



SUMMER
2020



CONNECTION

CLEVELAND CENTRAL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

REFLECTIONS:

A Decade of Transformation and Partnerships

(Part 4 of a 5-part series)

ALSO INSIDE:

Ironman Strong. CCC Launches
Collaborative Marketing Initiative

Board Member Profile: Betts Skrha

CCC's Music Program Strikes
a Chord with Faith

and more...



MISSION



Cleveland Central Catholic High School is a coeducational school **rooted** in the **Gospel values of Jesus Christ** and focused on college and career readiness. Our mission is to **challenge and encourage** our students to **excel** academically, to **deepen** their faith in God, and to live **a life of service**, so that they may face the future with **confidence and hope**.



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From the President

Leo Hyland

We are called. Yes, we are all called to love one another – as God loves us. Today's uncertain times present real problems for many people (safety, medical, emotional, financial and practical, etc.). We pray daily for ourselves, our loved ones, colleagues, students and families, and all who are hurting.

Today I received a prayer reminding me that we also need to act in faith, not fear. ***Our mission is to challenge and encourage our students to excel academically, to deepen their faith in God, and to live a life of service, so they may face the future with confidence and hope.*** In order to fulfill our school's mission, we must work together to better serve our students, our school, and our broader community. By doing so, in partnership with thousands of other people and organizations, we are preparing our young people to learn to lead and to serve others. This is truly putting the Gospel words into action.

Thank God that CCC was prepared to address the abrupt end of our school year. In just four days, our administrative team – working with our faculty, staff and community partners – successfully launched “remote learning” at our school. With only a few exceptions, our students were connected to the internet and they were continuing their classwork. In addition, CCC provided our students with nearly 400 Chromebooks, so they could complete their work from home. This was often done through the Google Classroom platform, which CCC launched several years ago. Throughout this period, our students have been resilient and have adapted well to these many changes. Yet, many of the other (non-academic) issues that our young people face are still prevalent in their lives: poverty, safety, food insecurities, shelter, fear of the future, and even loneliness. They need our support and encouragement. They need the love that we are all called to give.

Today, in this time of crisis, I ask everyone in our CCC community to consider how they can do more to help ensure that the goodness of urban Catholic education continues. One way to help is to encourage families to consider CCC as a good choice for a solid Catholic educational experience. CCC currently has 561 students from eight suburbs and 18 ZIP codes in Cleveland. We welcome your referrals.

Another meaningful way to help is to give to the Central Catholic Fund. Due to the drastic economic downturn, we know that it will be difficult for some families to meet their tuition obligations this year. Your gift today at www.centralcatholics.org/giving/donate/ will help guarantee that our students will be able to cover their tuition balance. All gifts are needed and greatly appreciated.

We humbly thank our families for their trust in Cleveland Central Catholic for the strong formation of their child (ren). We gratefully salute our community partners and all those who financially support our mission here at CCC – you are investing wisely in these promising young people. We applaud the leadership and encouragement of CCC's Advisory Board and the guidance of the Diocese of Cleveland. We promise to continue to be good stewards of these important relationships and to continue to build on our successes. Please join us in this important ministry.

Most Gratefully,

"In order to fulfill our school's mission, we must work together to better serve our students, our school, and our broader community."



From the Principal

Sister Allison Marie Gusdanovic, SND, Principal

In the last three months our country has entered into an incredible journey, especially as we think about what will be our new normal in light of COVID19. On March 16, 2020, classroom instruction, as we knew it, came to an abrupt end. Teachers and students needed to transition to a form of education that was alien and yet exciting to them. Yes, our teachers and students had used Google Classroom before, but instruction needed to be significantly transformed in order to reach new heights at warp speed.

Our teachers engaged in a workshop day on Friday, March 13 and met with their classes on Monday to outline what the next few weeks would look like. Teachers shared their expertise and taught each other how to effectively use technology to deliver instruction. They explored and tested new platforms for teaching and learning including programs for recording themselves teaching lessons and inserting questions for students to answer while viewing video clips. Learning how to “Zoom” and “Google Meet,” teachers and students journeyed together as they navigated these uncharted territories.

