Alumni Find Reward at Esopus

Campus Ministry: Fostering Faithful Men

President Donnelly '71 to Retire in June
A Message from
President Barry Donnelly ’71

Dear Friends,

Last month, as you know, I wrote to you regarding my retirement at the end of the school year. Since that time, I have received an overwhelming number of texts, emails and social media messages. I have tried to answer them all, but if I have missed any, please know how much I have appreciated the support you have shown. It has been both humbling, and, of course, more than a little bittersweet. I look forward to all the wonderful things that lie ahead in the remaining four months of the school year.

With that said, welcome to the latest issue of Knightlines and its special theme of service.

In “To Teach as Jesus Did”, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops speaks of the importance of service in Catholic schools: “Since the Gospel spirit is one of peace, brotherhood, love, patience and respect for others, a school rooted in these principles ought to explore ways to deepen its students’ concern for service and the achievement of social justice. Young people can learn together of human needs and begin to respond to the obligation of Christian service through action.”

An awareness of the importance of community and the need to serve God by serving others is one of the most essential parts of our mission as a Catholic school. This issue highlights the success of some of our campus ministry programs, as well as the continued commitment to service that is embraced by our alumni in exemplifying the ideals of “the faithful man” in their own communities.

God bless you,

President Barry Donnelly ’71

THE SERVICE ISSUE

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On the cover: During SJR’s “No Shave November,” Josh Rodriguez ’19 prepares a meal with his classmates at the St. John’s Soup Kitchen in Newark on the Class of 2019’s Senior Service Day.
**Karchich Field Dedication**
On October 6, the turf field at Robert J. Dinallo Stadium was formally dedicated and named in honor of another SJR legend: Tony Karchich, longtime football coach and athletic director.

The dedication took place prior to kick-off between the Green Knights and Bergen Catholic and featured a proclamation from the town of Montvale, addresses from the Karchich family, the Dinallo family and BC AD Jack McGovern as well as an unveiling of the new logo on the field by former players from the 1987 and 2013 state championship football teams.

President Barry Donnelly ’71 concluded the ceremony by calling attention to Karchich’s integrity: “In Tony's favorite catchphrase, 'Find a way,' he challenged his players to reject excuses and get the job done by giving their very best effort, leaving everything they have in the classroom and on the field.”

Additionally, the formation of the Anthony J. Karchich Leadership Award was announced. An endowed scholarship will be given to a rising senior who serves as a leader among his peers by taking initiative, offering no excuses, embracing responsibility and always doing things the right way. The first recipient of the Leadership Award was announced. An endowed scholarship will be given to a rising senior who serves as a leader among his peers by taking initiative, offering no excuses, embracing responsibility and always doing things the right way. The first recipient of the Leadership Award was Connor Grieco ’19.

**Leadership Award**
The award was Connor Grieco ’19.

**The celebration hasn’t stopped since the whole family partied on the field at Mercedes-Benz Stadium. The twins enjoyed a duck boat parade through Boston, a trip to ESPN studios and a guest appearance at the Grammys. The brothers spent time on the red carpet with former First Lady Michelle Obama and Jada Pinkett Smith before Devin joined teammate Julian Edelman to present the Grammy Award for Best Pop Duo to Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper for their song, Shallow.**

**Ski Club Returns**
Once a popular club at St. Joe’s, the Ski Club had been non-existent for almost two decades until Assistant Principal Steve Roberts organized trips this winter. The reemergence of the Ski Club began when Andrew Van Duren ’20 suggested the idea.

“I jumped at the chance to serve as moderator and hit the slopes,” said Roberts. “I want to see the club grow, and eventually have a ski team of our own here at SJR.”

**Green Knights Judge STEAM Fairs**
In November, Giorgio Scalone ’10 and friends Carmelo De Jesus and Frank Roman began moderating the dormant WSJR TV studio. The studio had been managed by the late Brian Hoffman, SJR’s director of technology who passed away in September.

Scalone gathered interested students and set about reimagining the studio to better reach an audience on YouTube. Previously, the studio had been used for morning broadcasts to SJR students.

“KnightCast has been a great experience thus far,” said Scalone. “Students are learning how to operate industry-standard equipment while working together to create video content. It has been an absolute pleasure returning as an alum to teach the students how to film, edit and construct video content.”

The new format enables students to produce and edit video interviews and highlights from events into short, social media friendly segments.

“KnightCast has enabled me to learn the many intricacies involved in broadcasting and enjoy doing so,” explained Michael Koning ’22.

**SJR reaches Sweet 16 at NJ Academic Championships**
The Green Knights team of Nick Steinhauser ’22, Owen Mitsinikos ’19, Ryan Collins ’20, Chris Flug ’20, Sebastian McChesney ’20 and Thomas Mendoza ’22 reached the Sweet 16 of the North Jersey Academic Championships (NorJAC) in December.

The tournament took place at Leonia High School with more than 70 teams participating. Categories in the Jeopardy!-style format included History and Geography, Science, Math, English Literature and Language, Sports, Potpourri and Arts and Entertainment.

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**Green Knights Judge STEAM Fairs**
Science Department Chair Joanne Cavera has led a host of Green Knights in serving as judges for STEAM Fairs at local elementary schools. In February, students visited St. John’s in Hillsdale for their interscholastic competition.

In March, Green Knights will serve as honorary judges at Our Lady of Mercy in Park Ridge, Academy of Our Lady in Glen Rock and St. Elizabeth School in Wyckoff.

At the fairs, the judges weigh the practical application and scientific viability of the projects.

“it was great being back to my old school and seeing just how innovative the current students were in thinking about the future,” said Victor Tomaszewski, an alum of Academy of Our Lady in Glen Rock.
**Gallimore ’82 Named 2019 Graduation Speaker**

Saint Joseph Regional is thrilled to welcome Dr. Alec Gallimore ’82 back to campus this June as the keynote speaker for the school’s 54th commencement exercises.

Gallimore currently serves as the Robert J. Vlasic Dean of Engineering at the University of Michigan. “We are delighted to have Dr. Gallimore return to SJR from Ann Arbor,” said President Donnelly ’71. “As our STEAM program grows and students opt for classes in robotics and engineering, having someone of his stature in the field deliver the commencement address is a genuine honor.”

Gallimore is the third speaker from the Class of 1982, following classmates Karl Kilb (2010) and Michael Mendillo (2013). “It is an honor to have been asked to serve as the 2019 commencement speaker,” said Gallimore. “I had a wonderful time at SJR and was well prepared for the rigor that followed—whether that was designing ion thrusters for travel to Mars or leading one of the top engineering colleges in the country. I look forward to sharing my journey and (hopefully) inspiring the students.”

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**SJR Launches Digital Networking Platform**

Saint Joseph Regional High School is furthering its investment in supporting strong alumni relations through the addition of a new platform powered by Graduway. The new platform, “SJR Connect” (sjrconnect.com), will create a private online community where St. Joseph Regional alumni can receive institutional support, network with peers, obtain professional development and more. St. Joe’s is confident this platform will have a positive impact on the success and growth of its alumni.

“We are thrilled to offer our alumni - young and not as young - the opportunity to connect with one another through this platform,” said Scott Donnelly, Director of Advancement/Alumni Relations. “SJR Connect provides our alumni with the ability to network with their fellow Green Knights in a meaningful way, to share news and local events and to catch up with lost brothers along the way.”

Graduway provides alumni networking platforms to schools and universities that wish to offer their past and present students with a way to connect and enjoy exclusive professional opportunities within a trusted and official destination.

SJR is pleased to join the ranks with other secondary schools in northern New Jersey who are already using the Graduway platform, such as the Delbarton School, Montclair Kimberley Academy, Seton Hall Prep and St. Benedict’s Prep.

**Internships Bring Real World Experience**

As SJR continues to provide opportunity for its students, its students continue to take advantage of those opportunities. This year was no exception.

In January, seven seniors formally concluded their first semester internships including two at Multi-Phase Electrical, owned by Dan Kelly ’87.

“My internship taught me more about my intended field that I would ever learn in a classroom,” explained Aaron Jarmusch ’19, who worked at the Globar Company. “The experience also taught me the value of time management and what the work environment is like on a daily basis. The best part was the people. Each person took time to explain to me and show me everything that I would need to know.”

Alumni interested in hosting an intern through the program should contact Jennifer Entity (P ’23) via email at jerryj@me.com.

**Spitaletta ‘11 Stars in National Tour of Something Rotten!**

Rich Spitaletta ‘11 is starring in the national tour of Something Rotten! In January, President Donnelly caught up with him after a show in Sarasota, FL. Check out rottenbroadway.com for tickets in your area.

**Athletic Hall of Fame Class of 2019 to be Inducted in May**

On May 4, Saint Joseph Regional High School will recognize former student-athletes for their outstanding contributions on the field for the Green Knights with the inaugural class of the school’s Athletic Hall of Fame.

The first class will consist of five student-athletes, two teams, one contributor and a husband/wife coaching duo—each nominated through an online portal and confirmed by a committee of current and former Athletic and Advancement Office staff.

“Given the athletic achievements of our school, the creation of the Athletic Hall of Fame is long overdue,” said President Donnelly. “The committee did a terrific job of selecting exceptional honorees.”

