



St. Benedict's

PREPARATORY SCHOOL

THE MORNING SHOW

Start your day with Convo, the livestream broadcast that is 100% student-run.



Tradition Meets Style

The Annual Draft for the Group System is a pivotal moment for every Gray Bee. The tradition, which is run in a similar fashion to the NFL Draft, not only determines each student's group for the next three and a half years, it's an affiliation and identity that Benedict's graduates will carry throughout their lives.

The draft for the Boys Prep Division on January 28 was welcomed with great fanfare. It was the first time the event was held in person since 2020, and the 18 groups that form the Group System conducted it in style. Suggested attire was dress shirt and tie, which to the surprise of no one, evolved into a spirited, but competitive fashion show among groups. Students and faculty donned sports jackets, dress shoes and even a few fedoras to claim bragging rights and a prize.

When draft day was done, every first year student had a home, and each group hopefully strengthened in the areas (academics, activities, athletics and attitude) where they needed to be more competitive. Fr. Timothy Dwyer, O.S.B. claimed the fashion show prize. The draft for the Girls Prep Division was held last fall.



Past is Present

The present is never that far from the past. It's why we tell stories about the people and traditions that built (and rebuilt) St. Benedict's Prep and pass them down from one generation to the next. It's also why we commemorate important events, however painful they may be.

February 16, 1972 was an extremely painful day for our community; students, faculty, families and alumni received the news that St. Benedict's would close in June. On February 16 of this year, our Boys and Girls Prep Divisions ran a Special Convocation to mark the 50th anniversary of that announcement. If you missed the livestream, I encourage you to watch on our YouTube channel because it brings to light two critical points about our mission and purpose.

One, our experiment to open a school in 1973 after the closure of St. Benedict's Prep, was not St. Benedict's Prep. It ultimately became St. Benedict's Prep because we listened. The monks of Newark Abbey listened to our families. We listened to the community and our city. With God's grace, and the support of alumni, laymen and women, and partners, we responded to what people told us they needed with the ministries we do best: accompaniment and education.

Two, The Hive certainly looks different than it did 50 years ago. Enrollment keeps climbing, people are clamoring to join us on the Property rather than flee it. The new student-run Broadcast Crew provides another opportunity to "never do for kids what they can do for themselves," while strengthening our Gray Bee community. And our financial position is strong as we aim to reach 37% alumni participation in the Annual Fund this year.

These gifts should not be taken for granted. As we learned 50 years ago, a community and school can fall apart. It's up to all of us to take care of it. Come to livestream Convo. Share your stories with our kids. Come to an upcoming event. And please consider a gift to the 2022 Annual Fund if you haven't yet done so. We need you.

Courage,

Edwin D. Leahy

Fr. Edwin D. Leahy, O.S.B. '63
Headmaster

IN THIS ISSUE

The Magazine for Alumni, Parents and Friends of St. Benedict's Prep

- 2. **The BUZZ: News from The Hive**
The latest news, progress and happenings from 520 MLK Boulevard.
- 4. **Cover Story: Kids Run the Show**
You may not see them from your computer or smartphone, but students have taken over the livestream broadcasts of Convocation and other school events.

- 8. **After Class**
Senior Associate Headmaster for Student Life Ivan Lamourt, Psy.D. '82 offers insight and wisdom on the state of youth mental health in the U.S.
- 10. **The Arts and Athletics**
How actor Theo Perkins '00 started a nonprofit youth theater ensemble from L.A., plus more on music and sports.

- 12. **50-year Milestones**
A look back at the ending from which a new beginning sprang.
- 14. **Advancement**
The Annual Fund aims higher with a 37% alumni participation goal for 2022.
- 16. **Gray Bees Forever: Class Notes and Events**
- 20. **Last Take**
Two letters from the archives bookmark an ending and new beginning for St. Benedict's Prep.



St. Benedict's
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Magazine • Spring 2022 • Issue 21

St. Benedict's Preparatory School Magazine is published three times a year by the Office of Advancement.

Michael A. Fazio, Chief Advancement Officer
Noreen Connolly H'11, Managing Editor
Paul Thornton '63, Contributing Editor
John Huss '81, Senior Director of Advancement
Ron Jandoli, Communications Officer
Michael Scanlan H'97, Photographer
Erbach Communications Group, Editorial and Design Services

How to Reach Us
520 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Newark, NJ 07102
(973) 792-5752
www.sbp.org
graybee@sbp.org

On the cover:
A member of the Broadcast Crew in action.

Follow us on



**BUILDING BRIDGES
DRAWS NATIONAL
AUDIENCE**

More than six million people watched St. Benedict's Prep students and New Jersey State Troopers team up for a grueling day of challenges on December 29, 2021.

"CBS Evening News with Norah O'Donnell" aired a segment on Building Bridges, a new partnership aimed at fostering trust and understanding between communities of color and law enforcement. The program is facilitated by Victory Road Development Group, an organization that The Hive has partnered with on expanding student leadership training. The segment aired as part of the CBS "Unifying America" series.

In February, Headmaster Fr. Edwin Leahy, O.S.B. '63 sat for an interview about Building Bridges for "One-On-One with Steve Aduato." The program aired on April 14 on NJ PBS.

SHEPHERDING FAITH



A deep commitment to social justice shaped the childhood of Fr. Francois Diouf, O.S.B., Ph.D., the new Associate Headmaster for Mission and Strategic Initiatives at St. Benedict's Prep. "Social justice was rooted in my family background," explained Fr. Francois, who grew up in Paris, France. "The focus was always on giving back to others."

In his new role at The Hive, Fr. Francois has been charged with rethinking transmission of faith to the School's richly diverse community. His stewardship encompasses St. Benedict's international initiatives in Israel, the Netherlands, Bolivia and Mongolia, as well

WHAT'S NEW IN COLLEGE PLACEMENT?

GROWING CLASSES OF GRADUATING SENIORS

Top-notch college placement is no longer news at The Hive. Gray Bees have demonstrated high rates of matriculation to college and persistence in higher education for some time. What is news is the number of seniors College Placement now accompanies.

The program is working with more than 160 seniors in the Boys and Girls Prep Divisions this year. That's 40 more seniors than any previous class since the School's reopening in 1973. Given that the program covers everything from choosing right-fit institutions to reviewing financial aid packages, the team is working overtime to provide each senior the attention and support they need.

Moreover, the high-achieving class (more than 50% hold a GPA of 3.3. or higher) created tighter deadlines with a record number of students applying Early Decision or Early Action to colleges, according to Dean of Seniors and College Placement Didier Jean-Baptiste '86. Early acceptances to date include Lehigh

as with domestic partners such as Kushner Academy and institutional programs including the Vox Institute, Leahy House and the Velvet Rope. "What we're really trying to transmit is not so much a religion, but a way of life," said Fr. Francois. "We are giving meaning, hope, value and perspective to students, including those who do not regard themselves as Christian or Catholic."

"What we're really trying to transmit is not so much a religion, but a way of life."

This new position augments the St. Benedict's academic leadership team of Associate Headmaster for Academics Michelle Tuorto H'16, Senior Associate Headmaster for Student Life Ivan Lamourt, Psy.D. '82, Dean of the Girls Prep Division Glenn J. Cassidy, Ed.D. '90, Dean of the Middle Division Jim Duffy H'16 and Dean of the Elementary Division Sr. Ann Marie Gass, S.S.J. Of the St. Benedict's community, Fr. Francois said, "It's a place where life happens. It's not static — it's a movement. As for me, I'm just a guy who's trying to be a better human being. If I can help people do the same, that's what I'm here for."

University, University of Pennsylvania, Northwestern University, Emory University and Yale University. Four seniors earned QuestBridge National Match Scholarships, the first group of Gray Bees to achieve the feat since 2016 and the largest group to ever represent St. Benedict's Prep.