Weeks turned into months as it became clear that students and teachers would not be returning to school for the remainder of the school year. In addition to Zoom and Google Meet, teachers phone conferenced and assisted students in one-on-one and small group settings, all through virtual electronic methods. Weekly virtual department meetings allowed the adults to connect with one another in lesson planning and mutual support, sharing the blessings and the difficulties.

Food was distributed to families in need. Campus Ministry developed a Hope and Challenge series of weekly messages from staff members and students to focus our energies on the hope we could find in these challenging times.

Seniors reflected on the blessings of staying at home. They shared the very depths of their souls. They appreciated the time to spend with their families. One wrote, “My blessing is my family and friend’s health.” Another said, “Everyone needs to squash more than just this sickness, but this world needs to get rid of HATE, IGNORANCE, MISTREATMENT!”

These young women and men dug deeply into their faith experiences: “Ever since my Kairos retreat I have been more mindful about the current moment and God’s presence in my life. I feel like He guided me through Kairos to help me with moments like these.” And, “This experience has been humbling. I’ve seen more people in need than ever before, and the drive to help.”

These are our future leaders. These are Cleveland Central Catholic graduates. These are young women and men who will face the future with confidence and hope. They are trailblazers. They are our future. We are grateful that, as a school community, we have been able to identify so many blessings in our lives as we embark on this journey called the new normal.

Thank you for your continued and ongoing support of Cleveland Central Catholic’s mission as it is embodied in staff, students, and benefactors.

One with you in the Peace of Christ,

Sister Allison Marie, SND

*"Isn't that the mission
of Cleveland Central
Catholic – to challenge
and encourage our students
to excel academically, to
deepen their faith in God,
and to live a life of service,
so that they may face the
future with confidence
and hope?"*

REFLECTIONS

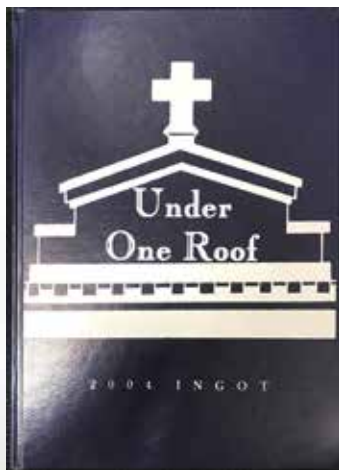
A Decade of Transformations and Partnerships

(Part 4 of a 5-part series)



The 2000s

The 2000s will be forever linked to the terror of September 11 and its aftermath. It also was a time of tremendous financial hardship for many, given a devastating housing crisis and a worldwide economic downturn. The human race was frightened with SARS, as well as bird flu and swine flu epidemics. But on the positive side, it was a period of extraordinary innovation and meteoric technological advancement. It was the decade of Google, the iPhone, Windows XP, Facebook, Twitter, flash drives and GPS. With the growth of the Internet and the explosion of social media, we experienced the benefits and challenges of globalization like never before. And it was the decade an African American was elected President of the United States.



On a local level, we were barely holding our footing from a vertiginous rollercoaster ride, complements of the LeBron James-led Cleveland Cavaliers. But, while the Cavs couldn't deliver a championship to Cleveland sports fans during the 2000s, Cleveland Central Catholic did – winning the Ohio Division III Girls Basketball title in 2007 and the Boys Division II Basketball title in 2009.

Under the passionate leadership of Karl Ertle, president 2004-2010, and Allison Marie Gusdanovic, SND, serving as both principal and assistant principal during a portion of that

decade, the school was nothing short of transformed.

In 2003 – with the consolidation of the Scranton (St. Michael's) campus and the Forman (St. Stanislaus) campus – the transition into a one-campus school was complete. Terry Edwards was principal during that transition period with Sister Allison Marie starting at CCC in the summer of 2003 and Ertle replacing Edwards in 2004.

