with this same clinical research group for the past five years, as a summer intern, special volunteer, and fellow. This July, I will begin pursuing my MD at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine in Nashville, TN.

What is your ultimate goal?

My ultimate goal on completion of medical school is to become a neurosurgeon, more specifically an academic neurosurgical oncologist. Therefore, I aspire to become a physician who surgically removes brain tumors, engages in clinical research, and teaches residents and trainees. I seek to join the fight against brain cancer, improving and prolonging the lives of those with this debilitating disease.

Why have you started volunteering at Bergen Catholic events with the Alumni Association?

I have started volunteering with the Bergen Catholic Alumni Association because I want to see more students graduate and pursue careers in medicine. I am currently serving in a two-year position on the Alumni Association Board as an elected decade representative for 2011-2020. Additionally, I am an Alumni Chair for the Class of 2016 and a member of the Bergen Catholic Hall of Fame nomination committee. I am excited to volunteer for events to give back to a school with such a noble mission of preparing young men to become dynamic global leaders by deepening religious faith, developing academic excellence, and strengthening social consciousness and responsibility. It has been fulfilling to see Bergen Catholic graduates matched with job and networking opportunities. To date, I have organized my Class of 2016 5-year reunion and volunteered at Open Houses and the Careers4Crusaders networking event as a panelist.

Pair of ACL Injuries Crystalize Plan A For Former Princeton Chapter Leader KURT HOLUBA '14

Six years ago former Princeton Tigers football All-American Kurt Holuba had a clear vision of his future. Coming off the best season of his life in 2016, Kurt was locked in on taking his shot at the NFL.

That was his Plan A. Although he would graduate with a degree in Psychology from Princeton, he admits that at that time, Plan B was much less clear.

It was the NFL or bust for the former standout defensive lineman.

Kurt had his own Plan A, but it turns out life had an alternate Plan A for Kurt that wasn't anywhere on his radar.

Looking back, though, where Kurt is headed today – he starts medical school at Columbia University this month – isn't a reach. If you travel back a decade or so there are several examples of Kurt choosing the road less traveled and carving out his own path.

Going to medical school to become a doctor and serve others is just the latest.

The catalyst for the former Princeton Chapter of Uplifting Athletes President to find his lane in life centers around suffering ACL tears to the same knee in back-to-back years. Those soul-crushing injuries quickly erased his Plan A dreams and forced Kurt to dig deep and to explore alternative options to find his true passion and purpose.

"I think (medical school) was definitely NOT on my radar. It was really that final two years at Princeton with my injuries that forced me to really think about my life. I evaluated my

passions and I took stock and evaluated several options. I knew this was it," Kurt said. "Everything happens for a reason. Those injuries were tough but had they not happened to me I would not be on this path.

"I would never have found this passion and purpose aligning had I not suffered those injuries."

The first knee injury came halfway through Kurt's senior year in 2017 against Harvard. All major injuries to athletes are laced with peril and question marks, and Kurt was no different. He had a medical redshirt he could use and he quickly returned to his Plan A and "worked his tail off" that spring and summer with a goal to return to the field of play in 2018.

It was the second ACL tear of the same knee eight days before the first game of his fifth year in 2018 that shook Kurt to his core. And it wasn't just physical. This time it also took a major mental and emotional toll on him.

"It was an extremely dark place. I was going through sessions with a sports psychologist, my fiancé, Kelly, had graduated and was visiting almost every weekend for support. It was extremely difficult. Yeah I was struggling," Kurt said. "Losing football stripped a part of my identity. It's been a process over the past three years to grow and find my way."

In many ways Kurt was suddenly like every other college student who earns a degree and isn't exactly sure what the next best steps are. He had already laid some groundwork over the years that served him well. He sought answers to questions he wasn't even sure were exactly the right ones to be asking.





Before he moved forward too fast, Kurt had to figure out how to take care of himself. He knew staying close to the game, his teammates and friends was vital. He couldn't contribute on the field, but somehow he had to do something as a leader and team captain. So, he started working in practice with the younger defensive linemen to teach them what he had learned. It served others and himself well.

"I'm not gonna lie, in many ways it was pure torture watching those guys go 10-0 and win an Ivy League title on the sidelines. But I was doing all I could do and I was proud of that," Kurt said. "The other captains of that team were part of my support network that really helped me. John Lovett, Mark Fossati and Tom Johnson... Those guys were everything."

"Especially a guy like John. We both had great success on the field and had NFL dreams. And I get shot down right at the goal line. He felt my pain and I could feel that. To this day all of us are close and talk to each other. They brought me along for the ride and it's a bond that will never be broken. The hardship and difficulty of that time made a difference for all of us."

Once football was done, the "what's next" question needed an answer. The injuries afforded Kurt an opportunity to dive deeper into his classwork. Without football dominating his daily schedule, Kurt's academic interests felt re-ignited. That was one part of the equation. Helping and serving others was still a top priority for him, though. And Kurt had a plethora of experiences to use as a guide in making his decision.

Kurt graduated from a faith-based Catholic High School in New Jersey where giving back was mandatory. It was the first glimpse for Kurt into one of his true passions — giving back and helping others. But he needed it to be more personal for it to have real meaning and purpose for him. Simply putting in the time and checking the box didn't work for Kurt.

He became the Princeton Chapter of Uplifting Athletes President his sophomore year in 2015. He formed a connection with the Rare Disease Community and discovered the correlation between what the Tigers program was doing annually and how it was impacting people with rare diseases resonated with him.

His final year of college he contacted a Princeton alumnus, Martin Johnson, who founded the nonprofit Isles in Trenton,

New Jersey. Kurt was offered an internship and learned more about how important serving and helping others is when it came to figuring out what he wanted to do with his life.

Kurt had previously explored selling commercial real estate. It's what his father and brothers do. He spent two summer internships during college in commercial real estate, but realized that wasn't an option he was interested in. The true giving back and helping others element was missing for him.

"There was this continuous growing sense that above all else I wanted to do something in the service of others," Kurt said. "Working with people one-on-one at Isles was amazing, working with Uplifting Athletes and actually seeing that the work I was doing was actually helping people opened my eyes. I could actually see that for the first time. I just couldn't imagine myself doing something where I wasn't giving back."