The outstanding athletes include John Inman ’05, Damian Logan ’96, Kevin Mendillo ’80, Cooper Rege ’97 and Joe Scott ’99.

“St. Joe’s is a home to us all, and, given the tremendous history of the Green Knights on the court, it is a privilege to be inducted,” said Inman.

The 1989 track and field team, named “Team of the Century” by The Record, and 1984 baseball team, which captured the program’s first-ever county championship, will also be honored.

Judy Corker, long-time PA announcer and school nurse will be recognized as a Contributor.

Frank and Barbara Horan will be inducted as outstanding Coaches for their successes with the hockey program in the late 70s and early 80s.

The Class of 2019 will be honored at an ESPYs-style awards ceremony in Inserna Theater. In addition, current SJR Hall of Famers will be honored for their contributions to the SJR athletic programs including Brother William Cushing, Flaherty, Tony Karcich, David Lehninski ’92, Devin and Jason McCourt 05, Bob Murphy, Peg Prendergast AP ’72, ’74, ’78, Bill Weidmann ’68 and the 1989 hockey team.

Tickets and sponsor opportunities online at sjrnj.org/ahof.

**Inductee Category Hall of Fame Highlights**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inductee</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Hall of Fame Highlights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Inman ’05</td>
<td>Athlete</td>
<td>Leading scorer for basketball (1,299), two-time First Team All County, 2005 tambouze title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damian Logan ’96</td>
<td>Athlete</td>
<td>Three-time state, four-time region and four-time district champ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kevin Mendillo ’80</td>
<td>Athlete</td>
<td>First Team All-State honors in football, led 1979 defense (41 points allowed - school record)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cooper Rege ’97</td>
<td>Athlete</td>
<td>First Team All County in football and track, 1995 (11-0) and 1996 (10-1) state titles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joe Scott ’99</td>
<td>Athlete</td>
<td>State champ QB, two-year starter in basketball, two-time First Team All County In baseball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank &amp; Barbara Horan</td>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>Winnimg hockey coaches (1,249-29-5, 801), four league titles, two overall state titles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judy Corker</td>
<td>Contributor</td>
<td>Long time school range and assistant for baseball, basketball, football and wrestling</td>
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<tr>
<td>1989 Track &amp; Field Team</td>
<td></td>
<td>Named “Team of the Century” by The Record, set national record in Shot Put Relay</td>
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<tr>
<td>1984 Baseball Team</td>
<td></td>
<td>First county title in program history, overcame heart attack to head coach Greg Carnley</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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FEATURED FACULTY

MRS. MARYELLEN GRILLO
STEAM COORDINATOR

EDUCATION: B.F.A., School of Visual Arts, Illustration

BIOGRAPHY: Born in the Bronx, Grillo previously taught at the Academy of the Holy Angels and at St. Joseph Academy in Bogota. A long-time art teacher, she created the STEAM class at SJR for freshmen and sophomores.

PHILOSOPHY: “I have put an emphasis on cross-curricular projects and activities. I am a firm believer that art is an avenue to engaging students and allowing them to make connections across all subject areas.”

CHALLENGES: “Creating the curriculum from scratch for STEAM I and II was an obvious challenge. Reacting and adapting the first-year course certainly makes for a new adventure every day.”

FROSH VS. SOPH: “The freshmen definitely picked up certain things more quickly during the first semester, particularly with Voice Threads. With that said, for next year, I’ll keep most of the STEAM I curriculum the same, but alter STEAM II slightly since the rising sophomores will all have the same STEAM background.”

QUOTEABLE: “Arts Education is a big part of 21st Century thinking and it can be incorporated into anything, including math. It can provide information about where we came from and how that has shaped our current place in the world.”

HOBBIES: Knitting and baking (specialty: Linzer tarts)

YEARS AT SJR: 11

Grillo lives in Bogota with her husband. The couple has two grown children.

Class of 2019 Flooded with Early Acceptances, Scholarships

A new year brings new opportunity and the Saint Joseph Regional Class of 2019 is no exception. As early acceptances continue to roll in, Green Knights are being afforded new opportunities at top tier colleges and universities on a daily basis.

Through January, the senior class had received acceptances to more than 65 different schools, including Amherst College, Boston College, the College of the Holy Cross, Georgia Institute of Technology, Harvard University, the University of Notre Dame, the United States Military Academy, Villanova University, the University of Virginia and the College of William and Mary. While Green Knights are seeing their hard work pay dividends with admittance to top institutions, they’ve also earned more than $7.7 million in scholarships for their successes in the classroom, in their community and in the field of play. In fact, over the past five years, more than 82% of all graduates receive at least one scholarship offer.

“It is always rewarding to see the hard work of our students and their counselors pay off with early acceptances to outstanding colleges and universities,” said Principal Michael Bruno ’05. “It is, and will continue to be, a hallmark of the SJR experience. Parents invest in SJR knowing that in four years that investment will pay off with acceptances and scholarships to top tier schools.”

Margaret Sullivan, SJR’s EdTech Specialist, wears a number of different hats at SJR. Perhaps most notably, she works with teachers and students to ensure a successful implementation of the school’s 1:1 Chromebook program.

Recently, Sullivan, who is a longtime volunteer with WiredSafety—the world’s first online safety, education and support group—was interviewed by Dyknow, a leader in classroom management software:

How long has St. Joseph Regional had a student device program and what were the reasons that you moved to one?

We are in our fourth year of our 1:1 Chromebook program. In the past, teachers would schedule time in the computer lab for their students, but found moving to the lab disrupted the flow of lessons. We needed a way to bring the technology to the students rather than the students to the technology. This affordable, teacher-managed device would best benefit our students when used daily in the classroom alongside other traditional resources. The Chromebook combines the functionality of a laptop with the accessibility of the Cloud. The management console allows teachers to control what students can access on their devices and gives them the opportunity to share apps and maintain the focus on learning while lessening outside distractions. The program also helps to increase student understanding, encourage collaboration, and accommodate different learning styles.

How do you interact and get feedback from teachers regarding the technology they are using in their classrooms?

I am available for students and teachers in the school’s Media Center every day. Many teachers see me in person while others email questions and concerns.

How do you support teachers so they can maximize the use of technology?

Every teacher is as different as the level of comfort when using technology. Finding the right tools is the key; one size does not fit all, and no two teachers need to use technology in the same way.

Do you have advice for teachers that find devices distracting in their classrooms?

Student devices are distractions so using tools like Dyknow and the Chrome management console make it possible to maintain focus. Talk to the EdTech specialist, speak with other teachers, ask the students themselves. Use these tools for good, not just “gotcha!” Remember, EdTech is only one tool in a teacher’s bag of tricks.
Barry Donnelly ’71, the first-ever president of Saint Joseph Regional High School, will retire from that position at the conclusion of the current academic year.

Donnelly began his tenure at SJR on January 3, 1977, when he was hired by Brother Peter Russell, C.F.X. as a part-time teacher and bookstore manager. The following year, he became a full-time faculty member and, in 1979, was appointed the school’s business manager, a position he held for twenty-one years. In 2000, he was named the school’s Assistant Principal for Academics before becoming the first alum to be named principal in 2007. After nine years in that role, he became the school’s first president in 2016. In all, he has completed more than forty-two years of service to St. Joe’s, helping to build the futures of more than three-quarters of the Green Knight population.

“It has been an honor and a privilege to have been able to serve a place that has been my home, either as a student or a faculty member, for the better part of my life. I will certainly miss it,” reflected Donnelly.

After graduating from Boston College in 1975, Donnelly has served in more capacities than anyone else in SJR school history including as a student, alum, parent (sons Scott ’02, Chris ’05), administrator, coach, board member and, through it all, a teacher.

“I am one of the many people who have been extremely fortunate to have worked with Barry during his tenure at our school,” said Principal Michael Bruno ’05. “His astounding professionalism, deep-rooted faith, love of St. Joe’s and insatiable work ethic have enabled him to impact SJR in remarkable ways. He will be truly missed.”

In announcing his retirement, Donnelly noted that the coming years are critically important ones as the school embarks on another self-study in preparation for Middle States re-accreditation in the fall of 2021, and develops a new long-term Strategic Plan.

“There are also some major renovations to our facilities that will necessitate careful planning and advancement endeavors. For all of those things to happen successfully, SJR will need stable leadership that will guide our school through these initiatives and beyond.”

The Archdiocese of Newark is conducting a national search for SJR’s next president. Members of the school community will make up the majority of the search committee, which will also include Deputy Superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese John O’Neil.

Mr. Donnelly was inducted into the SJR Hall of Fame in 1993 and selected as an Archdiocesan Outstanding Educator in 1996; later that same year, he received the Theodore James Ryken Award for service to Catholic education from the Xaverian Brothers.

In addition to writing for pleasure, he has had articles published in several professional journals including The English Journal, The Armchair Detective, High School Today and the NJ Council of Teachers of English Journal. He and his wife of 38 years, Jane, reside in Ramsey.

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A Culture of Service
Fostering the Futures of Faithful Men

When Saint Joseph Regional developed its strategic plan in 2015, one of the pillars was the expansion of the school’s campus ministry program. By any measure the progress has been significant in terms of active service.