A \$13 million capital campaign in partnership with the Catholic Diocese delivered new classrooms, labs, meeting space, the Four Saints

Chapel and a second gymnasium. To top it off, a beautiful new atrium entrance was created off Broadway Avenue. The dedication ceremony for this new wing took place in 2006. The campaign also strengthened the school's endowment, which funds academic scholarships and the school's tuition assistance program. Over a six-year period, enrollment climbed more than 40 percent.

Mr. Ertle remembers well the phone call from Bishop Pilla's office that ultimately led to leaving his post at St. Ignatius High School to spearhead Central Catholic's capital campaign and building initiative.

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"AS WITH EVERY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL, IT'S A MINISTRY. IT'S A VOCATION. THEY'RE NOT IN IT FOR THE PAYCHECK."

- Karl Ertle, president 2004-2010

In 2010, through a partnership with Third Federal Foundation, the City of Cleveland and the diocese, Central Catholic opened the Ben Stefanski, II Stadium, which accommodated football and track athletes.

Mr. Ertle includes his wife, Carol, and six children in his plaudits. "Carol was tremendous ... she would tutor kids ... she and all the kids would come to the games ... come to the graduation ... they'd help clean up the neighborhood ... help the homeless when we did that. They were all in."

The success of Central Catholic graduates, especially considering what so many have overcome, is what is most gratifying to both Sr. Allison and Mr. Ertle.

"It's that incredible Central Catholic spirit," explains Mr. Ertle. "We were a family." His stories are of sacrifice, of volunteering, of cooking and friendship, of extra tutoring, long hours and lots of hugging ... of

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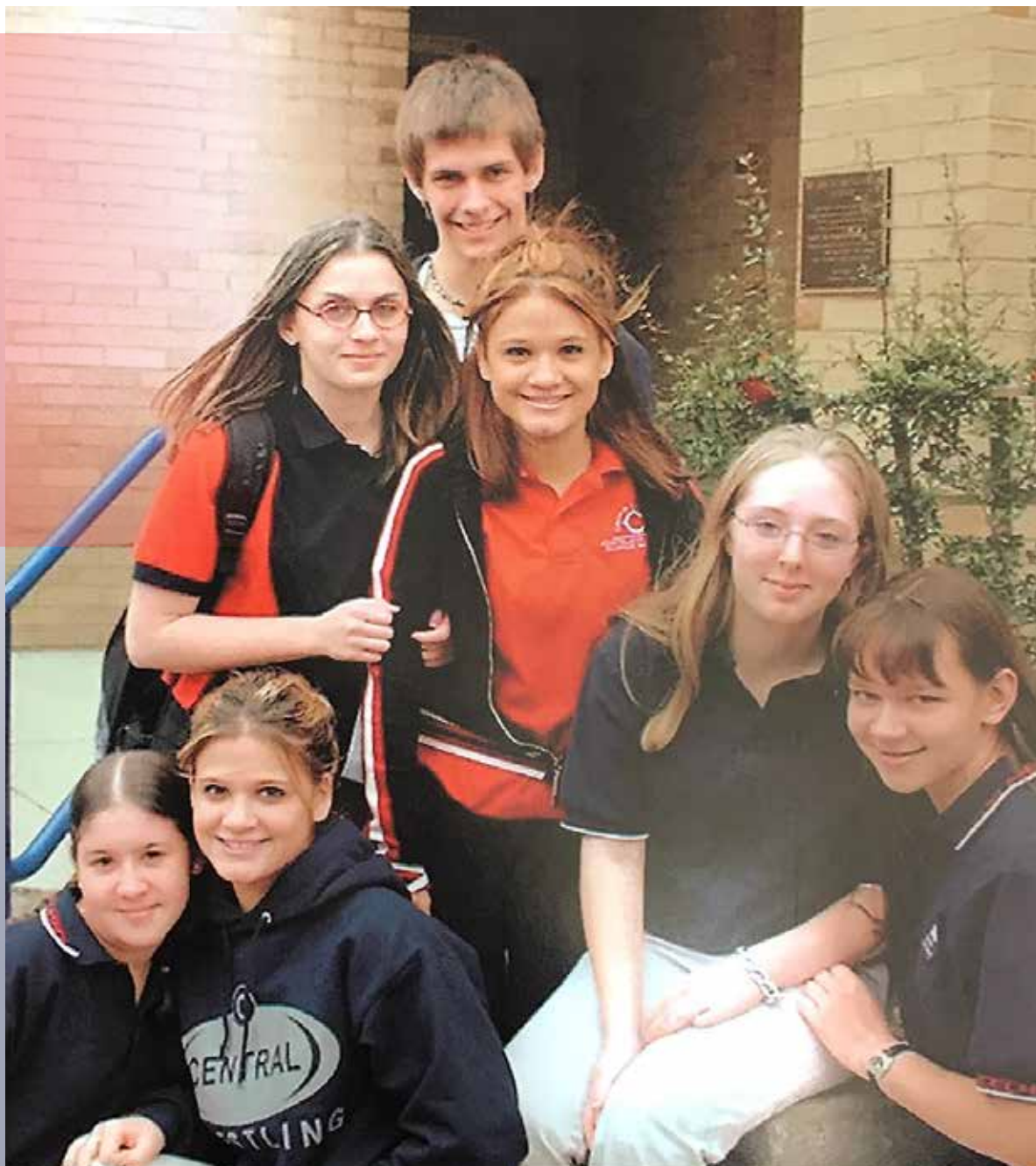
"The diocese provided a framework," he remembers, "and basically people just rolled up their sleeves, said a prayer, and set out to change the lives of these kids." He never doubted the assignment was a calling from God.