Mr. Jean-Baptiste doesn't make it all happen on his own. The highly personalized program is supported by College Placement Counselor Maryam Tobias, who joined St. Benedict's in January, History Teacher Susanne Mueller, Managing Editor of Advancement Publications Noreen Connolly H'11 and Dean of Administration Michael Scanlan H'97. While the vast majority of seniors are headed to college, the team also advises students on trade school, apprenticeships, entering the military and other opportunities.

Look for more news on plans for the Class of 2022 in E-Buzz and in the summer issue of *St. Benedict's Prep*.



GROSSMAN FAMILY STUDENT INVESTMENT FUND IS ESTABLISHED

Investing is no longer a simulated exercise for the Gray Bee Investors. Since the Grossman Family Foundation made a \$100,000 gift to establish the Grossman Family Student Investment Fund, Gray Bees are researching, making investment decisions and tracking the progress of those decisions in real time with real money.

Davion Cottrell-Miller '22, the club's first Treasurer, said he and other members are taking the venture very seriously. "It wasn't like I didn't take the simulated stock market game seriously," he explained. "But now the opportunity is really there to invest. Everyone is putting in the work. Everyone is doing research. We're learning how to become investors."

Club Moderator Michael Scanlan H'97, Dean of Administration, said students are focusing on sector or country-based exchange-traded funds (ETFs) and low-cost mutual funds to start. As they gain experience, members will consider individual

stock investing within specific guidelines. The first 4% of gains in the Gray Bee Investors portfolio will be transferred to the St. Benedict's Prep Annual Scholarship Fund to demonstrate how prudent investing can directly support students.

The Gray Bee Investors began in 2020 and held its meetings virtually throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Now, the 15-member club meets in person twice a week to discuss the markets, ETFs and the impact of world events on investments. Alumni advisors from the fields of finance and business have been essential to the club's success. They include Robert J. DiQuollo '65, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, who has been with the club from the beginning, Kevin Davis '72, John Sarabia '07 and Kendell Bryant '07. "Now that we're in person, we're starting to run Gray Bee Investors more like a class," said Mr. Scanlan. "Alumni advisors have elevated the whole club."

UNSUNG HERO: SCHOOL NURSE CAROL HUNTER



Ask Gray Bees about School Nurse Carol Hunter and they'll tell you she's been a calm and reassuring presence throughout the twists and turns of COVID-19. A traveling nurse before joining The Hive in 2016, Mrs. Hunter

is one of many unsung heroes of the pandemic. She took on new roles with compassion, whether it meant administering COVID tests or recognizing students who

might be struggling emotionally for referral to the Steven M. Grossman Counseling Center.

On top of that, enrollment keeps growing, which means more medical files and health records to review and process. Mrs. Hunter is more than up to the task. When St. Benedict's Prep began bringing students back to the Property in 2020-21, the school nurse had concern about resuming duties in a tiny office. Moving the nurse's office to a larger, well-ventilated space near the cafeteria made all the difference. Ultimately, Mrs. Hunter decided, "I can't let this fear rule me. I pray every day, come here and do my job."



1969 PENN RELAYS CHAMPIONSHIP IMMORTALIZED IN PAINTING

Jim Gallagher '69 and his teammates, John Anderson '71, Jack McGowan '69 and Jim Scanlon '71, returned to The Hive last September to present Fr. Edwin D. Leahy, O.S.B. '63 with a framed rendering of a photo of the four runners and their storied coach, Wayne Letwink '53, taken after their 440-yard relay championship at the Penn Relays.

The idea for the painting evolved from a reunion of three of the four runners soon after Mr. Gallagher and Mr. McGowan received their invitations to their 50th Benedict's reunion. The gathering revolved around memories of the race, their beloved coach, their relative athletic talents and the absolute glory of winning the prestigious event.

No one gloried more in that victory than Coach Letwink. He had brought three teams to the Penn Relays in 1969 and only one came back with the trophy and the coveted Penn Relay watches.

What did Mr. Gallagher's teammates think of his painting of them and their coach? Mr. Anderson, the talented lead runner of the '69 team, said, "It's a masterpiece."

KIDS RUN THE SHOW



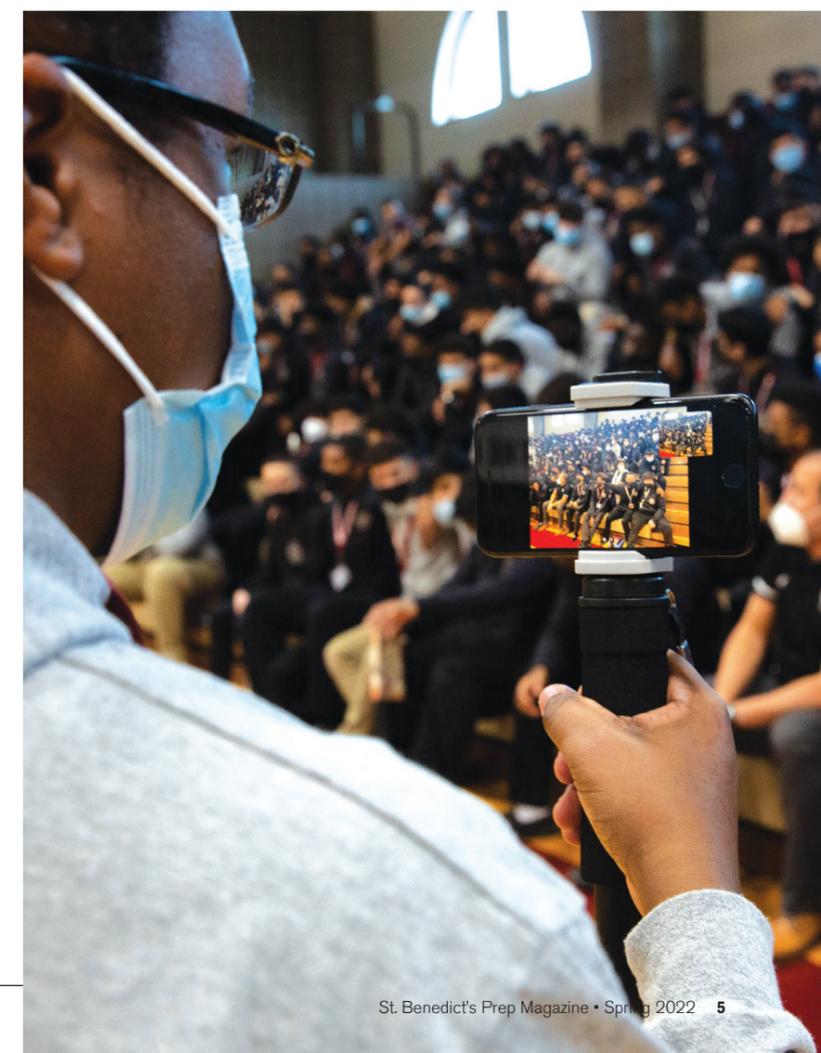
We say it a lot at St. Benedict's Prep: "Kids run the show." When it comes to livestream Convocation that began this year, students literally run every aspect of the production through a new venture called the Broadcast Crew. Here's what's happening behind-the-scenes when alumni and friends tune into Convo and other livestream events.

School starts extremely early – 7:15 a.m. – for James Dolores '23 and Savannah Rodriguez '22. That's because the UDII and senior lead their respective Divisions for the Broadcast Crew, a 100% student-run operation in charge of livestreaming Convocation, athletic games and other school events. Their day begins in the Academic Computer Center (ACC) in the Old Building.

Depending on the schedule (the Boys and Girls Prep Divisions alternate broadcasts during the week and work together on All-School Convocations), Savannah or James reviews livestream footage from the previous day with the crew, determines assignments for Convo and after-school events and deals with any last-minute changes, troubleshooting or technical issues that arise. By 8 a.m., it's go time. Four Gray Bees are on-site in Shanley Gymnasium or the Dalton Gym in the HAB, including an equipment manager, audio person and camera operator, plus a student trainee who is learning everything from adjusting volume levels to running the mobile cameras.