The most substantial area of growth is in the uptick in volunteerism from the student body as a whole. Director of Campus Ministry Joe LoGiudice’s goal is not simply to expect students to give back, but to foster a culture of service throughout the hallways.

“ Serving your community has become a hallmark of being an SJR student, a faithful man,” said LoGiudice.

The school calendar is filled with initiatives designed to encourage community interaction, faith-based learning and personal growth.

“Since coming to SJR, I’ve learned to look for opportunities to help in my community,” said Anthony Panissidi ’20. “It’s about accepting the responsibility that comes with being faithful men.”

In addition to off-campus class retreats, students have opportunities to volunteer with fellow Green Knights.

“Our goal is to make service opportunities more accessible to our student body, especially our younger students who do not drive and rely on their parents to engage them in campus ministry activities,” explained LoGiudice.

To that end, several school-sponsored initiatives enable all students to participate. Athletic programs have also gotten into the mix with by supporting organizations as a team, including a commitment to participate in the Tackle Sickle Cell 5K, benefitting the charity of Devin and Jason McCourtly ’05.

“It was good to do and good to see my friends do it alongside me,” said Vahn Friday ’21, who volunteered with football teammates at the Community Food Bank of New Jersey. “And it was actually a lot of fun as we packed up food for summer programs in the community.”

By far the largest school-sponsored activity is the Covenant House Sleep Out. Taking place in the fall, the event saw 170 students (more than thirty-three percent of the student body) sleep outside in the school courtyard.

SJR’s Sleep Out was the largest by a high school in the United States! “The hardest part is getting through the next day,” explained Dominick Mas ’21. “But that’s the reality for many of our peers.”

But it’s worth it as students come away with a greater understanding of the challenges others face on a daily basis.

“The Sleep Out taught me to respect people for what they have, to appreciate what I have and to do what I can to help others,” said Joe Lombardo ’20.

The event wasn’t always so large. Just seven years ago, at the first Sleep Out, only twenty-five students participated.

In addition to the continued growth of existing programs such Adopt-A-Grandparent, food drives and even Christmas caroling, SJR plans to expand the programming even further.

LoGiudice is planning to use the gift of a 10-passenger van from the Class of 1973 to support more regular initiatives.

He intends to offer multiple after-school service opportunities per week to enable students to volunteer in the community through after-school programs at Camp Acorn and Oasis-A Shelter for Women and Children.

On a larger scale, SJR’s summer mission trip program has grown from one to three options. 2019 will see excursions to Buffalo (Young Neighbors in Action), to Appalachia (Nazareth Farms) and, internationally, to Mexico (Université de Mariste). More info on page 22.

“In Chicago, the people were so happy to be able to use their community center after our work; it was incredibly rewarding,” said Matt Salmon ’19.

Additionally, more than five dozen Green Knights volunteer each summer at the Mid-Hudson Camps at Esopus during July and August.

As student service continues to grow, SJR has begun recognize those that go above and beyond by honoring them for their commitment to volunteerism.

Ninety-seven students were recognized at SJR’s year-end awards ceremony for completing twenty or more hours during the school year. Of that group, thirty-three earned the St. Joseph the Worker Award with more than one hundred hours served.

Additionally, the importance of serving one’s community in the college admissions process cannot be overlooked.

“When colleges emphasize the GPA as well as SAT/ACT scores, the importance of the student’s overall resume remains significant, especially community service/volunteering,” said Guidance Counselor Arlene DiFiore. “Serving with an organization for an extended period, taking responsibility and showing leadership is often the best way for a student to catch the eye of an admissions counselor.”

A recent study by Interactive Education Systems Design found that 68% of college admissions officers stated that service has a positive impact on a student’s acceptance with more than half stating that community service was an important factor in the decision making process at their college or university.

“My experience on mission trips over the past three summers absolutely led to my receiving a scholarship offer to Ohio State,” said Justin Pyle ’19.

The mutual benefits of creating a culture of service are obvious. In addition to the greater good, the young men of Saint Joseph Regional are building their own futures.
The Saint Joseph Regional High School Class of 2019 embraced the Second Annual Senior Day of Service in a huge way, with more than 100 members of the class, along with eight faculty/parent chaperones, completing 433 hours of community service on Tuesday, November 20. Students traveled to five different locations, including The St. Ann’s and St. John’s Soup Kitchens in Newark, The Community Food Bank of New Jersey in Hillside, Habitat for Humanity in Paterson, and the Father English Center in Paterson. Some stacked shelves and unloaded donations of food in anticipation of Thanksgiving. Others served luncheon meals at soup kitchens. Still others painted a house, raked leaves and moved hundreds of pounds of dirt and gravel for construction at two different houses awaiting families and nearing completion in Paterson.

President Barry Donnelly ’71 was among the faculty and staff members that accompanied the seniors. “It was both a humbling and amazing experience,” Donnelly said. “To realize that just fifteen minutes away from our school there is a city full of people who live lives so different from ours. It really opens your eyes to all the blessings we have received.”

The day began with a keynote address from Billy Ward ’94, who spoke to the students about making the most of each day and being aware of their surroundings and the struggles of those around them. After the address, the students headed to their service location for the remainder of the school day.

“The圣约瑟夫地区高中高一届的2019届学生在第二年度年度高级日服务中以巨大的方式，超过100名成员的学生，以及八名教员/家长护送者，完成了433小时的社区服务，于周二，11月20日。学生们前往五个不同的地点，包括圣安德鲁和圣约翰的施粥所，新泽西州的山景城，帕特森的社区食品银行，帕特森的蓝屋社区服务。有些人堆叠货架并卸载食物，以备感恩节。其他人则在施粥所提供午餐。还有一些人则为等待家庭和接近完成的两座房子粉刷房屋，耙树叶，移动数百磅的泥土和砾石。

普雷西顿的主任巴里·唐尼利 ’71随同学生的护送者。他说：“这是既谦逊又令人惊叹的体验。”唐尼利说。“意识到离我们的学校只有十五分钟的地方，有一个城市里的人生活的姿态与我们如此不同。这真的打开了你的眼睛，让你注意到我们受到的祝福。”

这一天以比利·沃德 ’94的主旨演讲开始，他向学生们讲述了如何充分利用每一天，并让他们意识到他们周围的环境和他们的周围人的困难。

唐尼利说：“要意识到，尽管我们离学校只有十五分钟的地方，却有一个城市里的人生活的姿态与我们如此不同。这真的打开了你的眼睛，让你注意到我们受到的祝福。”
Each summer, dozens of Green Knights make the seventy-mile trip north to volunteer at the Mid-Hudson Valley Camps at the Marist Brothers Center at Esopus. Brother John Dunning has coordinated the effort since he arrived on campus in 2000 and every year he finds willing volunteers to help staff the summer schedule, including two dozen alumni who return year after year.

So what keeps them coming back while their peers are spending hard-earned vacation days traveling with friends and family?

For some, the answer is simple: "Seeing the happiness on the faces of the campers," explained Craig Babcock ’11, who has been a regular at Young Adult camp in August since his senior year at SJR. For others, it’s more complex. "It is hard to describe. We don’t go to camp just to say we helped out in some way; we go to be reminded of what life is all about," explained Paul Costabile ’05. Perhaps it’s best to consider the banner that hangs in the Hall of Honor at Esopus and reads, "Looking from the outside in, you can never understand it. Standing on the inside looking out, you can never explain it."

The Mid-Hudson Summer Camps consist of eight camps that are almost entirely volunteer-run and benefit disabled and disadvantaged people from all walks of life. Kids I (ages 4-14), Kids II (15-30), Young Adult (30-45) and Adult (45+) are all designed for people with special needs. Sacred Heart Camp has been run for more than 40 years, giving a rare vacation opportunity for children from some of the least affluent communities in the Bronx. Camp Angels serves a similar population. Sister Pat’s Camp provides respite for children battling cancer.

"The camps serve families that have such a great need. The kids need your help and their parents need your help," said Norm Myatt, a teacher at SJR for the past ten years who has volunteered a week with the kitchen crew the past three summers. "The students who volunteer each year bring patience, humor and compassion to the wonderful service they do. All of them ought to get double stars in heaven."

Almost everyone makes his first trip to camp at the invitation of Brother John, who currently serves as the guidance counselor for the freshmen class at SJR. "How does one say ‘no’ to Brother John?" asked former teacher Bob Mackie, who has volunteered each summer for the past 13 years.

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Saying yes sometimes entails a leap of faith.

Shane McMorrow ’07, for one, remembers being initially apprehensive. "I was unfamiliar with camps, but a couple of friends were able to go the same week, so I decided to give it a shot," said McMorrow. "Looking back, I was definitely a bit scared to go up and volunteer in an environment that I had no experience with."

An Assistant VP at the Mechanical Contractors Association (MCA) of New York, he is now a camp director and is looking forward to his fifteenth summer at Kids I.

"I enjoy working with the younger campers," McMorrow said. "You get to watch many of the kids experience different things for the first time. Whether it's kickball, riding in a golf cart or swimming, it's truly a joy to help put together what is often their favorite week of the whole year."

Scott Donnelly ’02 had a similar experience, attending Kids II for the first time last year. "Throughout the week, I kept hearing campers, screaming 'this is the best day ever!' There aren’t too many opportunities to help someone enjoy their best day ever several times in one week!"