"My main job was just to go crazy letting people know about this amazing institution," Mr. Ertle reflects. He clearly is proud of the "simply fantastic young men and women who were committed ... who had parents who purposely chose Central Catholic ... (who) would do the volunteer work ... do the

service work and ... jump through all the hoops to get the vouchers to be able to afford it." In addition to the students and their families, he credits the faculty, staff, alumni, donors, the diocese, public officials, community groups, business leaders, board members, the architect, builders, the local media and "the brain power and volunteer spirit of the Third Federal team" with seeing the vision and bringing it to fruition. "As with every Catholic high school, it's a ministry. It's a vocation. They're not in it for the paycheck."

"THEY WERE ALL IN."

-- Karl Ertle, president 2004-2010



choosing to be there and to stay there, despite other opportunities.

“It was always about, ‘we can do this’ and ‘this school has a future because our city needs these kids to be leaders.’ ... It energized me,” says Mr. Ertle. “When I saw how [everyone] ... worked so hard to build this school without the financial resources that many

schools have ... what they did together was just fantastic to behold. I was blessed to be a part of it.”

And then there were those Ironman championships.

“You know, that’s what real schools do,” Mr. Ertle insists. “That’s what premier schools do. And for Central Catholic to go down to Columbus

and knock off every team in the state ... to see [team members] with tears in [their] eyes ...”

You didn’t even have to be there to know how special that was. ■

CCC Launches Collaborative



Last year, Cleveland Central Catholic's Advisory Board embarked on a comprehensive marketing plan and enlisted the services of a local advertising agency in Cleveland.

The committee took time to look back on the history of CCC while envisioning for the future. The committee learned of the deep legacy and commitment of a campus that spans Forman, to Baxter, to Broadway. This city block is home to Cleveland Central Catholic High School, The Shrine Church of Saint Stanislaus, and Saint Stanislaus Elementary School.

The marketing committee collaborated with CCC principal Sister Allison Marie Gusdanovic, SND and Saint Stanislaus principal Mrs. Deborah Ann Martin, both providing valuable insight into the commonalities and ministries of the respective schools. Together, Cleveland Central Catholic and Saint Stanislaus Elementary School provide excellence in Catholic education from Kindergarten to 12th

grade to almost 700 students. What better way to collaborate and envision for the future, than embarking on a co-branded marketing campaign?

The advertising campaign was launched in June 2019 beginning with bus shelter advertising and ads on social media. It expanded to include billboard advertising and television advertising on WKYC TV-3. A direct mail marketing campaign was added to reach out to prospective families.