Meanwhile, off-site in the ACC, a student runs the broadcast from a computer with the help of an assistant, while another student monitors the live chat and attendance to recognize alumni and friends who've signed on. A second trainee is also situated in the ACC because the goal is that every Broadcast Crew member learn how to do everything. Rounding out the morning show team is a quality control person and a broadcast coordinator who manages all communication between the on-site and off-site teams.

"Kids have completely taken over," said Director of Technology Dexter Lopina '98, who began the Zoom broadcasts of Convocation with Science Department Chair Dennis Lansang, M.D., when the coronavirus pandemic began in 2020. The faculty members always intended to make Convo broadcasts permanent with students assuming complete responsibility for running the show. The opportunity presented itself last spring when Mr. Lopina headed out on The Trail and more students were back on the Property. "That was a good warmup," said Mr. Lopina, who recruited and trained a few students to run the Zoom broadcast in his absence.





The Broadcast Crew

THE FIRST TWO WEEKS WERE BRUTAL

When Summer Phase began, Convo was outdoors. Mr. Lopina tapped Savannah and James to manage the more complex production and tasked them with recruiting and training other Gray Bees. The Broadcast Crew encountered a lot of responsibility simultaneously. “The Masses at the beginning of the year were much more difficult to livestream,” said James. “There are more mikes to set up and more cameras to manage. There are way more moving parts and equipment that needs to be managed. Plus, we had to keep equipment from overheating.”

“It was a lot of information coming at you at once,” Savannah noted. “And it was 90 degrees outside and sometimes the equipment would crash. We would have to figure that out, knowing that the audience is upset because there’s a delay.” As it turned out, adults involved in the production also had to adjust.

“I’m a control freak,” Dr. Lansang admitted. “It was difficult for me to release a lot of the responsibility.” Certain protocols, like unpacking and storing equipment in a methodical manner, had to be maintained. “Wires were a jumbled mess in the beginning,” Dr. Lansang recalled. “It was brutal. In less than two weeks, though, everything was set. The kids saw the importance of gathering up equipment neatly at the end of Convo, so we weren’t scrambling in the morning.”

Dr. Lansang also learned to cede certain controls. Manning the keyboard for Convo, he’d become accustomed to altering the volume during broadcasts. “You can’t keep changing the volume. Let us make the adjustment,” members of the Broadcast Crew told him. “They

were absolutely right,” Dr. Lansang stated. “Now, I get to Convo 10 minutes before it starts, plug in and do what I need to do. Everything is automated because of the kids. It’s remarkable.”

A SELF-PERPETUATING ENTERPRISE

Like so many student-run programs at Benedict’s, Broadcast Crew is designed to be self-perpetuating because it’s passed down from student to student. “Teachers never teach students how to record attendance at Convo,” Dr. Lansang pointed out. “Students teach it to each other. Dex [Lopina] understands the whole idea of peer training. It’s incredible how powerful that is.”

“We have a solid group of people that we work with now,” said James. “They know what they are doing and what’s expected of them.” Savannah will graduate in June and she’s focused on sustaining the broadcast operation for the Girls Prep Division. “Being in charge of a group of people and telling them what they are doing, or teaching them how to do it, has been really valuable,” she said. “By the time I graduate, I want to know that my team members will be in good hands. They’ll have a good understanding of what to do and what not to do.”

Crew leaders also hope the audience of alumni and friends who tune in every day recognize the effort that goes into the production. “The whole purpose of the livestream is to make alumni feel a part of the community,” said Savannah. “The amount of care we have for them is great.” “It takes a lot for us to come in every morning, or show up after school and on the weekends to livestream these



Above: Khalil Bah '24 (left) and Seth De Matas '23 (right).

events,” James added. “It really shows our commitment.”

The crew’s work ethic was recently rewarded on the athletic livestream; names of students producing the broadcast now appear in a ticker on screen. Mr. Lopina says there’s more to it than simply assigning credit: “It’s another tool we’re using to learn what’s working and what could be better, so the kids will have more pride and accountability in what they’re doing.”

You won’t always see them on screen, so here are the 18 Broadcast Crew students who bring Convocation, sports and activities to the community every day: Khalil Bah '24, Ethan Bostock '25, Al-tariq Caldwell '24, Seth De Matas '23, James Dolores '23, Deborah Emile '25, Elijah Farrell '24, Keisna Garib '24, Bruno Irureta-Goyena '25, Ethan Lopina '24, Tinashe Maphosa '22, Aquil Perry '25, Dallas Rodriguez '23, Savannah Rodriguez '22, Jalynn Skeete '24, Israel Small '22, Fernanda Somohano '24 and Aubrey Williams '24. **B**

Subscribe to St. Benedict’s Prep broadcasts for livestream Convocation, athletic games and more on the School’s YouTube channel. Links are also posted regularly on the St. Benedict’s Facebook and Instagram pages.



REMEMBER “HIGH STREET VIEWS”?

The student-run production debuted on May 11, 1982 on a local cable public access station. Part of a television production elective, “High Street Views” was the precursor to today’s livestream broadcast. Both put kids in charge of a show that brought the St. Benedict’s Prep community together. Look for “Back to the 80s: High Street Views” on our social media platforms for clips and highlights from the decade.



LIVESTREAMING SACRED EVENTS

When Br. Bruno Mello, O.S.B. professed simple vows on October 17, 2021, he was surrounded by community. There were his family members who witnessed the sacred ceremony in person at St. Mary’s Church and an extended group of friends who attended via a livestream made possible by the Broadcast Crew.

“I have a large network of friends who have been incredibly supportive of my vocation and accompanied me through the process of becoming a monk,” said Br. Bruno. “Most of them were not able to get time off work to travel to New Jersey for the Mass. Because of the work of the team, my friends scattered all over the country and the world were able to continue to support me as I took this massive next step in my life.”

As the monk placed in charge of livestreaming liturgies from St. Mary’s, Br. Bruno appreciates the high production value students bring to each livestream. “My best efforts pale in comparison to the work done by the Broadcast Crew. They are an exceptional group!”

“It makes me feel good that we can do this,” said James Dolores '23, the Broadcast Crew leader for the Boys Prep Division. “We’re helping the community support each other, no matter where they are.”

Last fall was a busy time for Newark Abbey. Br. Mark DiLone, O.S.B. professed solemn vows on December 4, 2021, committing the rest of his life to the monastery as a monk, and was ordained a Deacon on December 18, 2021. The Broadcast Crew was there to capture both events for family members, parishioners, alumni and all who draw hope from the resurgence of interest in monastic life at Newark Abbey.



Actions Speak Louder Than Words

The youth mental health crisis is finally getting national attention. According to Dr. Ivan Lamourt, the country needs to move from awareness to action.

U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy issued a rare public health advisory recently, “Protecting Youth Mental Health.” What did you think of the advisory and its aim to shine a spotlight on the mental health crisis impacting young people?

Let me start by saying that the work of accompanying Gray Bees is truly a team effort. I don't do this work alone so it's important that people understand our reaction, meaning the entire staff of psychologists, therapists and counselors at the Steven M. Grossman Counseling Center. That said, having been on the ground with kids who've struggled with a myriad of issues this pandemic has only exacerbated, our collective reaction was, "Finally!" Someone with a national platform was finally ringing the alarm bell about the mental health issues we've seen coming since COVID-19 took hold in March 2020.

Will the advisory make a difference?

It can make some difference. Bringing the emotional challenges young people face to the national stage is never a bad thing. But let's be real. Awareness alone won't solve this crisis. As a country, we do a much better job talking about mental health issues than addressing some very troubling data. Like the fact that one out of three high schoolers report persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness, a 40% increase that was recorded before COVID-19 hit. Or the substantial increase in suicide ideation among young people, especially in our African American communities. If we are serious about protecting youth mental health, we, as a society, need to move from awareness to action.

Before we talk about what needs to be done, can you address what you and your colleagues are seeing on the ground? How has the pandemic affected the mental health of students?