It is that opportunity that got Tom Murphy ’15, now a senior at Elon University, hooked from Day One. "After my first week, they were looking for volunteers to help later in the summer. I texted my mom right away ‘could I do another week?’ It just felt right.”

Murphy, who believes his time at camp led him to major in special education, spent the entire summer of 2018 at Esopus, serving in a number of roles from counselor to kitchen crew to head of maintenance.

"I never feel like I’m serving people; it doesn’t feel like work," he explained.

While Murphy is a fixture at many camps, most volunteers find one that suits them best and make it a point to clear the calendar each year.

"Same time, next year," said Bob Mackie, the head chef of the Sacred Heart camp. "The camaraderie is the best part of Esopus. A 51-week absence means nothing; you pick up where you left off.”

“I’ve done the Adult Camp every year," said Vincent Schiavone ’12. "It’s a great group and I’ve gotten really comfortable, I’ve fallen in love with it.”

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Patrick Kohn '16 has a similar sentiment, albeit at a different camp. "Kids I is Esopus for me. I love that the young campers have so much energy. By the end of the week, I'm completely exhausted, on my last bit of sleep, and I truly love it."

Camp is not, however, for the faint of heart.

"My first time, I had arrived early and was settling in, waiting for the buses to arrive," recalled Murphy. "One of the group leaders saw me and said 'hey, I need you to help me change a diaper.' So I followed and did what I could to help. I was 16, just finished sophomore year at SJR, I had never changed a diaper. When we finished, she said 'thanks for helping, what's your name?' and we're friends to this day."

It is striking to see the level of commitment from young people. Students are literally carrying campers from their wheelchairs to the shower to bathe them without hesitation. They simply recognize the job in front of them and do it.

"The Marist Brothers stress the importance of service and completing every task—whether making a bed, washing a pot or tending to a camper—to the best of one's ability," said Mackie. "Everybody responds to the dignity of doing seemingly small things well and they find serving others tremendously rewarding."

Many campers require constant attention, especially without their parents for a week. For some, camp is sensory overload. It can be a lot to deal with and drama becomes part of the routine. On the first night, all counselors are given a binder with notes on their campers including allergies, medications, level of independence, likes and dislikes—all to ensure the safety and happiness of each individual.

Campers are divided up into small groups and counselors are assigned accordingly. In addition to smaller activities each day, the whole camp gathers for meals and larger activities such as swimming and dancing.

A counselor must be all things: friend, lifeguard, coach, teacher, negotiator, therapist, waiter, caretaker, cook.

But that leads to some moments of levity as well.

"One of my friends volunteered and, on just his second day, we were all in the pool and his camper took my friend's phone and threw it in the deep end," McMorrow remembered with a laugh.

One of everyone’s favorite activities—Wet Down—needs to be seen to be believed. One night after dinner, the whole camp watches in amazement as a parade of lights and sirens descends upon the quiet drive of Esopus. Fire trucks—nearly twenty in all—from the surrounding towns, parade past the campers, stop on the lawn and blast water on to what has to be the biggest Slip 'N Slide in Ulster County.

"In 2017, I was put with a new group and, over the course of the week, I really connected with one of the campers. We'd never met before, but just found that we were on the same page all week. When Wet Down came around, we literally spent two hours just going back and forth and loving every minute of it," recalled Murphy.

Despite the challenges, there are not many who volunteer for just a single summer, and don't think about coming back.

"Yes, it is hard. But it is also is fun and rewarding. It is an experience that leaves a deep impression. And so, there are many reasons why students and alums return year after year."

"When I think of SJR, I think of the faithful man, and what is a faithful man without service?" said Babcock. "I come back because that is what being a faithful man is all about."

"I can see the difference that I'm making," explained Murphy. "But it’s not just one-sided. I also can see the impact that the campers make on me as well."

Brother John sums it up best: "For many, volunteering at Esopus has been an opportunity to keep life and core values in perspective. The sense of community they become a part of is very real and life giving. For some, it is a sense of church. For all, it is Esopus, it is home.”
INSPIRING SUSTAINABILITY

DR. MARK WAGNER ’77 recently spent spring break rebuilding tropical fruit farm in the Florida Keys with his student volunteers.

Wagner (left, gray shirt) is the director of the Binienda Center for Civic Engagement at Worcester State University. For the past four years, he has led a group of students to work with Growing Hope, an initiative whose mission is to revitalize and showcase the history of Grimal Grove.

Grimal Grove is a unique garden full of tropical fruits that fell into disrepair in the early 2000s.

“Our goal is to help restore the grove and to offer the community a truly unique edible park, community arts and education center, and epicenter for self-sufficiency in the Florida Keys,” explained Wagner.

Wagner’s students work with Growing Hope and gain real-world experience as well as an understanding of sustainable living. He believes the students become more aware of the challenges faced in the aquifer of the Keys—especially in terms of food and water sustainability—by living it and helping out on site.

For his part, Wagner serves as a “tour guide,” but enjoys getting his hands dirty as well. “We’re planting trees and putting up fences to help preserve the natural habitat,” explained Wagner. “But I also love to travel and teaching the students how to keep things running smoothly on the road is a great joy for me as an educator.”

The group finds time to have fun on the excursion as well including a snorkeling outing at nearby Looe Key. This year, the group also took a detour to the Mote Marine Laboratory’s Elizabeth Moore International Center for Coral Reef Research & Restoration.

A COMMITMENT TO OTHERS

ALUMNI WHO VOLUNTEER, SERVE AND INSPIRE

Favorite SJR Memory: “Many great memories, including our 35th reunion, but I do vividly remember Brother Talbot’s boys beating Essex Catholic, 5-3, in soccer in a state semi-final.”

After forty years as an environmental engineer, RAY DEVER ’68 answered a call to service as a deacon in the Diocese of St. Petersburg (FL).

While Dever’s faith was always an important part of his life, “the call to serve helped steer me to my first profession, environmental engineering.”

He graduated from Brown University before earning master’s degrees from CalTech and Princeton University. Education complete (for the moment), he embarked a lengthy engineering career, but remained active in his church community and was eventually encouraged by others to serve as a deacon.

After earning yet another master’s degree, this time in theology from St. Leo’s University, Dever was ordained in 2009.

Deacons are ordained to three-fold service: to the Word, to the altar and to charity. This entails preaching and teaching in parish programs, assisting with masses and presiding over baptisms and funeral services and, lastly, serving their communities.

Dever has worked tirelessly to bring mental health support to his parish and worked with the Catholic Relief Service Helping Hands to package thousands of meals for overseas distribution. Still, it is the individual support he provides to those in need that Dever finds impactful.

“The most fulfilling aspect of my ministry by far is any instance where I can support and accompany any individual who has serious struggles in their life. It is humbling to be present for someone who has lost a loved one and to help them find some peace and hope.”

In addition, Dever has extended his ministry to Catholic families with LGBTQ children, which is an outgrowth of his own family’s experience and his writing on this subject.

“My wife and I hear from Catholic families from across the US who are struggling with this issue, and it has been a blessing to be able support them.”

Favorite SJR Memory: “I distinctly remember our class receiving communion in our hands for the first time from Brother Peter and Father Theobald after the Second Vatican Council. It was a profoundly moving experience and helped demystify my faith and to make it a more personal, lived faith of service.”
SERVING WITH PRIDE

For TJ CALECA ‘05, ProudtLiving, a real estate firm based in East Orange, has always been more than just a business.

Caleca founded the company in 2010 and describes it as “a vehicle that gives me and my team access to thousands of people and an opportunity to impact those people in a positive way.”

The company has undertaken a number of community-driven initiatives including a $10,000 “Pay It Forward” Scholarship to Bloomfield College, a Holiday Coat/Toy Drive and a Thanksgiving Turkey Drive that benefits its own tenants. In an effort to help young people prepare for school, ProudtLiving gives away 2,000 backpacks each summer to local elementary school students.

Like many alumni, Caleca looks back on his time at SJR as vital to his formation as a member of the community.

“The things that stand out aren’t the obvious moments. It isn’t the mascot or colors, the rivalries, the bagel shop or the curriculum. It was my teammates and coaches, classmates and teachers, who ultimately created my experience. I believe we are the sum of our life’s experiences and I firmly believe that impacting another life comes down to simply deciding to do so.”

Caleca’s mission remains to have a positive impact on the “path” of others. He has, to put it simply, decided to make a difference in the lives of others.

“Even the slightest change of course to someone’s trajectory could make all the difference in the world for them, their future, and the futures of those that will one day influence them.”

Every year on Valentine’s Day, Callahan’s is “blessed and honored” to give back and donate lunch to those less fortunate.

“Valentine’s Day is about loving and being there for the people who mean the most to you,” explained owner DAN DEMIGLIO ’01.

“But we tend forget about the ones who are struggling to just make it to the next day.”

This year DeMiglio and his staff spent the day at a homeless shelter in Hackensack, handing out their famous hot dogs and sandwiches to more than 130 residents.

“I am grateful to bring love to the ones who need it; the more you give, the more you’re rewarded,” said DeMiglio. “To put smiles on the faces of others is truly the best feeling in the world.”