According to CCC Advisory Board member and chair of the marketing committee Ellen Zerucha, priorities included attracting and retaining students. "Enrollment in Catholic schools across the U.S. is declining, so it is competitive to attract and retain students, particularly with the competition in Cleveland," Zerucha explains. "We have public, private and charter schools that are targeting these same students." Engaging and retaining donors is another objective of the campaign.

The marketing team in collaboration with Sr. Allison Marie and Mrs. Martin carefully selected the individuals to be featured in the campaign ads. Alumna Marilyn Mosinski '83 was chosen because not only is she a graduate, but also a community leader in her role with Slavic Village Development Corp., as well as a parishioner of The Shrine Church of Saint Stanislaus. Jessica Maggard was chosen for the Prepared campaign because she is a graduate of Saint Stanislaus Elementary School and CCC, and currently has her child enrolled at Saint Stanislaus. The committee thought it was important to highlight the legacy our families have

at both schools. Veteran teacher Mr. Anthony Bien '99 was another alumni chosen, as he is one of CCC's great success stories as is a current member of our faculty. (See story on Anthony beginning on page 10).

Next time you are driving through the greater Cleveland area be on the lookout for our students and alums who you might see on a billboard or bus shelter advertisement. When you see the faces of these faith filled, smart, and dynamic students and alums we hope you will beam with pride just like we do. ■

Can a private school close the opportunity gap?

We think so.



bonitatem disciplinam scientiam
Saint Stanislaus
SCHOOL

Tour Cleveland Central
Catholic High School
& Saint Stanislaus School.

centralcatholichs.org
saintstanislaus.us

Marketing Initiative

"We have public,
private and charter
schools that are
targeting these
same students."

*CCC Advisory Board member
and chair of the marketing
committee Ellen Zerucha*



**IRONMAN
PROUD**

 **CENTRALCATHOLICHS.ORG**

A young woman is shown from the waist up, wearing a red t-shirt with "CCC IRONMAN" printed on it. She is looking upwards and to the right with a slight smile. The background is split diagonally from the top left to the bottom right, with the top-left half being dark blue and the bottom-right half being bright red.



**Prepared
to Grow...**

Brian,
Seventh Grade
Saint Stanislaus

Tour Cleveland Central Catholic
High School & Saint Stanislaus School.

A young man is shown from the chest up, smiling. He is wearing a light grey polo shirt with a small logo on the left chest. The background is a solid blue color.



**Prepared to
Give Back...**

Marilyn,
Alumni &
Community
Advocate

A woman is shown from the chest up, smiling. She is wearing a yellow textured cardigan over a white top. The background is a solid blue color.

CCC Alumni Making His

For Anthony Bien '99, returning to Cleveland Central Catholic to teach felt like coming home.

"I attended CCC for three years, from 1996 until graduation in 1999," Bien says. "I enjoyed attending CCC tremendously. Every student and faculty member made me feel welcome. It felt like I was part of an extended family and someplace where I belonged. It was an amazing experience being a student here."

"I have so many wonderful memories being a student at Central Catholic that it is difficult to narrow down just a few. If I had to choose, it would have to be prom and graduation. Spending prom weekend with my closest friends made it that much more special. Graduation was a day to celebrate the accomplishments of finishing high school. It was the last event as a student to share with family, faculty and classmates together," recalls Bien fondly. "I was very happy with the education I received at CCC. It truly prepared me to excel in college."

Bien attended Cleveland State University where he earned a bachelor's degree and master's degree in Education. With a college teaching degree in hand, the decision to return to CCC to teach was a no brainer. "I wanted to give back to the place that gave me so much as a young man trying to find my way. This is my dream job, and I am grateful every day to be here as a teacher," he exclaims with a smile. "I have never taught anywhere else."

Bien says his CCC teachers were influential in his pursuing a career in education.



"The teachers who stand out the most are Miss Lin Sinclair and Mr. Mark Anderson. Miss Sinclair was an excellent teacher who – if it were not for her – I'm not sure where I would be as an adult," Bien honestly admits. "She guided me in the right direction from day one and taught me the art of writing at CCC. Mr. Anderson is who I modeled my teaching technique after. He made it fun to learn."