By the time Kurt graduated from Princeton in the spring of 2019, his decision was made. Everything pointed to the road that most wouldn't choose to travel but was perfect for him — a 10-year commitment and something he never imagined himself doing until life and circumstances stepped in.

When the second knee injury robbed Kurt of his Plan A, it put him at another crossroads. He stayed true to the passion that fuels him. Similar to choosing Princeton coming out of high school, where he chose the Ivy League school calling it a '40-year decision not a four-year decision' despite offers from more than a dozen FBS programs, Kurt knew medicine would check all the boxes he was looking for in making another 40-year decision.

"I jumped into the postbac premed classes right after I graduated and was curious how my newfound academic self would handle that. I wasn't the football guy on campus or team captain anymore. I was just a guy there to study," Kurt said. "It was exactly what I had hoped for. Medicine will provide me the opportunity to not only heal personally, but also to help and serve others."

"I'm obviously nervous and anxious about medical school because this wasn't something that was anywhere on my passion radar at first. But since deciding to embark on this journey, I couldn't imagine myself doing anything else. I'm excited and know all this hard work will pay off in the name of helping people."



FEASTER PARADE

These three brothers, each of them an all-star player at a different position, helped elevate the Muhlenberg football program to national prominence.

Muhlenberg football players often refer to their team as a “brotherhood” because of the strong bonds and sense of togetherness team members enjoy. For three outstanding players in the last decade, it was an actual brotherhood.

When Michael Feaster '22 walked across the field to pick up his plaque as MVP of the Mules' bowl win against Lebanon Valley last November, it ended the “Feaster Era” of Muhlenberg football that began with John Feaster '17 and continued with Frankie Feaster '20.

The three Feaster brothers combined for 11 All-Centennial Conference selections and three All-America nods as Mules. More importantly, they led Muhlenberg to a sparkling 84-22 record, three Centennial Conference (CC) championships, nine postseason berths and nine postseason wins in nine seasons.

“The Feaster family impact has been immense on our program and College,” says Mule head coach Nate Milne.

It all began in late 2012 when John was a senior at Bergen Catholic High School in northern New Jersey. College coaches cycled through the school regularly, and one day Tom Perkovich, then the Mules' offensive coordinator, stopped by and introduced John to Muhlenberg.

“The overnight visit was the key,” recalls John, who currently works in the fashion industry. “After visiting a bunch of different campuses, Muhlenberg felt the most right. You know, you just get that gut feeling that this is the place that you're meant to go and meant to grow at.”

John entered preseason camp as a wide receiver but on the second day was converted to cornerback, a position at which he flourished. A four-year starter, he is the only Mule football player ever named to the All-CC team four straight seasons, finishing his career in the top five in program history in both interceptions (15) and pass breakups (22).

When it came time for Frankie to select a college, his experience attending games to watch his brother play was a big factor. “The Muhlenberg atmosphere engulfed you when you were there,” he says. “I fell in love with the culture, and it was the only school that I really visited.”

The culture, and the opportunity to play two sports, were the big selling points for Frankie. He set numerous school records as a faceoff specialist in lacrosse and reached incredible heights in football after switching from tight end to defensive end late in his freshman season. A two-time All-American and two-time CC defensive player of the year, he set a school record with 34 sacks.

“I guess you can say I didn't have a choice, right?” jokes Michael about his college decision. “No, I always had the opportunity to go wherever I wanted, but at the end of the day, I really didn't have a choice just because of what I'd seen [attending his brothers' games] and what these two guys did for me.”

Michael, who recently accepted a job in capital markets with Vitreous Loan Group, earned All-America honors as a wide receiver in 2021 and finished his career with 176 receptions, the third-most in program history, including a school-record 104 in one season.

Three brothers, three all-stars at three different positions.

Had COVID not canceled his senior season, Frankie — a physical education teacher and assistant football coach at Bergen Catholic and head boys lacrosse coach at Cedar Grove High School — would have played all four of his college years with a brother as a teammate.

“It's something I definitely don't take for granted,” he says. “I cherish those moments every single day. I wish I could go back and play with both of them at the same time.”

As much as the brothers enjoyed playing with each other, there was the inevitable sibling rivalry. When Frankie played tight end, he would on occasion be covered by John in practice.

“It was always a spectacle when it would happen, and everyone's eyes kind of gravitated there, especially if they knew that Frankie was going out for a pass,” says John. “I'll be honest, he caught a few on me, but I also knocked most of them down.”

And although Frankie, as a defensive end, never covered Michael downfield, there were times when Michael was in motion and had to try to block Frankie at the line of scrimmage. “It didn't end well for him, but he let me have it,” says Frankie. “He definitely gave it his all.”

But beyond the sibling rivalry is an incredible sense of pride the Feasters feel about each other, and about a Muhlenberg football program they helped elevate to national stature.

“If I had to do it all over again, I'd do it the exact same way because I truly think Muhlenberg shaped me to who I am today,” says John. “Having my brothers follow in those footsteps is just a really cool experience to know that we share so many of those memories together and we will always have that to fall back on.”

“But now I think I'm known as Frankie and Michael's brother instead of as John.”



DIVANGEL GUERRERO

Living the Ivy League Dream



Divangel Guerrero is living his dream — graduating in the top 10% of the Class of 2023, class speaker, accepting the Bergen Catholic Alumni Association Award and the Scarlet and Gold Award at graduation, and attending Harvard in the fall.

The road has not always been easy but Divangel is the type of young man who will work to overcome any obstacle to achieve his dreams.

Ironically, Harvard wasn't his original choice; Divangel actually didn't have a dream school at all. "I've always just focused on having the opportunity to pursue a good and safe education wherever that may be. If anything, I just wanted an environment that would shape me into a better individual, and allow me to give back to those who have helped me along the way." He says that his mom and sister were more excited to open the acceptance letter than he was, and that he tried to never be stressed out too much over it, knowing that as long as he could attend somewhere, he'd be satisfied. Divangel plans to major in Chemical and Physical Biology or Molecular and Cellular Biology in the hopes of attending medical school in the near future. He'd like to specialize in cardiothoracic surgery.