DeMiglio, who played basketball at SJR, credits coaches–Reggie Sainte-Rose ’92 and Mike Doherty ’82–with teaching him that nothing in life is given.

“Nothing can replace the value of hard work,” he said. “That was something I learned from them and I’ve applied it to my life.”

One of the best parts of the annual trip to the shelter for the third-generation owner is seeing how his staff responds to the experience. Members of the team at his Norwood location and those who travel to the shelter to serve find it equally rewarding—a testament to the culture at Callahan’s.

“We all have our own daily struggles and stresses but when you see what others are going through, you appreciate the blessings God has given you.”

During his time at SJR, ANTHONY D’APOLITO ’17 developed a reputation as someone willing to do whatever it took to further the cause, whether that was in the classroom, in his community or on the football field. This mindset didn’t go unnoticed as he earned the school’s St. Joseph Medal, presented annually to a senior who best exemplifies the personal traits of loyalty, cooperation, leadership, industry and active Catholicity.

Before embarking on his freshman year at Drewel University, D’Apolito spent a week assisting a Navajo community in New Mexico, a mission that he called “the best week of [his] life.” He spent seven days living on the Navajo reservation, assisting residents by refurbishing and painting buildings, clearing service vans and volunteering at local community centers. In addition, he was able to visit the Painted Desert and the Four Corners while learning about the Navajo culture.

At Drewel University, D’Apolito has continued to display that willingness to serve, volunteering at Habitat for Humanity Restore. In that capacity, he organized and loaded trucks full of donated furniture so that they could be purchased by those in need in the Philadelphia area to furnish their homes.

“I want to give back to the Philly community because this city provides me with opportunities and connections that will last forever. I see the problems in Philadephia and want to play my part in fixing them.”

D’Apolito believes that his desire to volunteer and support his local surroundings stems from his time at SJR.

“Feel a sense of happiness when giving without expecting anything in return. It is a testament to my family and SJR to have crafted that mindset,” he said, adding, “Brother John [Durning] and Mr. LoGiudice showed me the importance of giving and improving one’s community, whether it be a family, a town or a school.”

BRINGING THE LOVE BACK

People need love and kindness in their lives. As a way of giving back, DeMiglio and his staff volunteer at the shelter each Valentine’s Day. This year, they threw a surprise party and insisted that everyone wear red. The staff and guests had a great time, and the volunteers left feeling enriched by the experience.

“Valentine’s Day is about loving and being there for the people who mean the most to you,” said DeMiglio. “Nothing can replace the value of hard work. That was something I learned from them and I’ve applied it to my life.”

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A SEASON FOR THE AGES
Green Knights Capture State Title, #1 Ranking

It began in the blistering summer heat of Georgia. It ended in a torrential downpour at MetLife Stadium. In between was one of the greatest seasons the storied SJR football program has ever known.

The final stats tell one side of the tale: a 10-2 record against, inarguably, some of the finest competition in the nation. A #19 ranking in the United States, according to USA Today. This was just an amazing run with a bunch of kids,” said head coach Augie Hoffmann ’99. “You couldn’t ask for a better group. They worked hard, they listened, they cared for each other as a team, they never gave into adversity, they never stopped believing they could win it all. And they did. I am so proud of each and every one of them.

History will note that, along the way, the Green Knights defeated every NJ team they played at least once and an exceptional St. Peter’s Prep team twice. In fact, nine of SJR’s twelve games were against opponents ranked in the Top 25 in their respective states.

They dropped only the season opener to Florida’s American Heritage on a last-second field goal, and an October nail-biter to Bergen Catholic.

Following the loss to American Heritage in the Freedom Bowl outside Atlanta, GA, the Green Knights reeled off four straight wins back home in New Jersey.

The team boasted Inmotop Charter (PA) in a crossover game before wins against DePaul Catholic, Pope John and Paramus Catholic.

Prior to the game against Pope John, SJR hosted the first of several celebrations honoring the amazing history and tradition of the program.

Members of the football program from 1977-1981 were recognized on the field following the loss to American Heritage on a last-second field goal, and an October nail-biter to Bergen Catholic.

That was more than enough for the defense, anchored by Gatorade/Star Ledger Player of the Year Howard Cross. DeMatha finished #39 in the country. On September 7, the Green Knights will welcome DeMatha (MD) to Karcich Field. DeMatha finished #39 in the country. It was the last time the Green Knights saw the field at Robert J. Dinallo Stadium dedicated, for all time, to legendary coaches and players.

The SJR football team will open the season with three non-conference games against the best that California, Maryland and New York has to offer. To kick things off, the defending champs will head to San Diego on August 31 for the Honor Bowl against JSerra Catholic (CA). JSerra finished 9-3 last season, ranked #17 in the country by MaxPreps. On September 7, the Green Knights will welcome DeMatha (MD) to Karcich Field. DeMatha finished 8-3 last season, ranked #39 in the country.

The final celebration came during the San Diego showdown with JSerra Catholic. The SJR football team will open the season with three non-conference games against the best that California, Maryland and New York has to offer. To kick things off, the defending champs will head to San Diego on August 31 for the Honor Bowl against JSerra Catholic (CA). JSerra finished 9-3 last season, ranked #17 in the country by MaxPreps. On September 7, the Green Knights will welcome DeMatha (MD) to Karcich Field. DeMatha finished 8-3 last season, ranked #39 in the country.

In a sense, that adversity served to form the Green Knights as players and coaches, not just because of what we won, but because of all the sacrifice, hard work and heartbreak that came along the way, especially when we lost Coach Davis, Mr. Mack and Mr. Coccaro,” explained captain Connor Grieco ’19. “Adversity can break you, or make you stronger, but in our case it certainly helped us to pull together as a team.”

Without question, the 2018 team immediately takes its place as one of the legendary squads in SJR history, no small feat for a program that now boasts nineteen state championships in the last thirty-two seasons.

Nevertheless the future is bright with returning next season. Expectations will return next season. Expectations will continue to remain high for the Green Knights in the 2019 season.

The stage was set for a rematch. #1 vs. #2. Crusaders vs. Green Knights. At MetLife Stadium.

The rest is history as the Green Knights dominated en route to an emphatic 13-0 shutout in the pouring rain.

A blocked punt led to a early field goal and a defensive stop followed by an Audric Estime ‘21 touchdown take command of the game early in the first quarter.

Guglielmello booted the extra point through the uprights to give SJR a 10-0 lead and set the state record for career points, a feat which earned him The Record’s Athlete of the Week status.

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After three out-of-state games, SJR will begin play in the Super Football Conference on September 21 when it visits DePaul Catholic.

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Just two weeks later, on October 6, the Green Knights celebrated Tony Karcich Day as the field at Robert J. Dinallo Stadium was dedicated, for all time, to legendary coaches and players.

First Team All-League
Patrick McMurtrie, Smith Vilbert
Second Team All-League
Connor Grieco, Angelo Guglielmello
Fullback
Reid Roush, Amin Vanover, Jake Yoffee
Second Team All-County
Patrick McMurtrie, Frank McNaughton, Reid Roush, Amin Vanover, Jake Yoffee
First Team All-League
Michael Alaimo, Howard Cross, Eric Stoeckel
Honorable Mention All-League
Eric Stoeckel, Amin Vanover, Jake Yoffee
Honorable Mention All-League
Estime

FOOTBALL SET TO BATTLE BEST OF CA, MD, AND NY

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Cross Country

The young Green Knights capped their season at the NSCAA Non-Public A Group championships at Holmdel Park in November.

Ryan Collins ’20 and Nicos Eftychiou ’20 led the way all year, earning Second Team All League honors, with Patrick Buckley ’19 picking up key points along the way.

But with only one senior on the roster, head coach Nick DeVito ‘97 saw three freshmen and one sophomore step up to fill a need at the varsity level. Throughout the season, their efforts proved to be an important piece of the puzzle, helping to secure key league victories over DePaul and Paramus Catholic.

“We will be able to build off of this season,” said Eftychiou. “With these returning runners next year, we will be competitive with the top teams in the Big North.”

Wrestling

The Green Knights followed up last season’s resurgence with a great year on the mats once again. Ranked #10 in the state at season’s end, SIR captured the Bergen County championship for the first time since 1998!

Along the way, the team captured the District I and Region I crowns. At the Districts, ten Green Knights, including six champions, reached the podium.

In the Regions, SIR saw seven wrestlers punch their tickets to Atlantic City to compete in the NSIAA tournament.

The final weekend of the season was the time to shine for Sammy Alvarez ‘19. After consecutive runner-up finishes in the states, nothing short of a championship would suffice. The road was not easy as he faced defending champion Robert Howard from Bergen Catholic in the final, but an incredible move in OT gave Alvarez sudden victory and his first state title. He was named the tournament’s Most Outstanding Wrestler and became the first Green Knight to win the championship since 2004.

Joe Manno ‘22 and Justin Birdumpfel ‘20 each finished third to reach the podium in Atlantic City. Teammates Jack Fainarino ‘21, Craig Manno ‘19, Jean Carlos SanJuan ‘20 and Stefano Sgambellone ‘21 also reached the state championships.

Soccer

The Green Knights ended the season with a 13-6 overall record (4-1 in the Big North). The squad got off to a 5-1 start in September, including a dramatic victory over Don Bosco in overtime. In October, the team defeated Hackensack to become the only private school to reach the quarterfinals of Bergen County Tournament before ultimately falling to Ramsey.