What we're seeing here in Newark and across the country

are rates of anxiety and depression shooting higher and higher. COVID-19 shut down everyone's world, and on top of all the difficult circumstances kids in urban environments already navigate, it's created a lot of disconnection. Kids don't know how to be with each other. They're diving onto social media and shutting themselves off from other people and opportunities. I sit on the boards of two colleges, Saint Anselm College and Saint Vincent's College, and both schools are having an incredibly difficult time getting kids to leave their bubble and go away to college.

“As a country, we do a much better job talking about mental health issues than addressing some very troubling data.”

We're also seeing an intensification of self-harming behaviors. This encompasses cutting, substance abuse and most worrying, suicidal ideation, which is how we assess a person's risk of taking their own life. I'm usually a positive guy, but I also know the worst is still to come. The aftereffects of the pandemic are going to be with us for years to come, so it's something we need to get a grip on now.

How does the country get a grip on this crisis?

First, we need to recognize that improving mental health is about functioning better, not feeling better. That's how St. Benedict's looked at the issue when we started our counseling program 25 years ago. We recognized that kids were acting out because they were suffering emotionally and made counseling services a formal part of education to deal with those issues. It was all aimed at helping kids function better.

The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory includes broad recommendations to address youth mental health. Are there specific practices employed at the Grossman Counseling Center that other schools can replicate?

One thing we do is screen for mental wellness. That might sound outrageous to some, but think about it this way: If kids couldn't read by third or fourth grade, a national literacy crisis would be declared and a national program would be established to remedy the crisis. We're in that spot now with mental health and what are we doing?

Schools screen for reading and math proficiency all the time. We assess student-athletes to ensure

they are physically able to play and compete. Why not mental health? At St. Benedict's, we use the Problem Experiences Checklist. It's a set of adverse circumstances that helps us identify kids who may be at risk and set up intervention services to prevent bigger problems down the road.

Once you set up the need for intervention or services, how do you do it on a large scale?

It takes money, but not as much as people might think. We didn't have a lot of funding in the beginning, which is why we started group therapy: Alateen, for kids dealing with an adult's substance abuse issues, Blue Man Group, for those experiencing depression, Unknown Sons, for students to process difficult feelings caused by the absence of a parent. These therapeutic groups were less expensive to run and allowed kids to work with a professional and each other.

If you start a group, kids will come — and bring friends! Our Alateen group starts with a handful of students in September and grows to more than a dozen by December. You only need an adult member of Al-Anon to facilitate it. And yet, our Alateen is the only group of its kind in Newark. Money can't always be the excuse. We have to make services that can be run in an economical way a priority. I really hope the U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory helps people understand that mental health is a priority.

Given the depths of this crisis, what keeps you hopeful?

Faith. Part of what we're struggling with as a society is that we're having this existential crisis. There's only one cure for an existential crisis, only one, faith. When you lose faith, when you lose hope, you are in trouble. Part of our answer here at St. Benedict's is to continue to create community built on faith and not let people get away with, "I'm fine, I don't want to talk about it." We talk about it. **IB**

Ivan Lamourt, Psy.D. '82 was the founding Dean of Counseling at the Steven M. Grossman Counseling Center and currently serves as Senior Associate Headmaster of Student Life at the School. Joining Dr. Lamourt in the Grossman Counseling Center are Sinclair Davis, Psy.D., Gerard Figurelli, Ph.D., John Rowe, Simena Carey and Charlseay Sheib.



FDU MAGAZINE PROFILES DR. DAVIS

The graduation years of Sinclair Davis, Psy.D., tell a larger story about his pursuit of higher education at Fairleigh Dickinson University (FDU). Dr. Davis, a licensed school psychologist and Dean of the Steven M. Grossman Counseling Center, earned his associate (2009), bachelor's (2011), master's (2016) and doctoral (2018) degrees in stunning succession from FDU Metro, after dropping out of college a decade before. Dr. Davis' alma mater profiled his journey in the Winter/Spring 2022 issue of FDU Magazine.

"I was enamored with human behavior — how people interact, why some people get really angry and others are more relaxed and calm. I got really curious about the world and had so many questions to ask," Dr. Davis told the publication on his reasons for returning to college and choosing psychology as a major. On the recommendation of two FDU professors, he came to St. Benedict's Prep as a graduate school intern in 2014. Dr. Davis joined The Hive fulltime in 2016 and was appointed Dean of the Grossman Counseling Center in 2018.

He learned a long time ago that one needn't be perfect to achieve one's goals. "I'm not this perfect Point A to Point B; there was a whole line in between. But I figured it out," Dr. Davis said. "When students see that you don't have to be perfect to reach your goals, they see that we can do anything. That they can do anything."

IN ELIZABETH AND L.A., THEATER BRIDGES DIVIDES BETWEEN COPS AND YOUTH



Los Angeles based actor Theodore Perkins '00 has dazzled audiences onstage. He has guest starred on television shows like "NCIS," written and produced short films, and advised students as arts coordinator for the Center for the Art of Performance at UCLA.

The acting credits alone would keep most entertainment industry professionals firmly planted on the West Coast. Mr. Perkins also happens to be founder and artistic director of the Elizabeth Youth Theater Ensemble (EYTE), a role that brings him back to his hometown of Elizabeth, N.J. every summer.

"It was a way of giving back and a way for me to stay grounded when I began out here [in L.A.] pursuing acting," said Mr. Perkins. Bitten by the stage bug as a middle schooler, he was in every Drama Guild production at St. Benedict's Prep and even got to perform "Of Mice and Men" abroad senior year. "Benedict's prepared me with the confidence to be a leader," said Mr. Perkins, who also swam, played water polo and was group leader of Jim Cavanagh. He went on to Morehouse College, majored in theatre and performance, and was accepted to the MFA program in acting at UCLA.

EYTE originated while Mr. Perkins was still in graduate school. The City of Elizabeth wanted to offer a summer arts program for high school students. Mr. Perkins' aunt, Councilwoman Patricia Perkins-Auguste, pointed him to the opportunity, and the actor recruited performance artist and educator Angela Kariotis, who currently serves as EYTE's curriculum director and program facilitator.

The first summer was a success and the duo was asked back for a second year. The nascent arts program grew, and today, EYTE is a nonprofit social justice arts

organization with a mission to strengthen the voices of young artists within communities. Walking the Beat: A Cops/Kids Program is the nonprofit's signature initiative. The program brings inner city students and local law enforcement together to write, develop and perform an artistic work based on issues and circumstances that divide them. In 2022, the State of New Jersey awarded a \$380,000 grant to support the expansion of Walking the Beat as part of a community-based effort to reduce gun violence.

"We're excited to have the support," said Mr. Perkins. "I believe we are the only theater-based program accepted. We made the argument that there's value in focusing beyond physical violence. There are trauma-based issues that the arts can really address to sustain healthier communities for all of us."

Walking the Beat expanded to Los Angeles in 2019. "Our goal is to model the curriculum," said Mr. Perkins, who described the understanding that's forged between cops and kids. "From the student perspective, there is a reduction of fear and an increase in trust. From the officer's perspective, they are dealing with a lot on the job. There is nothing set up within the scope of their work to have a release or channel whatever trauma or incidents they are dealing with. When we have our drama therapists work with officers, the response is, 'Wow. Can we do this again?'"

Mr. Perkins' commitment to EYTE means occasionally turning down other opportunities, which he is more than okay with. The stars fortunately aligned on a new play this year. The actor played dual roles in "Detained," a drama that's drawn attention and favorable reviews for its adaptation of personal stories of immigrants facing deportation in the U.S. "Coming from Elizabeth and Newark, I grew up around these stories and families," Mr. Perkins stated. "It makes me love Elizabeth that much more." **B**

MUSIC TO OUR EARS



MEET MUSIC TEACHER JOSHUA MAULDIN

It was a gratifying moment for music lovers at The Hive. After a multi-year hiatus, an ensemble chorus performed holiday selections at the Christmas Program on December 16, 2021. "The kids did a fantastic job, and I was really proud of them," said Joshua Mauldin, who organized and directed the Gray Bee ensemble after a year of pandemic learning. Teaching remotely and operating under social distancing guidelines since joining the Fine Arts Department in 2019, he's eager to do more.