Throughout his tenure at Bergen Catholic, Divangel was impressed with the dedication of the teachers of Bergen Catholic. All of the teachers who came across his path had a profound impact on him in one way or another. The overall thing he learned from them was how to help others. He acknowledges how teachers work for the common goal of the students and he, too, hopes to one day work to help others. He cites his work with

Mr. Rendine's Honors Research course as an example of how faculty mentor individual students, pushing them academically and inspiring them to grow as productive members of society, all while looking towards their near future goals.

He acknowledges how the entire school — faculty and staff, coaches and teammates, and classmates — gave him the tools that allowed him to be successful and it was his choice to use them to find success. His advice for families considering a Bergen Catholic education is that they will have a community that will support them without hesitation, and their sons will be given all of the tools they need to succeed there and beyond, if he wants to do so. Divangel says that he learned how to be a respectful, disciplined and selfless individual who could lead others. "Simply put, this school helped me achieve my dreams by giving me the tools I needed. Whether it was the academic knowledge, the mentorship, the overall support, or the guidance with the college process I had it all. In reality, they set me up for success. It was just a question of whether or not I wanted to take advantage of those opportunities, or let them go to waste." And he did not let them go to waste. Applying to Harvard, getting in, and getting a full scholarship Divangel will continue to follow his dreams. We wish him much success.



For Bergen Catholic senior Noah Sim '24, his love of baseball began after being taken by his uncle to a Mets game when he was only five years old, but at that moment he immediately fell in love with the scenery, atmosphere and pace of America's past time. But while the game of baseball has given Sim so much throughout his childhood and playing career at Bergen Catholic, the Crusader senior felt that he needed to give back to the game, and become a true ambassador for a sport that means so much, to so many around the globe.



NOAH SIM '24

Crusader Baseball Ambassador

Sim recalled the inherent joy he experienced while first learning to play on a baseball diamond in Little League, and later felt that same sensation after giving back to his local community as a volunteer youth coach. Sim decided he wanted to find a way to give back and have others experience that same level of joy he first associated with the game of baseball, and like any Bergen Catholic student, he was not confined to think on a small level, but instead began to dream big.

"I had always seen that there are community works going on [at BC], like mission trips," said Sim. "I wanted to branch off and do something myself, because I feel like giving back you can do that in many different ways, and I wanted to just start from scratch with a solo project and see what I could accomplish by myself."

Through a connection with a family friend, Sim was able to identify a youth baseball program in need of help

located in Cotuí, Dominican Republic, a city located an hour away from the capital of Santo Domingo.

Sim began to collect donations which quickly amounted to hundreds of pieces of baseball equipment. With his collection in hand, Sim then traveled to the Dominican Republic in the Summer of 2023, donated the collected baseball equipment to the local youth baseball program in Cotuí, and even ran a practice with the team, getting a chance to experience their normal lives firsthand and a forging an even greater passion for service.

"I really feel like I made a connection," said Sim. "It gave me the true experience to live there and what it's like for the baseball players there, and that really touched my heart. It was more fuel to the flame, where it's now becoming an important aspect of my life. I want to continue doing it and expand it across the island and to maybe other places in the world and give back."

Graduation

JUNE 3, 2023

Congratulations Class of 2023!

Christian Abrimian
Ryan Patrick Applin
Christopher Paul Bacchioni
Aidan Nicholas Baglino
Nicholas Phillip Barra
Joseph Christopher Barry
Jason Adam Baumann, Jr.
Tristan Colin Becan
Gabriel Lee Beidleman
Nicholas Antonio Raymond
Bernik

Zachary James Betz
Michael Thomas Biskup
Shant Horen Bolat
Dean Anthony Borghi
Eric Jaxon Broadie
Connor Thomas Byrne
Christian Francis Carti
Logan Tyler Casey
Alexander Christopher Cavegn
Patrick Francis Cece
Harrison Jack Certo
William Marcus Chin
George Evan Christodoulou
Vincent Anthony Cirello, Jr.
Sean Joseph Coll

Jack Louis Comeau
Braden John Connors
George Anthony Conway
Jack Tyler Cooper
Jack Bradley Coursen
Andrew Lee Crane
Thomas Charles Cusick
Jack Lucas de León
Alexander Tyler DeFina
Giacomo Dente
Matthew William Desiderio
Nicholas Anthony DiMeglio
Ryan Krikor Forrest Dockery
Christopher James Donnelly
Luca Joseph Duardo
Jack Daniel Duffy
Michael Philip Esposito, Jr.
Ronan Patrick Flynn
Peter Robert Frattini
Orlando Gabriel Frau
Ian Michael Freemantle
James Joseph Fricchione
Joseph Anthony Gandara
Dylan Kevin Thomas Garrity
Jason Philip Gentilello
Michael William Gentilello

Matthew James Geraghty
Andrew Nicholas Giacomini
Michael John Giovacco
Stephen Robert Giovacco
Daniel Philip Grabstein
Rocco Anthony Gratale
Joseph Lawrence Griffith
Divangel Guerrero
Riley Alexander Halal
Ryan Patrick Henry
Aiden Patrick Hickey
Allan Gabriel Hilton Clarke
James Joseph Hughes
Michael Christopher Ilardi
Calvin Jung
Jared Dayne Junio
Kevin Eunpyo Kang
Dylan Tuapeua Katjomuise
Donald Walter Keating
Timothy Michael Kelly
Andrew Jonathan Kero
Jonathan J. Kim
Marcus Deacon Kim
Justin Leo King
Alexander Paul Klecha
Mikai Kendell Klintman

Ian Lee Knab
Richard Martin Knab II
Collin Bryce Kraus
Andrew Christopher Lama
Geonhun Lee
Jaden Jihwan Lee
Jachwan Lee
Ethan Joseph Leja
Yuanzhe Li
Anthony John Liggio
Jack Parker Lindberg
Sebastian Londono
Oliver Jon Lopez
Ryan Joseph Loughlin
Jack Michael Lynch
Luke Robert Macejka
Daniel A. Makino
Joseph Michael Marinaccio
Justin Richard Martin
Steele Sarantos Matthews
Dylan Gregory Mazzola
Brennan Murphy McAuley
Duncan Scott McClure
Shane Christopher McCusker
Sebastian Juan Mendoza
Malachi James Mercer