In the NSIAA playoffs, the Green Knight defeated Pope John, 1-0 in the first round before losing to Seton Hall Prep (by the same score) to close out the season.

The 2018 campaign will be seen as a stepping stone by the coaching staff. However, with eight graduating seniors, the returning players and the coaching staff recognize the challenge ahead.

Bowling

New head coach Nick Delahanty ‘11 led the Green Knights to a 7-5 record in his first season at the helm.

Ross Forthorap ’20 and Alex Malfa ’19 paced the team all season, averaging 176 and 166, respectively.

Along the way, SIR defeated Bergen Catholic, Don Bosco (twice), DePaul (twice), Bergenfield and Eastside.

With only Malfa and Ray Paradiso ’19 (161 average) graduating, there is much to be excited about for the Green Knights.

“It’s been a pleasure to work alongside my bowlers,” said Delahanty. “I’m truly impressed with how much we’ve improved since day one of the season and look forward to a great winter next year.”

Basketball

The SIR basketball team battled to a 22-6 record against some of the best teams in New Jersey. In the end, the squad finished with a #10 ranking in the state.

The Green Knights got to a hot start with a 6-1 record in December before upsetting Hudson Catholic to kick off the new year. In February, head coach Mike Doherty ’82 led SIR back to the semifinals of the Bergen County Jamboree.

The team hit its stride in the NSIAA Tournament, knocking off Seton Hall Prep and Union Catholic before falling in the Group IV North championship against Bergen Catholic.

Chris Manon ’19 (12.9PPG, 6.6RPG) and Smith Vilbert ’19 (6.0PPG/6.4PPG) paved the way, but the underclassmen on the roster certainly did their part with Dyree Rogers ’21 (10.9 PPG) and Nazir Williams ’20 (12.0PPG) contributing on both ends of the floor.

Hockey

The hockey team, ranked #12 in the state, completed the year with a 15-6-3 record and captured the Big North Freedom regular season title. Still, the Green Knight left the ice disappointed with a lack of postseason hardware. The team defeated Mahwah and Indian Hills in the Bergen County Tournament before falling to Don Bosco in the final. In the Big North Gold Cup, SIR fell to Indian Hills after a dramatic 3-2 overtime victory against Northern Highlands in the semifinals.

The future looks bright as the JV team captured the ice Vault Holiday Classic, besting the Crusaders to secure the title.
SR’s 2019 musical Bright Star, which completed its highly successful run in the Inserra Theater on February 2, was a unique challenge for the renowned SR performing arts program in several ways.

“Well, it’s always a bit of a gamble, doing a show that so few people would know, or even have heard of” said the show’s producer John T. Asselta of the first hurdle to overcome. “We were the first high school in the Northeast to perform the show, so you’re always concerned that it will find its audience.”

And there was the fact that Bright Star, written by Steve Martin and Edie Brickell, features something not typically heard in a Broadway musical – country bluegrass music, or as Martin calls it, “American folk music.”

“Not your typical musical fare,” Asselta acknowledged. Bright Star tells the story of Alice Murphy (played by Sara Becker, Kassi McMillan and Christina Priestner), the editor of a prestigious southern literary journal who has been scarred by a tragedy in her past. The story weaves the two timelines (the Twenties and the Forties) together until Alice is, at long last, finally able to find happiness in the circumstances of her life.

Jimmie Ray Dobbs (Zack Mackiewicz/Patrick Buckley) is the love of her life while Billy Cane (Luke Berninger/Brendan Moran/Marc Rivera) is a WW2 veteran whose writing captures her attention.

“Bright Star makes a lot of demands on its actors,” said Asselta. “The story is a very emotional one, and the show’s power derives as much from the music and singing as it does from the acting of our very talented cast.”

“The second act was a very difficult one for me,” said Matt Ranagan, who played Alice’s father. “You have to think a lot about how you’re going to convey all of the character’s regret and sadness. It’s a lot of heavy stuff to get across convincingly.”

But Luke Berninger, who played Billy, had a different perspective: “In some ways, Billy was an easy part for me to play because he’s a lot like me. Unlike Jimmie Ray, Billy has a pretty optimistic view of life. It’s reflected in the music. Billy’s songs are direct, less complicated in their rhythms and music, just like his life.”

Bright Star was also the first SR musical helmed by new director Eric Sciotto, a veteran Broadway performer who appeared, most recently, as Will Shakespeare in Something Rotten!

“I was a bit nervous at first, to be honest,” admitted Patrick Buckley ’19, who played Jimmie Ray. “Getting used to the show itself – the time period and its culture, the dancing and the music – those were all things I had no experience with. And, of course, there’s the uncertainty of working with someone new, someone you just don’t know.”

“That said,” Buckley added, “It all worked out very quickly. Eric turned out to be a terrific director. He worked very hard with each of us to provide the foundation of our characters, but then encouraged us to fill in the gaps. The result was a very personal show for all of us.”

In the end, the stars aligned for everyone. Everything that seemed challenging at the start came together in the end. The production included eight regular shows, a grammar school preview and a senior citizen performance. A special reception following the February 1 performance featured original tour cast members Sarah Jane Hanks and Patrick Cummings (Jimmie Ray). Five of SR’s nine band members were also musicians in the original Broadway show.
On the Road: Georgia

From Left to Right: John Forte ’80, Mike McKinney ’78, Charlie DeLorenzo ’67, Craig Murphy ’78 and Dr. Tom McIntyre ’73 were among the local alumni at Friday evening’s reception at Tommy’s on Windward; Green Knight alumni, parents and fans supported the football team in Georgia.

Foundation of Success: 1977-1981 Football

Left to Right: Members of the football program from 1977-1981 celebrate at Fire & Oak in Montvale after being honored prior to the start of the Green Knights 31-7 win over Pope John; Michael McDonnell ’82 coordinated the event and reminisced with teammates and coaches about the 1981 season; a First Team All-State defensive player in 1979, Kevin Mendillo ’80 handled the coin toss before kickoff.

Tony Karcich Day

Clockwise from Top Left: Coach Tony Karcich takes the field along with his wife, Linda, sons Greg ’93 and Kurt ’89 and their families; Karcich with good friend Mike Hoagle ’84 at the post-game reception; Karcich and Leadership Award recipient Connor Grieco ’19 share a moment before the game; Alumni from the 1987 and 2013 state championship teams (Karcich’s first and last at SJR) unveiled the new COACH TONY KARCICH FIELD logos on the turf at Robert J. Dinallo Stadium.

Grand Opening: Inserra Rehearsal Studio

Clockwise from Top Left: Mary Kay Buckley P ’19, Eva Hajek P ’21, Jinky Rivera P ’20, Jamie Burns P ’21, Hillary Barnett, Teresa Marzulla P ’16, 18 and Lisa Mackiewicz P ’20 pose for the camera; Larry Inserra Jr., Larry Inserra Sr. ’75 and Beth Lawrence; Patrick Buckley ’18, Ben Hajek ’21, Zak Mackerwack ’20 and Quinn Burns ’23 entertain the audience.

Homecoming & Reunion Weekend

Clockwise from Top Left: Jim Redner ’68 shows off some vintage issues of The Guardian; Members of the Class of 2008 enjoyed their 10th reunion at Dinallo Stadium; The Class of 1968 was recognized on the field before the football game against Seton Hall Prep; Bob Dunne III ’68 and Barry McWatters ’68; Steve Odierno ’93, Barry Donnelly ’71, Brian Tesseyman ’93, Jude Cancellieri ’93, Chris Amoruso ’93 and Dr. Bryan Winn ’93; Members of the Class of 1998 enjoy an after-party photo; John Bianchi ’73, Stephen Murphy ’88 and Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Ralph Jodice ’73 show off their varsity jackets; Chris Dubee ’03 found his Scholar of the Week photo on the wall of the main hallway.

Clockwise from Top Left: Mary Kay Buckley P ’19, Eva Hajek P ’21, Jinky Rivera P ’20, Jamie Burns P ’21, Hillary Barnett, Teresa Marzulla P ’16, 18 and Lisa Mackiewicz P ’20 pose for the camera; Larry Inserra Jr., Larry Inserra Sr. ’75 and Beth Lawrence; Patrick Buckley ’18, Ben Hajek ’21, Zak Mackerwack ’20 and Quinn Burns ’23 entertain the audience.
Alumni Lacrosse Game

Clockwise from Top Right: On November 23, more than thirty former Green Knight lacrosse alumni joined current student-athletes for the third annual SJR Alumni Lacrosse Game. Brian Muggeo ’16 was voted MVP, helping the alumni to a 7-6 victory; Major League Lacrosse MVP Rob Panell gave a clinic for more than 100 young lacrosse players and future Green Knights; Mike Plescia ’00 suits up for the alumni.

Scholarship Reception

Left to Right: On November 8, TJ ’05 and Ayana Calea hosted a reception at their home, raising more than $37,000 for the SJR Scholarship Fund. Frank Ficarra ’07, John Lorenzo ’11, Mckey Gardella ’09 and Dan Kinnally ’09; Tony Kancias, James Cahill ’09, Joe Scott ’09 and Augie Hoffmann ’99.