"I love teaching at CCC. Every day is such a great experience," says CCC's Government, Economics, World Geography, Street Law and African American History teacher.

"I have learned a lot from my students. I have learned patience, understanding, and forgiveness from them."

- Anthony Bien '99

Mark

The passionate teacher believes the most important values he can teach his students are working hard, integrity and courage. “With these three values, any person can achieve their dreams, especially from an academic sense,” Bien insists.

Bien is quick to turn the attention back on his students. “The students at CCC come from numerous backgrounds,” he says. “Most kids here are very street smart. Once they become book smart, they can accomplish anything. The combination of both types of knowledge can allow a person to go very far in life, especially in the corporate world.”

Stephen Todorovich '20 says, “Mr. Bien is a great guy. His conversations are pretty interesting, too. You can go to him with everything, but that’s how it is with most of my teachers at CCC.”

Classmate Elizabeth Neace '20 agrees, “Mr. Bien is not afraid to get intimate and share his own struggles in order to encourage his students. He always makes sure the students understand what is being taught. He is very passionate about what he teaches and makes the students excited about the subject matter.”



“I just transferred here this year,” adds Khyyana Moore '21. “It was exciting to come to Mr. Bien’s class and joke around at the same time. I feel comfortable in his class. He takes the time with his students.”

“I have learned a lot from my students,” Bien says. “I have learned patience, understanding, and forgiveness from them.”



Recently, Anthony Bien participated in an advertising campaign for Cleveland Central Catholic. His face can be seen around town at bus stops and on billboards. About the experience, he laughs, “It is a lot of fun when people recognize me from these ads.”

During his free time, Bien enjoys working out and doing the Baptiste style of yoga. ■



CCC's Music Program Strikes a Chord with Faith

The story of how Traci Jones became the director of music at Cleveland Central Catholic is rooted in providence.





From a young age, Ms. Jones demonstrated an exceptional talent for music, playing the flute proficiently at age six and the keyboard soon after. Her parents, against overwhelming odds, found a way to get her a piano. It was the first time she recognized God's hand in her life.

"It's still amazing to me," she says. "Somehow or another I learned how to play the piano. I didn't know I was playing so well, but my mom thought it was really necessary to get a piano, and she was able to do that and my whole life changed."

Many years later, when she became pregnant with her third son, Ms. Jones was diagnosed with a life-threatening disease. She felt the Lord calling her to music again. Rather than give in to her illness, Ms. Jones became determined to develop and share her talent for music.

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“My doctors said I was wasting my family’s money, and I should just enjoy my last days at home,” she says. “But I decided I would do what I really wanted to do – what I knew God wanted me to do – go to school and become a music educator.” A single parent struggling with the physical limitations of her disease, Ms. Jones enrolled at Cleveland State University. “I didn’t want to sit around and wait to die. It would catch me when it was time.”

Before Ms. Jones received her diploma, her son, Marcus, a freshman at the time, worked to get her an interview at Cleveland Central Catholic. “He told them I would teach for free,” Ms. Jones laughs. “I credit so much of what we’ve been able to achieve here to my son because he wouldn’t stop bragging about me and pushing the idea on both ends,” beams Ms. Jones. “He was and still is on quite a spiritual journey.”

Many hundreds of students and parents are grateful Marcus got his way. His mom joined the staff at CCC in 2008 and became the full-time director of the music program

in 2013. With assistance from Sister Susan Clark and Sister Mary Seton Schlather, Ms. Jones was able to expand the music program dramatically. From its humble beginnings with just four students in the choir, the program now has an expanded, award-winning choir and band. Each semester, students may enroll in an engaging, mixed-genre music appreciation course and any number of instrumental classes. Among the most popular have been keyboard, drum and guitar.

“But I decided I would do what I really wanted to do – what I knew God wanted me to do – go to school and become a music educator.”