Aram Minnetian
Sydir Isiah Mitchell, Jr.
Zachary Owen Moloney
Royer Stanley Moreno-
Cedeño
Conor John Morrin
Andrew Jeffrey Mosco
Christopher James Murphy
Johnathan Paul Nalbandian
Nicholas Joseph Napolitano
Dylan Anthony Natalicchio
Spencer Christopher Neal
Donovan Scott O'Connor
Aidan Regan O'Malley
Michael Grant Odum
Justin Charles Onello
Mateo Vicente Orochena
Joseph Vincenzo Pandorf
James Hunter Pappas
Christopher Lucas Paul
Nicholas Joseph Penza
Gavin Michael Perez
Michael Joseph Petrilli
Ryan James Phelan
Jorge Eloy Pogue
David Cornelius Polli

Carter James Pontone
Donovan James Reid
Richard Michael Reid
Luca Andres Reyes
Cory Walter Robinson, Jr.
Jacob Thomas Rodman
Thomas Ryan Rogers
Constantine Rossakis II
Mark Joseph Ruggiero
Owen Francis Ryan
Ryan Lawrence Rydell
Philip Robert Saint Cyrus
De'Juan Jasir Samuels
Austin John Sargenti
Anthony John Saric
Declan John Schmidt
Gavin Jerome Schornstein
Luciano Vincenzo Sebastiani
Rocco Vincenzo Sebastiani
Adem Rohat Seker
William Chaney Self
Matthew Raymond
Semelsberger
John Casey Sheehan
Daniel Aiden Sheppard
Grailin Ethan Simmons

Adam Ross Sincavage
Andrew George Skoufis
Jason Anthony Smith
Samuel Zimmerman Speiser
Noah Steven Spencer
Michael Gerald Spinelli
John William Staff
Daquan J. Stewart
Saeed Curan St.Fleur
Thomas John Sullivan III
Erich Elias Surovets
Aaron Robert Sylvester
Kyle Joseph Tencza
Gabriel Enrique Tinoco
Javier Omar Torres
Nicholas Adrian Torres
Nikholas Torres
Dominick Joseph Tullo III
Carmelo Franco Velardo
Dhruv Kedar Vengurlekar
James Thomas Verdino
Benjamin Charles Vester
Luke Alexander Vidaic
Nicholas Andrew Viggiano
Jackson Eric Vonderhorst
Aidan Matthew Wallace

Ian Gregory Walls
Ethan Joseph Washburn
Donald William Watros, Jr.
Tate Joseph Wells
Nicholas James Wheaton
Grady James White
Liam Schroeder White
Brandon Robert Woodford
Sean Ryan Woods
John Henry Wright
William Frederick Young
Enzo Yuen
Yoel Kuttiplavil Zachariah
Aiden Connor Zimmer



Graduation

CLASS OF 2023



DEUS VULT!

Graduation Medal Winners

Blessed Edmund Rice Medal – “First in Merit”	Calvin Jung
<i>Br. Edmund Rice is the Founder of the Christian Brothers.</i>	
Br. Alfred X. Keane Medal – “Second in Merit”	James Hunter Pappas
<i>Br. Keane was the second Principal of Bergen Catholic.</i>	
Br. James B. Walsh Medal – Religious Education	Ethan Joseph Washburn
<i>Br. Walsh taught Religion for many years at Bergen Catholic.</i>	
Br. James H. Vaughan Medal – English	Donald Walter Keating
<i>Br. Vaughan, a true gentleman Scholar, taught English for two terms at Bergen Catholic.</i>	
Br. Edward T. Beyer Medal – History	Nicholas Joseph Napolitano
<i>Br. Beyer taught History at Bergen Catholic for forty years (1969-2009)</i>	
Medal for – Physics	Jackson Eric Vonderhorst
Medal for – Chemistry	Yuanzhe Li
Br. Edward Roepke Medal – Biology	Sebastian Juan Mendoza
<i>Br. Roepke was Principal and teacher of Biology at Bergen Catholic.</i>	
Medal for – Calculus	Michael John Giovacco
Thomas Fuchs Medal – Mathematics	Adem Rohat Seker
<i>Mr. Fuchs was a member of the Math Department for forty years (1971-2011).</i>	
Richard D’Orazio Medal – Spanish	Nikholas Torres
<i>A teacher of French, Spanish and Italian, Department Chairperson, leader of trips to Europe and South America, passed away during the 2001-2002 school year.</i>	
Br. Thomas J. Jensen Medal – Latin	Riley Alexander Halal
<i>Br. Jensen was a teacher’s teacher who inspired his students to excel.</i>	
Medal for – Mandarin	Calvin Jung
Medal for – Art	Jack Lucas de León
James J. Obrotka Medal – Music	Kevin Eunpyo Kang
<i>Mr. Obrotka was an early faculty member who composed and wrote the school’s Alma Mater.</i>	
Medal for – Technology	William Frederick Young
John Courtney Medal – Christian Service	Constantine Rossakis II
<i>Mr. Courtney was an early faculty member who founded the Crusaders for Christian Action.</i>	
Victor Liggio Medal – Outstanding Scholar – Athlete	Joseph Christopher Barry
<i>Mr. Liggio was a Business teacher, Baseball coach, and Dean at Bergen Catholic.</i>	
The Jack McGovern Memorial Award	Jack Louis Comeau
The Bergen Catholic Alumni Association Award	Divangel Guerrero
The Bergen Catholic Alumni Association Award	Marcus Deacon Kim
The Scarlet and Gold Award	Nicholas Antonio Raymond Bernik
	Divangel Guerrero
	Jaehwan Lee
	Andrew Jeffrey Mosco
	David Cornelius Polli
	Thomas Ryan Rogers
	John William Staff

2023 Hall of Fame

MARCH 26, 2023



2023 Hall of Fame Honorees

The 2023 Bergen Catholic Hall of Fame Reception was held on March 26, 2023 at Seasons, Washington Township, N.J. This year's group of 7 distinguished inductees, along with our first team induction, were joined by over 400 family members, administration, fellow alumni, Hall of Famers and friends for a most enjoyable evening of fellowship and fond remembrances.