Young Alumni Night/College Life Panel

Clockwise from Top Left: Current college students and young alumni were welcomed back to campus in early January. More than thirty young alumni enjoyed Buffalo Wild Wings and Phil’s Pizza before the Green Knights basketball team defeated Paramus Catholic. Teacher Liam FitchMcDonald chats with recent grads at Young Alumni Night; Members of the Class of 2018 returned home for Young Alumni Night; College Life panelists included Kyle Clark ’18 (Hamilton), Gage Poindexter ’18 (Embry-Riddle), Rajkowski (Boston College), Dan Soter ’18 (Rutgers) and John Tyrie ’18 (Notre Dame).

Alumni Basketball Game

Left to Right: Joseph Giles-Harris ’15 dribbles past Patrick Doherty ’15; on January 5, more than two dozen former players enjoyed the annual Alumni Basketball Game.

Legacy Brunch

Clockwise from Top Left: Stephen ’22, Katia, Julianna and Paul Carrozza ’87; Kevin ’81 and Brian ’90 Stapleton with their legacy sons Matthew ’20, Devin ’20 and Brendan ’22; Mike Mahoney ’75, Steve Odierno ’93, Conor Mahoney ’22, Steven Odierno ’23, Brian Brennan ’21, Brian Brennan ’93 and Dan Brennan ’23; On January 13, SJR welcomed father and son legacies and their families for mass, celebrated by Father Anthony Carrozza ’81 (uncle of Stephen, brother of Paul). After mass, all were invited for brunch and family portraits.

On January 25, the Green Knights wrestling program celebrated the past, present and future of the program. Former student-athletes and their families were welcomed back and introduced to the mat before the match against Don Bosco Prep. The team’s three seniors were recognized before earning a 52-21 win over the Ironmen.

Alumni Wrestling Night
1969 REUNION

The Class of 1969 will celebrate its 50th reunion during SJR Homecoming Weekend on October 4-6. Contact BOB AURAY (bob.auray@gmail.com) or CHRIS WEIGL (cgwelq@verizon.net, 201-788-0534) for more info.

ROBERT KAISER retired in 2014, but remains a part-time partner for the engineering and architectural firm he worked at for 27 years. In addition to staying busy at work, he does extensive volunteer work with Trout Unlimited’s youth education program and enjoys traveling with his wife.

JOHN FUHRMAN retired from his post as Bergen County Chief Probation Officer in 2018. He spent 42 1/2 years as a probation officer, the last fifteen as chief.

1970

GLENN CLARK is the Principal at Academy of St. Therese in Cresskill. After 43 years in public education, he retired in August of 2017 to step into the role at the Catholic elementary school.

DAVE DONOHUE is planning to retire after 32 years at Roosevelt & Cross, a municipal bond firm in NYC.

1971

PHILIP HAYES recently moved from New York to Leland, NC.

ED KOCH is the Chair of the New Jersey State Track & Field Officials Committee of the USAFT, the national governing body of the sport.

1973

GEORGE DETTITA recently started work on season two of HBO’s Succession as Set Decorator.

1974

BILL FOLKER and BOB MENTO stopped by the Barrett Jackson auctions in Arizona.

1976

GERRY McINTYRE captured gold in shot put in the NI Senior Olympics, throwing a 2018 best 11.00m on his final throw. SJR classmate PETER GAETA came out to support his fellow former teammate on the track and field squad.

1978

STEVEN OLSEN retired from the United States Air Force. He lives in Lompoc, CA.

1979

The Class of 1979 will celebrate its 40th reunion during SJR Homecoming Weekend on October 4-6. Contact SCOTT DONNELLY ’02 (donnaelli@sjrnj.org) in the Advancement/Alumni Relations Office for more info.

1981

JIM MONAGHAN and his brother STEVE ’83 host a podcast on soundcloud.com called Sports with Mono & Mono. The pair discuss relevant topics on the world of sports in a weekly 30-minute podcast. Sports with Mono & Mono debuted in mid-February.

1982

COLONEL MICHAEL LYONS retired from the Army National Guard in June. He had served for more than 30 years after graduating from Kings College with a degree in finance.

1984

The Class of 1984 will celebrate its 35th reunion during SJR Homecoming Weekend on October 4-6. Contact JASON GLEICHER (jasongleicher@gmail.com) for more info.

1989

The Class of 1989 will celebrate its 30th reunion during SJR Homecoming Weekend on October 4-6. Contact SCOTT DONNELLY ’02 (donnaelli@sjrnj.org) in the Advancement/Alumni Relations Office for more info.

1994 REUNION

The Class of 1994 will celebrate its 25th reunion during SJR Homecoming Weekend on October 4-6. Contact SCOTT DONNELLY ’02 (donnaelli@sjrnj.org) in the Advancement/Alumni Relations Office for more info.

1996

JOSEPH VALENZANO is an associate professor and chair of the Department of Communications at the University of Dayton. He received his undergraduate degree from Providence College, his Ph.D. from Georgia State University. Valenzano has published three national textbooks on communication and public speaking and three other books on religion, politics and media. His research has also been recognized with a top-paper award from the National Communication Association. He lives in Ohio with his wife and son.

1997

NIzar Abdul-Samad earned his master’s degree in administrative science from Fairleigh Dickinson University during in May 2018.

1999

The Class of 1999 will celebrate its 20th reunion during SJR Homecoming Weekend on October 4-6. Contact AUGE HOFFMANN (hoffmanna@sjrnj.org) or CHRIS SANDT (chrisphersandt@gmail.com) for more info.

2001

AFSHIN CHARNAR-HALJIAN and wife, Amber, welcomed daughter Avery, in April.

2002

SEVE COUSINS is the Basketball Operations Manager at Hoop Dreams in Wyckoff.

2004

The Class of 2004 will celebrate its 15th reunion during SJR Homecoming Weekend on October 4-6. Contact SCOTT DONNELLY ’02 (donnaelli@sjrnj.org) in the Advancement/Alumni Relations Office for more info.

2001

As the owner of Advanced Electrical, Williams enjoys “being involved where my talents can assist the school.” In addition to in-kind gifts, he has been a member of the President’s Leadership Society—Legacy ($2,500+) since 2013.

“The most formative years of my life were spent with my extended family at SJR. SJR feels right to give back to one’s home,” explained Williams.

He credits his time with the performing arts program for teaching him responsibility. “Managing stage crew transcended age. Students worked alongside professionals from their respective fields. Having the freedom and responsibility to communicate with outside vendors taught life lessons unavailable anywhere else.”

In addition, Williams recalls the academic opportunity he enjoyed at SJR. “The administration allowed me to take two math classes as a junior so I was ahead of the game when I entered college. Although a small example, SJR went the extra mile to put me in a better position for my future.”

Williams, who lives in Norwood with his wife, is pleased to see the ongoing dedication of SJR’s community to the core values and traditions that first drew him to the school as a seventh-grader.

“The world is changing rapidly, yet SJR has found a unique path to adapt and foster traditional Catholic values.”

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RYAN EMMONS (right) is the Resident Director for the national tour of Miss Saigon. In Providence, he was joined by fellow alum DAVIN DESANTIS ’05 who served as a production adviser.
2009 REUNION
The Class of 2009 will celebrate its 10th reunion during SJR Homecoming Weekend on October 4-6. Contact MICKEY GARDELLA (mjgardella@gmail.com) in the Advancement/Alumni Relations Office for more info.

2010
JEFF GARCIA is completing an M.A. in special education at the University of St. Thomas (MN) alongside a year-long residency in Saint Paul Public Schools. Upon completion of the program, he will receive an M.A. and Minnesota teaching license. He lives in Saint Paul and spends free time volunteering with the local roller derby league.

PAUL LESICA and his brother, CHRIS ’13, are coaching the JV lacrosse team together at Old Mill High School in Annapolis, MD.

2011
VINCENT SILANO is the head wrestling coach at Holyoke High School in Holyoke, MA. He coordinated the team’s Veterans Appreciation Match which benefitted VetsAir (transport to medical appointments). He is the lead strength coach at Train for Life in Chicopee, MA.

2013
DEVIN OCHIUZZO was sworn in to the Bergen County Police Department on January 16. He is currently attending the Bergen County Police Academy.

2014 REUNION
The Class of 2014 will celebrate its 5th reunion during SJR Homecoming Weekend on October 4-6. Contact SCOTT DONNELLY 102 (donnelly@sjrnj.org) in the Advancement/Alumni Relations Office for more info.

MICHAEL SILANO was recently sworn in as a police officer in River Vale. Silano earned his BS in criminal justice from the University of New Haven. Before attending police academy in July, he was a communications officer with the Saddle River Police Department.

KEVIN WILKINS was the co-winner of the David Bender Award as the best lineman for the Rutgers Scarlet Knights football team. He started all eleven games and led the defensive line with 50 tackles on the season.

DOMINIC CARFAGNO earned Dean’s List recognition at Bloomsburg University.

MARK FOSSATI was named First Team All Ivy, leading Princeton University football to an undefeated Ivy League title.