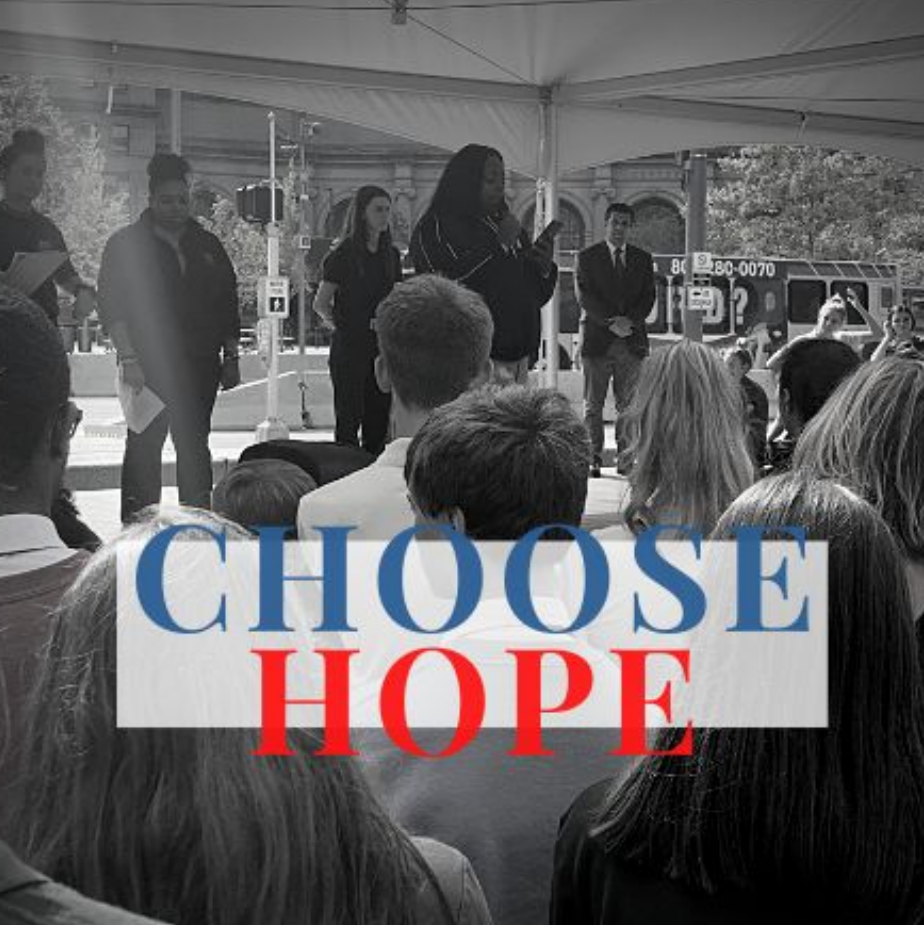
– Traci Jones

“I love to see how much the students grow in the program,” says Sister Mary Seton. “I am incredibly moved by the spirited way the choir leads the singing at Mass. ... and so impressed with all the students’ achievements and accomplishments.” The band recently received the highest rating for its solo in the Ohio Music Educators Association’s annual event, Sister Mary Seton notes. “It’s all due to Ms. Jones.”

An ordained minister, Ms. Jones is not shy about bringing God into her classroom. She starts every session with The Lord’s Prayer and creates an environment where students feel safe and inspired to lead impromptu prayers or sit in quiet meditation.

“It’s been such a blessing,” Ms. Jones reflects. “What could be more beautiful than to work all day in the house of God and be able to use the talents God has given you?” ■





How do you choose hope? The answer to this question is still a mystery I've been asking teachers, asking my parents and even asking my friends to help me with, but somehow I come to a dead end.

How do I choose hope when everything we thought senior year would be was stripped away from us? With no warning, no alert. It was just taken. No motivation to finish school work, and I'm a hands-on learner or in-person learner so there's no help there. But EVERYTIME I think of giving up I get the "God puts you in this situation because he knows you can handle it," and the "The storm will be over soon." But do I believe it? The answer is YES. It's not that I don't believe that God has it under control. It's the events that happen which show us He's under control. You get what I'm saying?