Joining the 210 previous members of the Hall of Fame are:

Michael Bowe '84 (Contributor)
John Crowley '85 (Special)
Anthony DeBellis '85 (Coach)
Thomas Kearney '87 (Athlete)
Daniel Kurpick (Contributor)
Michael McGovern '88 (Athlete)
Brian Tramontozzi '90 (Contributor)
1991 National Champion Mock Trial Team

Many thanks are extended to our Hall of Fame Leadership Team: **Mike Ference '87, Greg Tramontozzi '88 and J.R. Meloro '91.** Master of Ceremonies, **Jimmy Canton '85, Hall of Fame '19,** kept the evening well-paced throughout. The speeches were alternately touching, hilarious, inspiring, and fondly reminiscent of times much enjoyed and long remembered.



Once again, the night showcased the diversity of the Bergen Catholic family, with its many unique perspectives, talents, and experiences. Pervasive throughout was the awareness that our individual and collective B.C. experiences enrich our lives, while forming us into the persons we've each become over time.

Thank you to our generous 2023 Hall of Fame Sponsors:

Award Sponsors

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Carmen & Gene Pagnozzi
Joe Patterson '60
Aleta & Rich Taylor '70

Cocktail Hour Sponsor

Stacy & Michael Bowe '84

Printing Sponsor

Joanne & Jim Dowling '64

Faculty & Staff Sponsors

BC Finance & Investment Club
Stacy & Michael Bowe '84
Christine & Gerard Maron '87
Tony Rocchio '76
Gerri & Rich Scanlon '99

Congratulations to our newest Hall of Fame members! Continue to represent your Bergen Catholic heritage proudly in all that you do.



Michael Bowe '84

Mike is a go-to trial lawyer in major litigations across the country. His landmark RICO cases against several powerful hedge funds have been credited with sparking the largest insider trading investigation and conviction in history and have been featured on "60

Minutes," in documentaries and in best-selling books, and in business school classes. Mike relishes representing the less powerful against the most powerful and is particularly proud of his civil rights case against New Jersey and the world's largest asset manager on behalf of New Jersey's only African-American founded and run asset manager, his successful *pro bono* representation of United States Marine Major Jason Brezler, and his regular and varied *pro bono* representations of single and expectant mothers in the Bronx. Mike is a long-time supporter of Bergen Catholic and other organizations that laid the essential foundation for his life; his local parish, where he has served as Trustee; the Tunnel to Towers Foundation; and the selfless work of the Sisters of Charity and Sisters of Life. Mike could have done none of this without the unconditional love and support of his parents, Mary and Jim Bowe, his amazing wife, Stacy, and his impressive son and great friend, Patrick, an NYU freshman who always inspires Mike to be the best person he can be.



John Crowley '85

John is the Executive Chairman & Founder of Amicus Therapeutics, a global biotechnology company. John's involvement with biotechnology stems from the 1998 diagnosis of two of his children with Pompe disease — a severe and often fatal neuromuscular disorder.

John and his family have been profiled numerous times on the front page of *The Wall Street Journal*. The major motion picture, "Extraordinary Measures," starring Brendan Fraser and Harrison Ford, is inspired by the Crowley family journey. John is the author of a personal memoir: "Chasing Miracles: The Crowley Family Journey of

Strength, Hope, and Joy." After attending the United States Naval Academy, he graduated with a B.S. in Foreign Service from Georgetown University and earned a J.D. from the University of Notre Dame Law School and an M.B.A. from the Harvard Business School. John served as a commissioned intelligence officer in the U.S. Navy Reserve from 2005-2016, assigned to the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC), and is a veteran of the global war on terrorism. In 2011, he served as the Deputy J-2 (Deputy Chief of Intelligence) for an elite special operations task force in Afghanistan.

The Crowley family was the recipient of the 2011 Family Exemplar Award from the University of Notre Dame. He is the former National Chairman of the Make-A-Wish Foundation of America. He was awarded a Doctor of Laws Degree (Honoris Causa) from the University of Notre Dame, where he delivered the commencement address to the Class of 2020. He serves as a member of the Board of Directors of the United States Naval Academy Foundation. John and his wife Aileen have been married for 32 years and their children are John, Jr. (28), Megan (26) and Patrick (24). They have one grandchild, Stella Aileen.



Anthony DeBellis '85

Tony is a 1985 graduate of Bergen Catholic. Subsequently, he completed studies at Pace University, Lubin School of Business, in just three years. Upon graduation from college, Tony began his career in the insurance industry. At the same

time, he began coaching football at BC at the age of 20 years old. As a player and a coach, Tony has been a part of over 300 varsity football victories with the Crusaders. He has also been part of 13 State Championships and eight #1 ranked football teams in NJ (and counting). Tony was the offensive coordinator in the 1990's where for the decade the program went 99 and 10, highlighted by the 1998 Crusaders which went 12-0, scored a school record of 599 points, and was named the Team of the Century by the Bergen Record. Moving through the 2000's, Coach DeBellis helped on both sides of the ball before settling in as the defensive coordinator in 2014. As the head of this unit he led the Bergen Catholic defense to a 12-0 record in 2021. Tony started his own insurance agency in 1999. His office is in Hackensack, NJ. Tony and his wife Tracy (maiden name Campanile, his high school sweetheart), have been active supporters of BC for over 40 years. Tony and Tracy started the NJ Freedom AAU girls club basketball organization in 2001. Tony had the honor and privilege of coaching his three daughters, Dakota, Hunter, and Colby, throughout their basketball careers.