2015
ANTHONY FUGNITTI earned his bachelor’s degree in accounting and management from Sacred Heart University. As a student in the Welch College of Business, Fugnitti was a Welch Scholar, a research assistant and an accounting tutor. He was inducted as a lifetime member of the Epsilon Chapter of Beta Gamma Sigma at SHU after graduating summa cum laude and receiving the Gold Medal of Excellence at commencement. Currently, he is working for PricewaterhouseCoopers as an auditor and working on his master’s degree from SHU while studying for the CPA exam.

JOSEPH GILES-HARRIS was a First Team All ACC selection for the second consecutive season, leading the Duke University football team in tackles once again.

NICHOLAS SACCOLLITI and THOMAS TORNETTO earned Dean’s and Honors List recognition at Fairleigh Dickinson University in 2018.

2016
JONATHAN BLAKE earned Dean’s List recognition at the University of Hartford, where he is majoring in health science.

DONATO CUTTONE is enrolled in Army ROTC at Auburn University.

CONOR DICKSON, SALVATORE PALMIERI and JOSHUA PEREZ earned Dean’s List recognition from the University of Scranton.

DEJOUR DOBSON recently started his own company and is attending college part-time to complete his degree. “I’m living my dreams by helping others less fortunate.”

2017
ZACK ALMONTE just completed his second soccer season at the University of New Haven and is pursuing a degree in Sports Management.

STEPHEN CHIMENTI earned Dean’s List honors from the University of Scranton.

COLIN MEDWICK made the Dean’s List for the Fall 2018 semester at the George Washington University. He recently spent the week at Teach For America in Oklahoma. The early engagement program helps rehabilitate schools, while teaching students about educational inequity.

RYAN SORANNO was named to the University of Delaware’s Dean’s List.

2018
TYLER CONROY earned Dean’s List recognition at Cornell University in the fall. He is a member of the Student Agencies program and plays on the club tennis team. “It’s been a learning process to adjust to college life, but I’m really happy with where I am and the friends I’ve made.”

RYAN HEISER was recognized on the Dean’s List at the University of Scranton for the first semester.

CONNER MUSCARELLE has secured an internship with Komatsu Northeast.

BROTHER WILLIAM CUSHING returned to the United States after twenty years of service as a teacher and librarian at St. John’s Major Seminary in Nyeri, Kenya. He is living at St. John’s High School in Shrewsbury, MA. In December, Cushing (with former students President Donnelly ’71 and head coach Larry Mahurter ’87) attended a pair of SJR hockey games in December as the team traveled to New England.

BROTHERS GEORGE DONNELLY and JOHN MCDONALD direct the Xaverian Brothers Retirement House in Venice, FL.

Former Faculty/Staff
BROTHER LOUIS CALMEI recently retired to the Ryken House in Louisville after serving the Diocese of Lodwar in Kenya since 1997. He had worked at the new St. James Secondary School in the Turkana Desert.

2010

RON J. ROCK ’10
Ron Rock is finding his way in the entertainment world. After graduating from SJR, he studied at the New York Film Academy and later New York University.

He initially made contacts as a concierge in the night life business, “rubbing elbows” with high-end entertainment personalities including actors, producers and directors in California, Miami and Chicago.

Those contacts eventually enabled him to make his foray into acting again.

Rock appeared on stage at Inserna Theater in Uncinetown, West Side Story and The Who’s Tommy.

“I really enjoyed playing one of the gang members in West Side Story. It was aggressive and intense and my castmates and I became very close to each other both on and off the stage,” Rock recalled.

While he’s been in the industry for almost two decades, his credits include Den of Thieves, Gerard Butler and 50 Cent as well as an appearance on the ABC show The Rookie, starring Nathan Fillion.

In addition to his acting credits, Rock is expanding his work to include production and content creation in the near future.

He is part of the production group for Non Stop, a musical set to debut on Broadway later in 2019.

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JACK RAJKOWSKI is working with Creating Brand Legacy while enrolled at Boston College. He began working with CBL through SJR’s internship program.

EDWARD SCHWARTZ JR. is attending Fordham University where is a member of the Rams’ football team.

BRIAN SIDLE is a finance major at Roger Williams University, where he was a member of the Hawks wrestling team.
In Memoriam: Brian Hoffman
By Luke Berninger ’19

Mr. Brian Hoffman, Director of Technology at SJR since 2015, passed away on September 25 after a two-year battle with cancer. He is survived by his wife, Jennifer, and their two children, A.J. and Zachary.

He was a legend in the SJR community known for his witty jokes and famous Spider-Man tie, but he was also a passionate volunteer firefighter with the Upper Saddle River Fire Department. In his short time at SJR, Mr. Hoffman impacted a tremendous number of students and faculty with his vast intelligence and willingness to help. Mr. Hoffman was also the WSJR administrator, helping students create news broadcasts.

“He showed me how to balance fun and work. I know he left a lasting impression on everyone in the SJR community that worked and learned alongside of him.” – Rafael Padilla ’16

“His contributions to WSJR opened doors for students to have hands-on experience with media and broadcasting. My interactions with him have influenced my college choice and his presence around the school will be greatly missed.” – Patrick Buckley ’19

“He always had a good music suggestion and, if we had a creative idea for the broadcast, he was always receptive.” – Christian Papa ’17

Mr. Brian Hoffman, Director of Technology at SJR since 2015, passed away on September 25 after a two-year battle with cancer. He is survived by his wife, Jennifer, and their two children, A.J. and Zachary.

He was a legend in the SJR community known for his witty jokes and famous Spider-Man tie, but he was also a passionate volunteer firefighter with the Upper Saddle River Fire Department. In his short time at SJR, Mr. Hoffman impacted a tremendous number of students and faculty with his vast intelligence and willingness to help. Mr. Hoffman was also the WSJR administrator, helping students create news broadcasts.

“He showed me how to balance fun and work. I know he left a lasting impression on everyone in the SJR community that worked and learned alongside of him.” – Rafael Padilla ’16

“His contributions to WSJR opened doors for students to have hands-on experience with media and broadcasting. My interactions with him have influenced my college choice and his presence around the school will be greatly missed.” – Patrick Buckley ’19

“He always had a good music suggestion and, if we had a creative idea for the broadcast, he was always receptive.” – Christian Papa ’17

In Memoriam: Jim Dineen ’73

On November 26, just one month after enjoying his 45th Reunion with his former classmates and fellow Green Knights, Jim Dineen ’73 passed away after a battle with cancer.

“Jim never let on that he was sick. He was one of the most honest and caring people that I have ever known. He always got me to laugh. He was one of the bright lights among our classmates.” – John Bianchi ’73

“Jimmy would light up any room; he never failed to put a smile on my face.” – Bill Gilsenan ’73

“A whirlwind of energy, positive and kind. Just a great guy.” – John Hall ’73

“A prince of a man who was dedicated to his family. He would do anything for anybody. His heart and soul was huge. I miss his warmth and friendship already.” – Ralph Jodice ’73

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In Memoriam

Alumni
RICHARD P. SHOULDIS ’68
JOHN C. HECTOR ’68
PAUL A. REED ’69
JAMES F. DINEEN ’73
EDWARD F. HARTWICK ’75
THEODORE P. MASOTTI ’75
Father of Kyle ’17 and Lucas ’22
WILLIAM J. KITTREDGE ’03

Faculty/Staff
MARGARET CORBETT
Former science teacher
LEONARD M. DAVIS
Assistant football coach
BRIAN HOFFMAN
Director of Technology
BROTHER JAMES MAHONEY, C.F.X.
Former science teacher

Family Members
GERALDINE ARMETTA
Grandmother of Paul Armetta ’21
FRANK COCCARO SR.
Father of Frank Jr. ’01
JOHN D. SILVA
Father of John Henry ’16
LORELEI D’VITO
Grandmother of James D’Vito ’20
ELDA DI VINCENZO
Grandmother of Ryan D’Vincenzo ’21
JOSEPHINE GIARDINA
Grandmother of Angelo Giardina ’19
JOHN HARRINGTON
Grandfather of Patrick ’10
THERESA HUND
Mother of Michael ’83 and Mark ’91
MARIAM KOFI
Mother of Ebenezer ’22
PHYLLIS KORNHAUSER
Grandmother of Paul Armetta ’21
GERALD LODGE
Father of Gerald ’74 and Thomas ’78
LEON MACK
Father of Elwyn ’20
ERNST MENDILLO
Father of Kevin ’80 and Michael ’82
PHILIPP REAP
Father of Joseph ’79 and Kevin ’80
GLORIA SANDERS
Grandmother of Stephen ’19
CHRISTOS TIMOTHEOU
Uncle of Nicos ’20 and Chris ’22 Eftychiou
LORAINE TOEPERT
Grandmother of Joseph ’75
VICTOR TRAVERSO
Grandfather of Rob Gambassi ’19

What a difference a day makes.

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If this is not you or if your son no longer lives at home, let us know. Call 201-391-3300 or email sjralumni@sjrnj.org. Don’t fret - just because we update his address doesn’t mean we’ll remove you from the mailing list!

Connect • Find and reminisce with fellow graduates, see what they have been up to and stay in touch

Give Back • Introduce, employ and offer to act as a mentor to our graduating students

Expand • Leverage your professional network to get introduced to people you should know

Network • Find upcoming events in your area to connect with former Green Knights

Share • Keep the SJR community up-to-date on your professional goings-on