Currently, Mr. Mauldin teaches general music and chorus in the Prep Divisions and group piano lessons for the Middle Division. He also serves as an instructor for the CrossFit program. A pianist with a master's degree in music performance from Manhattan School of Music, he relished the idea of working with high school students and applied for the job at St. Benedict's Prep. The position was created with the philanthropic support of William Doan to expand the music curriculum, which is overseen by Dr. Jeremy Fletcher.

Once social distancing guidelines can be eased, Mr. Mauldin hopes to make chorus an established part of the School. He envisions a beginning ensemble and "an advanced ensemble that we can show off." As in competition? "I'm not sold on making music a competition," Mr. Mauldin explained. "Being able to perform, and to perform really well, is satisfaction enough." A liturgical group could also be on the horizon.

One idea the music teacher is sold on is putting students in charge of the School. "It's one of the most attractive parts of Benedict's," he noted. Mr. Mauldin hiked The Trail last year and plans to do it again for Spring Phase 2022. "Giving kids day-to-day responsibilities to run the School is a fantastic idea," he stated. "I don't know why more schools don't do it."

GOGRAYBEES ATHLETICS



BOYS BASKETBALL once again dominated conference and non-conference play, with a 25-1 regular season record. The Gray Bees ousted rival Blair Academy by 77-60 to win the State Prep A championship. Head Coach Mark Taylor notched his 300th win as a Gray Bee on February 12 in a 48-44 triumph over Prolific Prep at NJCU.

GIRLS BASKETBALL is a program to watch. Established during the pandemic, the Gray Bees played their first regular season this year, led by Head Coach Art Pierson. The girls finished the season 8-9 overall, with some hard fought losses to Gill St. Bernard's and Rutgers Prep, and decisive victories over Peddie and Lawrenceville.



WRESTLING resumed its tradition of excellence after a year of limited competition due to the pandemic. Twelve matmen earned berths at the 86th National Prep School Wrestling Championship in Maryland, following the qualifying tournament held in Dalton Gymnasium on February 19.



FENCING took fourth as a team in the State Prep Championships placing third in Epee and fifth in Foil and Sabre. Epee fencer Micah Upshaw '22 took second at the Individual State Prep Epee tournament and Captain Kolby Samuels '22 took third in the same event. Jordan Shiver '22 placed in the Top 8 in the Sabre event and Ethan Lopina '24 placed Top 8 in the Foil event.



50-year milestones

1972 2022

On February 16, 1972, St. Benedict's Prep announced it would close in June. Fifty years later, a thriving community commemorates the anniversary with a Special Convocation.



One Ending Became a New Beginning

For most teenagers, 1972 might as well be 1872, a faraway time unrelated to the lives St. Benedict's Prep students lead now. Or is it? Past and present converged on February 16, when The Hive commemorated the 50th anniversary of the announced closure of the School with a Special Convocation led by the Boys and Girls Prep Divisions and attended by alumni and friends via the livestream broadcast.

The closure, which also announced on February 16, became very real when Senior Group Leaders Justin Crespo '22 and Marie Rosa Jeudy '22 read aloud the 1972 letter informing students that St. Benedict's would "suspend operations indefinitely" in June. Witnesses also shared recollections. Fr. Albert Holtz, O.S.B. '60, a young teacher at the time, told current Gray Bees, "I don't let myself think about that day, it's

such a painful memory." He recounted feeling uncertainty, confusion and a great sense of loss having taken the Benedictine vow of stability of place. The announcement ended what Fr. Albert thought was "the beginning of the rest of my life."

Fr. Augustine Curley, O.S.B. '74 was a sophomore in 1972. He described "dead silence" when the closing letter was read at a first period assembly in Conlin Auditorium. Afterwards, students and faculty struggled to proceed as if nothing had happened. "It was a strange day," Fr. Augustine stated. "What we thought would go on forever was going to end."

St. Benedict's didn't end. Even before the closing announcement, there was, "A movement afoot to do a feasibility study of running

a small, innovative school here next year," according to Fr. Albert's journal. Several passages in his journal detail the desire to establish a new educational venture in Newark, along with plenty of doubts that it could be accomplished.

In his closing remarks, Headmaster Fr. Edwin Leahy, O.S.B. '63 read and commented on the journal entries for February 15 and 16, 1972. The questions Fr. Albert posed, "Do we have the requisite élan, creativity, commitment [to set up a new school]," stand in sharp contrast to the HAB filled with Gray Bees in 2022. "This community exists through God's grace working through all of us," Fr. Edwin told the St. Benedict's community. "It takes all of us." **B**

Commemorating More Milestones

MORE 50TH ANNIVERSARY MILESTONES WILL BE REMEMBERED IN 2022 AND 2023.

November 14, 1972



The monks of Newark Abbey elected Fr. Edwin Leahy, O.S.B. '63 to be Headmaster of a "new school venture." Just 26 years old, Fr. Edwin had little administrative experience, but his fellow monks saw in him "the vision, drive and energy to lead the fledgling operation."

December 1972



Two days after Christmas, 13 Benedictine monks held a retreat in Yulan, N.Y., to map out a plan for a new educational venture. After the monks returned to Newark Abbey, Fr. Albert Holtz, O.S.B. '60 turned their retreat discussions into the six-page proposal, "A Possible School."

February 24, 1973

Fr. Edwin sent a "Dear Friends" letter to alumni and donors. The letter informed recipients of plans to start a new school on the Property and asked for prayers and support.

July 2, 1973



St. Benedict's School opened with the first ever Convocation, the cornerstone that monks, faculty and students would soon call, "the most important thing we do every day." The opening was an impressive gathering of students, parents, faculty, city officials, Catholic clergy and local educators.

Summer 1973



The Advisory Board, chaired by Roger Cooke '61, held its first meeting. The group of alumni and friends played a critical role in St. Benedict's success, offering business expertise, financial support and encouragement to the monks of Newark Abbey.

AIM HIGHER

Alumni support of the St. Benedict's Prep Annual Fund far exceeds other schools. Gray Bees weigh in on why our participation rate – 36% in 2021 – needs to keep climbing.



31%
FY16

32%
FY17

33%
FY18

34%
FY19

35%
FY20

36%
FY21

37% Goal for FY22

Brian J. Kennedy '87 traces his philanthropic enthusiasm to his role as Senior Group Leader at St. Benedict's Prep. "It became my job to get fellow students to do things in the interest of the whole group rather than themselves," recalled Mr. Kennedy, Managing Director at Goldman Sachs and Vice Chair of the St. Benedict's Board of Trustees and Chair of the Finance Committee. "A sense of community with kids from different backgrounds was instilled in me. I took away from that a desire to help more kids grow and overcome the socioeconomic challenges they face."

The St. Benedict's mission to elevate the lives of urban kids has resonated with donors like Mr. Kennedy and others, who believe deeply in the School. As a result of their support, The Hive's Annual Giving campaign is the envy of most schools. For FY21, Annual Giving generated \$14.3 million, the most recorded in Benedict's history. Last year, 27% of donors increased their contributions. Even more remarkable: This rise in giving occurred in the midst of a worldwide pandemic.

Gray Bees played a key role in the campaign's success. In fact, alumni participation grew for the fifth consecutive year. Today, 36% of alumni support The Hive, a rate that far exceeds alumni participation at other independent and Catholic schools in New Jersey. Chief Advancement Officer Michael A. Fazio said, "Remember that Benedict's Hates a Quitter. Gray Bees always want to be number

one. Our guys want to keep that participation rate going, so this year we've raised the bar with a goal of 37%. Most of all, alumni want to pay it back to our kids."

The increase in giving comes at a pivotal time in St. Benedict's history. As many urban Catholic schools struggle to survive, enrollment at St. Benedict's has grown 28% over the past five years, spurred in large part by increases in the Elementary, Middle and Girls Prep Divisions. The trend is expected to continue, with current applications up across all Divisions.