2023 Hall of Fame



Thomas Kearney '87

Tom was a proud member of the 1986 Parochial A North State Championship football team. In his senior year, Tom set then existing school records for most yards rushing in a single game (281 yards) and in a single season (1,517

yards) while amassing 98 tackles as a line-backer. That year, Tom earned 1st Team All-County, 1st Team All-Groups All-State and Honorable Mention All-American recognition as a running back and participated in the New Jersey North/South football game. Tom also earned four varsity letters as a sprinter on the B.C. track team and competed in the New Jersey State Meet of Champions in both his junior (200 meter dash) and senior (100 meter dash) years. Tom was awarded the Br. Eugene McKenna alumni scholarship as the "graduating senior who best typifies the Bergen Catholic man." Although his collegiate football career was curtailed by injury, Tom played for the 1989 Ivy League championship football team at Yale. A career public servant, Tom has worked as an Assistant Prosecutor in Bergen County and as an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the District of New Jersey. He and his wife Christy currently reside in Bergen County with their four children.

for VWV Construction and worked for them for four years before joining the Bergen Catholic maintenance team in 1990. He quickly joined in on many projects for Bergen Catholic and was promoted to the Director of Facilities in 1998. As the Director of Facilities, he has worked with four Bergen Catholic Presidents and five Bergen Catholic Principals, making Bergen Catholic the place it is today. Some of the projects that Dan has worked on are: three turf fields, the Saingas Building, three Science Labs, the BC TV Studio, the Robotics Lab, the Business Lab, the Student Success Center, remodeling the Main Office, and many other projects. His current position has enabled him to build the Facilities Department to become second to none. Dan has two sons, Danny and Jason, and resides in Hawthorne, New Jersey with his life partner Cathy.



Michael McGovern '88

Michael is a 1988 graduate of Bergen Catholic. During his time at BC, Mike was a three-year starter as quarterback on the varsity football team and played four years on the varsity golf team. As a junior, Mike was a key member of the Crusader

team that won the 1986 Parochial A State Football Championship. As a senior, he helped lead the Crusaders to the NNJIL League Championship and a return trip to the Parochial A State Finals. Mike completed his senior season holding the career records for passing yards, passing touchdowns, pass completions and rushing touchdowns by a quarterback. In 1987, he was named 1st Team All-State Parochial, 1st Team All-League, and 3rd Team All-County. In golf, BC won the 1988 New Jersey State Tournament of Champions in Mike's senior season. BC also won the BCGL Championship, the NNJIL Championship and the NJ District I Championship all four years that he played. Mike was selected 1st Team All-Bergen County as a senior and 2nd Team All-Bergen County as a junior. He went on to play Division I golf at Lehigh University.



Daniel Lawrence Kurpick

Dan is number five of seven children and was raised in Prospect Park, NJ. Dan graduated from Manchester Regional High School in 1983 and he was already working with family members in the construction field. He knew at an early age

that he wanted to work with his hands. He turned down a trade school scholarship to continue working with Passaic Valley Construction. Dan became the foreman

Congratulations!



Brian Tramontozzi '90

Brian's path to Bergen Catholic started ten years before his birth when his father Anthony was a freshman at Villanova University. Anthony was so impressed by the maturity and preparedness of his roommate, a BC graduate, he decided if

he had sons that they would attend Bergen Catholic. Brian entered BC in 1986 and embraced his time as a Crusader. His senior year, despite his 5'7" frame and 160 lb. weight, Brian was starting center for Bergen Catholic's varsity football team and never once played against anyone his size. He was head of the school's peer tutoring program and was also named "Volunteer of the Year" at Spectrum for Living in Closter. Brian graduated Georgetown University in 1994. He played for Georgetown's nationally-ranked Division I rugby team and was a member of both the Potomac Rugby Union and Eastern Collegiate Division all-star teams. Brian has spent his entire career with JPMorgan Securities Inc. and is presently Head of North American Leveraged Finance Capital Markets. He has remained active with Bergen Catholic since graduation as he has always felt an obligation to give back to the school that made him into the person he is today. He is a Class Chair, an Alumni Advisor to the Bergen Catholic Finance and Investment Club, and an annual presenter at Careers4Crusaders. He is an active member of the Crusader Touchdown Club and is a fixture at BC athletic events. He also serves as an advisor to numerous Bergen Catholic graduates looking for career paths in investment banking. Brian resides in Harrison, NY and Fly Creek, NY. He is the proud husband of Kathleen and father of Luke, Jack, Ava and William.



1991 National Champion Mock Trial Team

The student leaders of Bergen Catholic's 1991 Mock Trial Team were Glen McGorty, Attorney Captain; Chris DeCarlo, Attorney; and Michael Olivo, Attorney. The team also included six student witnesses as it initially competed in the Bergen County, Northern Regional and New Jersey State Competitions, all of which were won by Bergen Catholic. All team preparation occurred under the motivation and guidance of the Attorney Coach, Dominick Preziosi '67, and the Teacher Coach, Babetta Ferris. Preparations began in September with team tryouts, intense analysis of a legal case created by the New Jersey State Bar Foundation, lawyer and witness role assignment followed by the team lawyers developing prosecution and defense lines of questioning, as well as witnesses interpreting their story, their character and strategy development. Initially meeting a few times a week to prepare for the Bergen County and Northern Regional Competitions, the team later met seven days a week as it prepared for the New Jersey State Competition. This was followed by a six-week "full court press" on a complex civil case for the National Mock Trial Competition in New Orleans. At the National Mock Trial Competition, the team won four trials against other state champions over the course of two days. In the fifth and final trial of the competition, Bergen Catholic dominated the Texas state champions to win the National Mock Trial Championship, delivering Bergen Catholic its first national title in any competitive endeavor.

To make a Hall of Fame Nomination, please submit an application to the Bergen Catholic Hall of Fame Leadership Committee at BergenCatholicHallofFame@gmail.com



SAVE THE DATE

Hall of Fame

SUNDAY MARCH 24, 2024
THE VENETIAN

Class of 1972

50 Year Reunion Weekend

October 21-22, 2022

The Class of 1972 50 Year Reunion attendees shared stories as they attended the special weekend! The weekend was a great success with perfect weather, student guided tours of the MUCH-improved school facilities, and memories shared. The festivities included a 42-27 win over St. Peter's Prep in Crusader stadium (with yearbook photos and congratulations displayed on the LED scoreboard!) and closed with a dinner reception at Bacari Grill; it was clear that the "Brotherhood" stood strong 50 years later.

The Reunion Committee reminded that Class frequently throughout the planning process that they have much to be thankful for: the education, memories and values instilled in them during their time at Bergen Catholic and set a goal to pay it forward so that future Crusaders have the opportunities they had. The Class proudly committed to secure a Class gift to support further investment in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math). With the demand for a Bergen Catholic education being strong and hope for admission to top-tier colleges and universities, the Class of 1972 understands and wants to support Bergen Catholic's investment in science laboratories and technology.