With more kids comes the need for additional resources to support their educational, emotional and financial needs. The School recently constructed six new classrooms — four in Bishop Joseph Francis Hall and two in Cawley Hall — to accommodate higher enrollment. St. Benedict's also has plans to enhance space and capacity to welcome even more students in coming years.

Higher enrollment also heightens the need for additional student financial assistance. The Hive currently awards \$5 million in financial aid to 85% of Middle and Prep Division students. Dean of Freshmen Jared Boone '13 understands the difference this support makes for Benedict's families. Parents sometimes work two or three jobs, and some freshmen even hold part-time jobs, to help pay tuition. Recalling how his own mother sacrificed so he could attend St. Benedict's, Mr. Boone said, "I think we owe it to every kid to help them be

here. Everyone who has given a dollar is committed to our mission. Without that commitment, we don't have the history and the legacy that we have. Without that commitment, I wouldn't be here. It's incredibly important."

Mr. Kennedy has reaped the benefits of a St. Benedict's education in his own career, and has seen classmates, as well as more recent alumni, succeed at Goldman Sachs and other top firms. That strengthens his resolve to aim higher for a new generation of Gray Bees: "St. Benedict's Prep changes the trajectory of our students' lives. We are a proven investment that puts your money to work on day one. Every dollar you give today helps someone tomorrow. In order to keep that mission going, we need people to invest in us and our kids."

Mr. Fazio is grateful for the recent increases in giving, yet he knows the need will grow every year. Noting that tuition provides just 30% of the School's annual revenue, he said, "St. Benedict's Prep needs to raise so much money each year because without it, we wouldn't be here. Financially speaking, this model shouldn't work. Everything you see here in Newark — the 12 acres, the beautiful buildings, the faculty, the amazing programs, the counseling center — all of that is not inexpensive. In fact, it's pretty expensive. But that's exactly what these kids need. We're not going to skimp on that. We find a way to make it happen through the generosity of donors." **B**



FRESHMAN MAKES FIRST GIFT TO THE HIVE

Kaleb Hassel '25 didn't wait years to make his first gift to The Hive. And he didn't put off giving until he "made his first million" or found career and financial success. Kaleb donated to the Annual Fund at St. Benedict's Prep just four months into his freshman year.

His experience with Drama Guild was a big reason why. Inspired by the culture, diversity, love and support "that embraces the actors and technicians within the community," Kaleb made his gift shortly after the Guild returned to live performances and staged "Dream on Monkey Mountain" last November.

"Acting in a production was always a dream of mine for the past six years," said Kaleb. "And Drama Guild surpassed the dream's expectations. I'm glad that with my donation I'm able to help fund future productions that the Drama Guild will host." Director of Drama Guild Patricia Flynn H '95 was especially touched by Kaleb's thoughtfulness and generosity.

"Kaleb came up to me after the production was over and said he wanted to make a donation to the Drama Guild," she said. My first reaction was confusion because no one had ever done so before." As Kaleb talked about what being a part of the play meant to him, "I was so happy," Ms. Flynn continued. "He was expressing what I hope every student experiences in our theater." She was also impressed that as a freshman, Kaleb understands "what it means to be a Gray Bee and that giving back is part of our history. What we do here would be impossible without people giving back."

Director of Annual Giving Lauren Alampi said Kaleb's gift provides a bigger lesson for the St. Benedict's community. "As adults we try and model expectations and standards of accountability for our kids," she said. "In this instance we have a student showing us the way. Thank you, Kaleb, for your gift and for demonstrating the importance of giving back to Benedict's."



SHARE YOUR GOOD NEWS!

St. Benedict's welcomes any and all news about your career, education, family life and reconnecting with other alumni. Submit news via email to graybee@sbp.org.

1946

Paul Lobo and his wife, Nancy, moved their principal residence to Fort Pierce, Fla., in 2019. They are communicants of St. Helen Church in Vero Beach, where Nancy is an active member of the Council of Catholic Women. Paul is staying busy working on two projects for a Colombian sugar operation relating to the reduction of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. They say they greatly miss their many children and grandchildren, now all in the Northeast, but not the cold winters. Paul said he feels blessed to be able to assist Benedict's in its mission of Catholic education.

1947

Joseph Debold is grateful for a great Catholic

education he received at St. Benedict's and added that dedicated faculty and many in his family, relatives and friends are all Gray Bee graduates going back to 1926.

1959

John M. Pierce is still renovating churches for Holy Mother Church.

1963

Colette and **Albert Hagovsky** celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary and moved closer to their daughter, who is expecting their second grandchild.

1964

Arnold Lettieri, Jr., served as the delegate for Fairfield University at the November 5, 2021, inauguration of Jonathan Scott Holloway

Ph.D., as the 21st President of Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

Michael Walter, son of Gerri and **Jack Walter**, was awarded the Law Enforcement Torch Run International Executive Council's Athlete of the Year Award for his "outstanding contribution to the Law Enforcement Torch Run and Special Olympics" in December 2021.

The Torch Run is a fundraiser benefiting Special Olympics worldwide. Locally, it is a 24-hour ocean plunge usually in November each year into Rhode Island's Narragansett Bay. Michael, who was born with Down syndrome, has participated in many different events over the years. As he got older, he turned his attention toward raising funds for his

favorite charity. Over the past 14 years, Michael has successfully plunged and raised more than \$100,000 for Rhode Island Special Olympics. This year he raised more than \$10,000.



1965

Larry Froelich wrote, "I am happy and proud to announce the birth of my first grandson, Nakoah Lorenzo Froelich, born to my son, **Devin '11**, and his wife, Yenny. His first name includes "koa", the Hawaiian word for warrior. His middle name is Spanish for Lawrence, which is obviously my first name and also Devin's middle name. Devin and Yenny were kind

to honor me with his middle name and used the Spanish translation to acknowledge her Colombian background and the connection I have with Colombia due to my graduate school international internship in Colombia in the 70s."

1966

Former Big Ten Commissioner **James Delany** was inducted into the Rose Bowl Hall of Fame.

1968

John D'Ascensio and his wife, Janine, have relocated from North Caldwell to Barnegat, N.J., to begin the quiet enjoyment of retirement accompanied by their two Labs, Blaze and Eddie.

John wrapped up a long career spanning (and juggling) 48 years as volunteer, 28 years as a Cedar Grove Construction Official and 39 years as Essex County Fire Coordinator. Along the way John served as Municipal Fire Chief and was awarded

Fire Inspector of the Year. He also had a hand in writing the statewide Model Emergency Operations Plan.

Sam Carollo and his wife, Michele, report they have relocated from Freehold, N.J., to a 55+ community in Manchester, N.J. Sam is enjoying retirement after 39 years in progressive roles as an Educator, Assistant Principal and Principal. He is doing volunteer transport work at CentraState Hospital bringing patients to test sites and discharged patients home. Sam will be looking to sharpen his golf skills once spring arrives.

Sam also wrote that he and Michele are as proud as parents can ever be of their children. Samantha, now in her seventh year as a Second-grade Teacher with a master's degree in special education, is currently pursuing supervisor/principal certification. Their son, Michael, is a licensed Doctor of Psychology working in a counseling capacity at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital in New York City.

1970

Ralph G. Fusco is a retired CIO (Chief Information Officer) and has built a new house and moved to Upton, Mass.

Daniel P. Quinn just received the Certificate of Excellence for "Sacco & Vanzetti: BURN!!!" a film that he directed. The film was a finalist in Best Short Film (Main Category) in Beyond the Curve International Film Festival.

1972

William M. Brown III was inducted into the College of Fellows for the American Institute of Architects at the Opera House of the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.



1982

Sgt. Brian Wilson retired from the Hillside Police Department after 25 years of service.

1984

Kristen and **Benjamin Battle** welcomed their first grandson, Benjamin Joseph Gallagher, last June.



1986

Mark Zeno wrote, "This year I was honored by receiving the Scouting... Vale La Pena! 2020 Service Award, which recognizes outstanding services by an adult individual for demonstrated involvement in the development and implementation of Scouting opportunities for all youth

and community involvement." Mark also had the honor of accepting the Business Education Partnership Champion Award on behalf of the Woodbridge Junior Police Academy.



1998

Jamaal Johnson was accepted to the Educational Administration-Supervisors, Principals & School Business Administrators online program at Kean University.

1999

Demond Cowins was inducted into the NJIT Men's Basketball Hall of Fame. **Dr. Torian Easterling**, who is the First Deputy Commissioner and Chief Equity Officer of the New York City Department of

Health and Mental Hygiene, has a few PSAs running on TV, radio and social media about COVID and flu vaccines.

2003

Humanity United's Managing Partner, Srik Gopal, announced that **Kehinde Togun** became Managing Director of the foundation's Public Engagement Portfolio effective January 1. Kehinde is being promoted from his current role as Senior Director, Policy & Government Relations, where he has spent the past year developing a new team strategy and leading HU's efforts to engage the U.S. government, multilateral institutions and advocacy organizations.

2006

Cameron Jones sent this update on his work in the UK: "I am currently in rehearsals for "The Burnt City," an immersive, physical theatre piece by the theatre company Punchdrunk. My characters are Polymestor

Events

HEADMASTER'S RECEPTION



Eighty-five guests attended the Headmaster's Reception at Mayfair Farms on November 18, 2021. The student speaker was **Yamill Harris '22**. **Carl Studer '48** presented Headmaster **Fr. Edwin Leahy, O.S.B. '63** with a Knights of Columbus sword that had belonged to his uncle, Fr. Richard Studer, O.S.B, a monk at St. Mary's Abbey (now Newark Abbey) who had been chaplain to the Knights of Columbus in Newark, Maplewood and the Oranges. Fr. Studer died in 1958.

NEW ENGLAND AREA RECEPTION



The New England Area Reception was hosted by **Art Meehan '53**, although he was not able to attend. About two dozen guests including recent graduates at colleges in the area attended the event at Brae Burn Country Club in West Newton, Mass.

GRAY BEE GOLF OUTING



The Gray Bee Golf Outing took place on September 20, 2021, at Spring Lake Golf Club. About 100 guests, both alumni and friends, attended the event.

CLASS OF 1961 60TH REUNION



The St. Benedict's Prep Class of 1961 60th Reunion was celebrated with a gathering of former classmates at the Breakers Hotel in Spring Lake on November 13, 2021. Forty-five alumni and their wives attended the

affair, which provided an opportunity for longtime friends to reconnect and enjoy old memories. **Pete Ryan '61** introduced classmates and **Jack McCaskie '61** provided a Zoom call for those who couldn't attend, which a number of classmates took advantage of. **Candace Bradsher H'99**, **Paul Thornton '63** and **Didier Jean-Baptiste '86** were guests of the Class of '61 and each spoke about the St. Benedict's of today and the wonderful work that is being done by the community.

and Cabaret/Bar Host. We start previews in March, and I will be performing that show until January 2023 in London. I recently played The Wiz in "The Wiz" at the Hope Mill Theatre in Manchester, UK, from November 2021 to January 2022. Last summer, I performed in "South Pacific" at the Chichester Festival Theatre in Chichester, UK. I also do regular voiceover work, including hosting the podcast show "Cancelled" by Broccoli Productions here in the UK."

2008

Kwasi Agyeman is among a handful of local law students who have been awarded the Law School Scholarship by the Louis A. Martinet Legal Society in New Orleans. Kwasi is a research assistant at the Tulane Corporate Law Institute, where he helps in organizing the nation's premiere corporate law annual conference for securities practitioners, Delaware Supreme Court and Court of Chancery judiciary, Fortune 500 corporate counsels and Wall

Street investment bankers. He spent his law school summers experiencing litigation work at the New Orleans City Attorney's Office, and global transactional work at Albright Stonebridge Group in Washington, D.C.

After law school, Kwasi plans to focus on transactional deal-making at the intersection of government and business. Prior to attending law school, he worked in the U.S. Senate and International Monetary Fund. He received his Bachelor of Arts in History from The George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

Dan Sheehan earned an MBA with a concentration in Management and Leadership from Rutgers Business School. Dan is an insurance executive at William H. Connolly & Co. in Montclair, N.J.

2009

Jared Pietz was promoted to Lieutenant of Roselle Park Fire Dept Engine 1 and Rescue 1.

2010

Christian and **Matt Aaron** celebrated their first wedding anniversary.



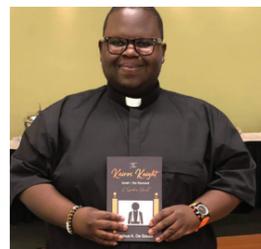
Brendan Coble has been promoted to First Lieutenant in the United States Air Force.

2012

Congratulations to **Louis Lainé**, Director of St. Benedict's Vox Institute, who recently received his letter of acceptance to the Harvard Law School. Louis will be headed to Cambridge, Mass., in the fall.

2014

Joshua DeSousa is officially a licensed minister and also an author.



Isaac D. Tucker-Rasbury lives and works remotely in Los Angeles as a Data Analyst for Slalom, a global consulting firm focused on strategy, technology and business transformation. Before Slalom, he worked in the financial services, private equity and fintech industries on operations, financial planning and analysis and data analytics teams in Los Angeles and Dallas. He earned a certification from the University of California Berkeley's extension school in data analytics in 2020, another in gender data in 2021 and took self-paced courses to pick up other skills along the way. Professionally, Isaac is proudest of his

accomplishments working on teams to build dashboards, improve processes and synthesize ambiguous needs into coherent plans and deliverables.



BIRTHS

Chidi Asoluka '01 and his wife welcomed twins, a son, Obioma and a daughter, Onyekachi (Onye), in November 2021. "We are overjoyed," he wrote, "and overtired."



Nicolette and **Matthew Lesperance '02** announce the birth of a baby girl, Sophia Rose.

Kehinde Togun '03 wrote, "Zsuzsi and I are blessed to celebrate this Christmas as a family of four

after welcoming Theodore Adeoluwa Lippai-Togun into the world on December 14, 2021. He and Zsuzsi are doing very well. Theodore was so eager to see the world that he came four weeks ahead of schedule. Despite being early, he weighed a healthy 6 lbs., 5 oz and measured 19.75 inches. He is truly wonderful and we are enamored with him. Abraham is also excited to finally be a big brother – he's been waiting months for his big brother debut, and he gets an A+ so far!"



Jenny and **Roberto Abrantes '11** just welcomed their fifth child, Elias Alexander Abrantes, last July.

Shane and **Kristopher McKoy '14** welcomed a baby girl, Kamaya, in December.



MARRIAGES

Tamika and **Joe Harris, Jr. '98** were married.



Ashely Burgess and **Ian Frankoski '00** were married in Ship Bottom, N.J., last fall.



Brittany and **Angel Rodriguez '08** were married.



Gina Lippolis and **Victor Villagomez '16** were married.



Making Good on an Overdue Loan

Seventy-two years ago, John J. Connelly was enrolled in a graduate program at Seton Hall University. His professor was a Benedictine monk. Mr. Connelly, who lived in Newark at the time, often drove his



professor back to Newark Abbey after evening classes had concluded. Their car rides were filled with conversation about literature, writers and the English author Geoffrey Chaucer.

The monk loaned his student two works by Chaucer from his personal library "to encourage me in furthering and broadening my education," Mr. Connelly remembered. The class ended and their paths didn't cross again. Some years later, Mr. Connelly's energetic dog got hold of the Chaucer books and the volumes were no longer fit to return.

Now age 97 and living in Florida, Mr. Connelly doesn't remember the name of the monk who loaned him the books, but he never forgot about replacing them. In January, a letter explaining the overdue loan arrived at St. Benedict's Prep, along with a new Chaucer volume and a generous check. "I am truly sorry it has taken me this long to return Chaucer," he wrote. "Please see that it is given to someone who will know the right place for it to reside and to be put to good use."