Thank you to the Class of 1972 Reunion Committee and fellow classmates; to date they have raised \$33,375 in support of our STEM Program!





Class of 1973

50 Year Reunion Weekend

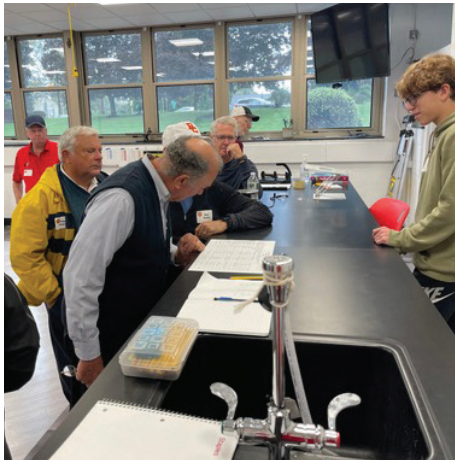
September 29–30, 2023

The Class of 1973 50 Year Reunion set a record for most attendees, with 60 proud Crusaders coming back to celebrate with one another on their reunion weekend in September 2023.

Their weekend began with a great dinner on Friday night at Biaggio's, followed by a jam-packed Saturday back on campus in Oradell. Current BC students led tours of the Bergen Catholic campus for the Class of 1973, complete with visits to BC's renovated or newly-created classrooms. The alumni then got the chance to watch their alma mater's top-ranked football team in New Jersey defeat DePaul Catholic 31-13 in a great matchup at Crusader Stadium. Complete with that gameday experience, was a fitting tribute to the Class of 1973 on the stadium video scoreboard, showcasing pictures of their times in Oradell on full display for the large crowd to enjoy.

After celebrating Mass together, the Class of 1973 later enjoyed themselves at The Glen Rock Inn, and it felt like old times again for these close Crusaders. A member of the Class of 1973, Gerry Daniello, reflected on the entire weekend when he said, "It was absolutely fantastic to see everyone and catch up, even if so briefly. All the mannerisms are the same, the laughter is the same, the expressions are the same, the body language is the same...all with a little less hair and a few more pounds. If I closed my eyes, I felt like it was 1973 and nothing changed. Cannot thank you all enough for bringing me back 50 years. I always said Bergen Catholic was a unique place and last night confirmed it."





Alumni Events



Parents Association Casino Night

June 2, 2023

The Bergen Catholic Parents Association hosted Casino Night on Friday, June 2, at the Graycliff in Moonachie. Those who attended enhanced their skills in the games of craps, roulette and black jack. With their “winnings” they had the chance to win some great prizes! Thank you to all who sponsored the event and came out for a night of fun! A special thank you to Frances Santos, CP’25 for all of your hard work in planning this event!



Golf and Cigar Night

May 25, 2023

On May 25, 2023, alumni gathered at Paramus Golf Course & Taverna on the Green for golf, dinner and cigars. Thank you to Brendan Scott '87, co-owner of Ferio Tego cigars, for your support of Cigar Night.

Thank you to our committee for making this such a successful event!

Chairmen:

Bob Fortsch '73
Mike Panos '72

Committee:

Larry Carpentier '83	Gerard Rizzo '07
Brian Langan '83	Frank Rizzo '06
Gerard Quinn '76	Frank Rizzo '79

Thank you to all who attended! Please spread the word to all your cigar smoking friends and plan to attend our next event in May of 2024!



Alumni Events

52nd Annual Brother Burns Golf Classic

June 12, 2023

We are grateful to all who participated in The 52nd Annual Bergen Catholic Golf Classic on June 12th, held in memory of Br. Martin P. Burns. More than 135 golfers, made up of alumni, parents, teachers, coaches, and friends of Bergen Catholic, battled the wind and the challenging course at Arcola Country Club. In the end, the rain held off and the following golfers walked away with prizes and bragging rights for the year:

Champions:

Kevin Collins, John Brett, Joe Colletta, Kevin Attilio

Low Gross:

Dan FitzPatrick, Cris Hartigan, Paul Dunphey, Mike McGovern

2nd Net:

Greg Schwake, Mike O'Neill, Chris Lama, Dan Driscoll

2nd Gross:

Dave Monahan, Chris Paoella, Eric McKenna, Ralph Ruggero

3rd Net:

Joe DeVita, Tom DeVita, John DeVita, Keith Meyers

4th Net:

Greg Larsen, Rob Morris, Noel Naughton, Mike Gallucci

Longest Drive:

Hole #5 Pat Kenny

Longest Drive:

Hole #17 Matt Thiffault

Closest to the Hole:

Hole #2 Noel Naughton 19' 2"

Closest to the Hole:

Hole #7 Dan FitzPatrick 10' 4"

Closest to the Hole:

Hole #11 Dave Monahan 12' 3"

Closest to the Hole:

Hole #14 Chris Foerch 3' 9"

Golf Experience Raffle:

Taking the prize for the most exciting win of the day — our very own Pete Coleman, Assistant Principal for Academics and Discipline (and Assistant BC Golf Coach), won this year's Golf Experience Raffle. Pete will choose between Pebble Beach and SW Ireland for an unforgettable golf experience. Congratulations to Pete and his new best friends!





2023 BERGEN CATHOLIC GOLF CLASSIC

MONDAY, JUNE 12



Brotherhood



Hoboken on Tap

June 8, 2023

On Thursday, June 8, the Bergen Catholic Alumni Association hosted its Hoboken On Tap at Union Hall. This annual event gives alumni in the NYC/Hoboken area a chance to reconnect and strengthen the brotherhood in a casual evening. Thank you to all who came out and we look forward to our next event in the fall!



Alumni Association

Fellow Crusaders,

Our Alumni Association is stronger than ever and we are proud of the efforts our brotherhood has made in expanding our reach to benefit and support our 12,000+ brothers. We have successfully made great progress in providing support to each of our alum both professionally and personally. The new year ahead will bring many new opportunities to support the mission of Bergen Catholic High School and our dedication to furthering our brotherhood through value added initiatives.

I challenge each and every one of you to get involved as we enter the 2023-2024 school year. We have many committees for career advancement, professional networking, faith based learning as well as many fun activities planned for the year ahead. Bergen Catholic has helped shape each of us and played an integral part of who we are today. I ask you to remain connected and share in the brotherhood that keeps us strong. To that end, volunteers are needed to help us further our mission. We can use help with Admissions Support, mentoring, Careers4Crusaders, and the many events your Alumni Association organizes throughout the year.

Contact me anytime for more information on how to get involved. Similarly, remember that as your Alumni Association we are here to support you as well, so please feel free to reach out if there is an area where you think we can grow.

Deus Vult!

John W. McDermott '99

President, Bergen Catholic High School Alumni Association
bergencatholicalumboard@gmail.com



John W. McDermott '99



Careers4Crusaders

On May 18, 2023, the Bergen Catholic Alumni Association hosted its annual Careers4Crusaders professional networking event at the Hoehl Gymnasium. The purpose of Careers4Crusaders is to foster a sense of community, provide valuable support, and serve as a powerful tool for personal and professional development for our younger alumni. The event brought together alumni volunteers representing various industries such as healthcare, finance, accounting, cybersecurity, engineering, marketing, performing arts, insurance, construction, public service, and law enforcement.

One of the primary goals of Careers4Crusaders is to facilitate networking opportunities for students, enabling them to establish connections that can greatly benefit their future endeavors. Alumni mentors have the opportunity to introduce students to industry professionals, potential internships, and job shadowing opportunities, providing them with a head start in building their professional network. For instance, Kishan Sahu, a BC Class of 2021 alum, found participating in Careers4Crusaders to be an incredibly rewarding experience, as he was able to secure an internship in his desired career field. These connections formed through the event can be immensely valuable, opening doors to internships, mentorships, and future career opportunities.

The success of Careers4Crusaders has led to the planning of our next event, scheduled for January 4, 2024. We invite alumni who are interested in volunteering to contribute to the event's success. If you would like to participate as a volunteer, please email us at bergencatholicalumniboard@gmail.com. Your involvement as an alumni mentor can make a significant impact on the lives of current students, offering guidance, insights, and opportunities that can shape their educational and professional journeys.

At Careers4Crusaders, we believe in the power of alumni connections and the importance of providing a platform for meaningful interactions between experienced graduates and aspiring students. By joining forces and leveraging the expertise and experiences of our alumni, we can create a supportive network that empowers younger generations to achieve their goals and aspirations. Together, we can make a lasting difference in the lives of our BC community and contribute to a brighter future for all.



Crusader Giving Day

May 5, 2023

To all the members of the Crusader Family who came out to support Bergen Catholic on May 5, 2023
#CRUSADERGIVINGDAY23 — we thank you!

With 1,083 gifts and over \$579,000+ raised — **TOGETHER WE DID IT!**



Enormous Thank You to Our Challenge & Match Donors

Milestone Challenge Donors

Susan & Henry Gomez '81 • Scott Robinson '92 & Family • Jim Van Tassell '90 & Family
Patricia & Joseph Donlan '64 • Mr. & Mrs. James R. Fisher '73 • and Maryellyn & Thad Miller '69
all challenged us to reach important milestones throughout the day,
and YOU helped unlock their generous gifts!

\$100,000 Challenge Donor

This extraordinarily generous, anonymous, current family helped rally our entire community to unlock this special and unprecedented Crusader Giving Day gift when we reached 1,000 gifts!

Faculty & Staff Match Donor

Board Member, Jim Dowling '64 committed to matching all Faculty and Staff donations.
This year, with the incentive to double their impact, they thoughtfully raised
a record breaking \$10,000!

Advancement

A letter to the BC Family,

I am honored and excited to have started my term as Vice President of Advancement for Bergen Catholic High School in July 2023. I am very touched by the warm and encouraging welcome I have received. Thank you!

I have worked in advancement in NJ for close to three decades, and have experience in all areas of fundraising, alumni relations and communications. I have heard so many great things about BC from my husband of 24 years, an alum from the Class of 1989 and many of our close friends who are also alumni. It is wonderful to have the opportunity to bring my skills and relationships to BC and to be playing a part in sustaining the school's strong future.

There are so many reasons to be excited about all that is going on at Bergen Catholic! Our exceptional educational, experiential and career pathway opportunities, as well as the new business and science environments in which to learn, there is no wonder why BC's enrollment continues to grow, and our students and alumni continue to thrive. These things, along with such strong BC traditions are the foundations on which we will continue to build.

In addition to leading a great Advancement team, many of whom I am sure you hear from regularly, with invitations to great events, programs, fundraisers and ways to participate, I will work to expand Bergen Catholic's opportunities in areas like major and planned gifts, grants, corporate and foundation sponsorships and growing BC's Endowment — these will help secure Bergen Catholic for a long, strong future. In upcoming issues of the Crusader Magazine, I look forward to talking in more depth and sharing information about these exciting opportunities.

With so much going on, from the annual Crusader Gala, Careers4Crusaders and open houses, to athletic events, music performances, golf outings, cigar nights and regional receptions all over the country — some in person and some online — I look forward to meeting you soon. Of course, if you would like to talk with me, I hope you reach out!

Thank you for all you do for Bergen Catholic!



Karen DiMaria

Vice President of Advancement
Bergen Catholic High School



Karen DiMaria

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THE MASKED SINGER

CRUSADER GALA

11.10.23 | THE VENETIAN

MISSION STATEMENTS

Bergen Catholic High School

Bergen Catholic High School is a diverse, Catholic community, which prepares young men to become dynamic global leaders by deepening religious faith, developing academic excellence and strengthening social consciousness and responsibility in accordance with the Essential Elements of an Edmund Rice Christian Brother Education.

Office of Advancement

The Office of Advancement, guided by the spirit of Blessed Edmund Rice, seeks to build growing, sustainable relationships with people and organizations who care about the mission of Bergen Catholic High School and to spread the "good news" of Bergen Catholic to all who care to hear it, embrace it and support it with their time, talent, treasure and prayer.



**BERGEN CATHOLIC
HIGH SCHOOL**
CATHOLIC. GENTLEMEN. LEADERS.