The new Chaucer book has a home in the Radel Library. Mr. Connelly's gift is supporting the 2022 Annual Fund.

We have received word that these members of the St. Benedict's community or members of their families have died.

ALUMNI

Robert P. Miller '42
Joseph A. Barber '44
Edward J. Grohe, Jr. '45
James V. Connell '46
Capt., USN (Ret.)
William J. Kastner '46
Philip E. Beekman '49
James E. Stanton '49
Louis R. Grote '50
Robert G. Lasher '50
Michael Murray '50
Adam M. Stanislawczyk '50
Joseph Hegner '51

Edwin P. Crowell '52
Louis F. Friedman '53
Charles F. Nash '53
James R. Coker '55
Paul F. Noll '55
Joseph D. Barbieri '57
Phillip A. Aromando, D.D.S. '58
Robert D. Finnegan '58
John F. Fox, Sr. '58
Paul M. Giegerich, Sr. '58
Robert Koval '58
Anthony R. Mautone, Esq. '60
Rocco A. Summa '60
Richard P. Vreeland '60

Timothy S. Hughes '61
Edward T. Burke '61
Sabino A. Molinaro '61
Eric C. Brintzinghoffer '63
Patsy E. Briante '64
Kevin W. Kelly '64
James D. Russo '68
John A. Maginnis '70
Gerard T. Egatz '71
Lyle Clark '72
Alfred Davis, Jr., D.C. '74
Carl J. Quick, Jr. H'79
Michele & Gregory J. Ebert '81
Paul A. Lombardy '84
Joseph J. Baker '89

COMMUNITY

Anastacio Alcantara
Father of Jose '20 and Moises '17
Ever Nosta Arteaga
Father of Julio Nosta '99
Wayne Olive Barrett
Mother-in-Law of Leon McBurrows '82
Shirley J. Bazemore
Mother of Marvin '83
Stanley E. Brzuskiwicz
Father of Derek '99

Carol Bukwich
Wife of George '56 (RIP)
Claude Cain, Sr.
Father of Claude '89
Mary Caruso
Mother of Thomas '69
Linhord A. Darlington, Sr.
Father of Linphord '83
Geneva DeShazior
Mother of Joseph '72
Ernestine Dickey
Mother of Todd '81

Tina DiPiano
Mother of Mike H'82,
Grandmother of Mike '95,
Frank '01
Michael J. Donnelly
Husband of Joyce
Elizabeth Murphy Durkin
Mother of Thomas '71,
Edward '73, Dennis '75,
Cornelius '79, Michael '82,

Grandmother of Thomas '96,
Kiernan '10
Ethel Eason
Grandmother of Terence '96
Maverick Edwards
Former St. Benedict's student
Antoinette M. Galioto
Daughter of John Bianchi
1918 (RIP)

J.V. Harris
Father of Corey '95
Alida Wiltse McKeon
Wife of John Conroy '75
Joseph R. McLaughlin
Son of Daniel '70
Donald J. Meisch, Sr.
Father of Donald '04
Michael W. Peter
Father of Timothy '87

Mildred B. Pugh
Grandmother of Marvin
Bazemore '83
Anne Ruth "Robin" Scanlan
Mother of Mike Scanlan H'97
Troy Slade
Father of Troi '22
Betty Lou Stypa
Wife of Joseph '49 (RIP)

Mary Louise Sweetman
Wife of Charles
Deanne Turner
Mother of Rahn '96
Jane R. Wahl
Wife of Anthony '60
Vincent Williams
Father of Yasin '11
James Zarembo, DPM
Son of Stephen '56
Dorothy Zawistowski
Wife of Robert

A sympathy card has been sent to each bereaved family in the name of the St. Benedict's family – alumni, students, faculty, staff and monks – promising our prayers and a special remembrance at the monks' daily conventual Mass.



CENTURY II SCHOLARSHIP FUND
 ST. BENEDICT'S PREPARATORY SCHOOL
 520 HIGH STREET • NEWARK, NEW JERSEY 07102
 (201) 643-4800

February 16, 1972

Dear Friend of St. Benedict's:

A sad letter, but one that must be written. St. Benedict's is suspending operations indefinitely as of June 10, 1972. This decision was reached in a Newark Abbey Community meeting last night.

The struggle over the last three years against decreasing enrollment and rising costs was hard fought on our part but we lost.

We are grateful for your support of our Century II Campaign. After the expenses for launching the drive were paid, I am happy to report that almost all of the Century II scholarship students for this year have been taken care of.

Needless to say, the campaign is at an end and all pledges for future payments are no longer in existence.

If as a worker you are in possession of any donations, I ask that you return them to the donors. Please send me all your cards at your earliest convenience.

Again, thanks, and please keep us in your prayers; you are daily in ours.

Sincerely,

+ Ambrose J. Clark, C
 (Rt. Rev.) Ambrose J. Clark, C
 Abbot
 President, St. Benedict's

520 High Street
 Newark, New Jersey 07102

February 24, 1973

Dear Friends:

I hope this writing finds you healthy and living in the peace that is ours through our brother Jesus Christ. All of us at the Abbey are well and looking forward to beginning a new work here this summer.

You have probably heard several rumors concerning our plans in Newark. I would like this letter to dispel the rumors and provide you with the facts. Those of us still resident at the Abbey have spent several months evaluating our position in the Church and in Newark. After much discussion and planning we have decided to open a small, interracial secondary school with the belief that we can meet some of the pressing educational needs of our time.

The school will consist of freshmen, sophomores and juniors in its first year of operation. Several members of the Class of '74 have said that they would like to come back if we were able to open a school again. We have decided not to have a senior class because 1) it would be unfair to students to change schools again, and 2) one year would not allow sufficient time for students to receive a significant experience in our new learning community. We hope you will understand our reasons for not having a senior class. We hope, too, that the members of the Class of '74 realize we will always consider them Benedict's men.

We are writing this letter so you will be aware of our thinking and to set straight the rumors that are about. We ask your continued interest and prayers in our behalf.

In Christ,

Edwin D. Leahy
 (Rev.) Edwin D. Leahy, O.S.B.
 Director, St. Benedict's



GREAT TEACHING
 never goes out of style.



The monks opened your mind to art, religion and philosophy. They coached you, tended to your heart and showed you how to bounce back from setbacks. They were the big brother and friend you didn't know you needed.



We hope we can count on your support of the 2022 Annual Fund to ensure today's Gray Bees receive the same formative experience you did. Please respond today!



Giving is easy!
 Scan the QR code to make your gift, visit www.sbp.org/style or use one of the other options.



GIVING MADE EASY

Venmo @SBPGrayBees

Cash App \$SBPGrayBees

Text SBP to 91999

From the Archives

Two very different documents, written one year apart, brought to the attention of the St. Benedict's Prep community as the School approaches important 50-year milestones. The first letter ended an era. The second conceived something entirely new, that in time, became the St. Benedict's people look to for hope and inspiration today.

FOREVER
BENEDICT'S
 The Campaign for St. Benedict's Preparatory School

BE COUNTED!



St. Benedict's
PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Office of Advancement
520 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard
Newark, NJ 07102
www.sbp.org

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Newark, NJ
Permit No. 4763

2022 Annual Scholarship

Gala

Thursday, May 12, 2022

Honoring

Barry H. Ostrowsky

President and Chief Executive Officer
RWJ Barnabas Health

Ronald J. Del Mauro

Chief Executive Officer (Retired)
Saint Barnabas Healthcare System
Trustee, St. Benedict's Prep

Candace Bradsher H'99

Secretary to the Abbot
Annual Giving Officer, St. Benedict's Prep

Celebrating the culmination of



Formal invitation to follow. sbp.org/gala2022

For information on sponsorships or journal ads, please contact Mary Hauck at (973) 792-5776 or email graybee@sbp.org.