It's devastating that the only thing we can do is wait and see -- clueless not being able to control our future, but this was our year right? Well we THOUGHT it was our year.

So I #ChooseHope because I know up in the skies God is there somewhere pulling the strings and doing what He thinks or He knows needs to be done. I'm not ever going to question that. To all my senior classmates, I know it seems like it's the end, but honestly, it's the beginning This is the beginning of the long SUCCESSFUL path that God has chosen for us. It's the beginning of YOUR story. How are you going to *write it*?

~ Shelbi Richardson '20



Shelbi Richardson '20

Meet **Betts Skrha,**
CCC Advisory
Board Member Extraordinaire



At 90 years of age, Mrs. Betty Ann (Betts) Skrha continues to radiate joy, enthusiasm and determination. She exclaims, "I have had a wonderful life and enjoyed many opportunities to serve. I am a people person. I love being with people, helping them out, and bringing a little joy into their lives."

Betts has certainly brought a lot of joy to others, particularly the Cleveland Central Catholic community. She has served on the CCC Advisory Board for more than 15 years. "I am happy to play a small part in the exciting changes I continue to witness at Central Catholic," Betts says.

Betts has played more than a "small part" in the growth she has witnessed over the past dozen years at Cleveland Central Catholic. "Betts has brought a joyful presence to our school and our Advisory Board," explains CCC President Leo Hyland. "To me, Betts is the Angel of Broadway, having lived here and given so much to this neighborhood for so long -- and God only knows how many prayers for CCC and our students! She is a real blessing to us all."

Service has played a big role in her life. "My father was a physician, and my mom, a nurse. They always tried to reach out and help others," reflects Betts. Obviously, she continued that family legacy.

Betts attended Our Lady of Lourdes Elementary School and graduated from Notre Dame Academy, formerly on Ansel Road in Cleveland, in 1948. She went on to earn a bachelor of science degree from Notre Dame College, in South Euclid, in 1952 and a bachelor of science degree in nursing from St. John College in 1955.

"After I graduated from St. John College, I accepted a nursing position as an OB instructor at St. Alexis Hospital," she states. It was there that Betts met her future husband, Dr. Joseph Skrha. (Dr. Skrha also served as a deacon for decades, having been a member of the first Diocesan deacon class.) They married in 1954. Eventually, Betts worked with her husband at his family medicine practice on Broadway, across from the hospital, until her husband retired in 1996. The couple raised a daughter and three sons (two deceased).

When University Hospitals took over St. Alexis Hospital, renaming it St. Michael Hospital, Betts again offered her leadership skills, serving on the St. Michael Hospital Community Board. It was in this capacity she met then CCC Principal Karl Ertle, who asked Betts to consider serving on CCC's Advisory Board. "Well, I told him, 'Yes,'" says Betts.

"I've lived in this community all my life," says the Broadway resident. "As the chairwoman of the Community Board, once the hospital closed, we focused on Cleveland Central Catholic. Goodness begets goodness. It's been rewarding to see graduates move out to their own worlds. There is such tremendous enthusiasm at CCC."

"It's been rewarding to see graduates move out to their own worlds. There is such tremendous enthusiasm at CCC."

"I also continue to have the greatest regard for Karl Ertle and all the changes that occurred under his watch. He is a wonderful man who really likes people," describes Betts.

The former nurse, civic leader, and grandmother of five acknowledges she has always valued her Catholic education and continues to have a strong desire to help people in need.

"Cleveland Central Catholic is important to this community. We need to hold on to this high school because people depend on it," she passionately insists. "CCC graduates need to share their high school experience with their spouses and children. We must continue to get the word out about the excellent education this school provides our youth."

She concludes, "Current CCC President Leo Hyland is wonderful and very supportive as is the CCC staff and faculty. His wife, Beth, is too. They are a real blessing to all of us. Third Federal Savings is also a wonderful neighbor and friend to this school. Through this school, we are able to bring the love of the Lord to others. CCC is a beacon of hope to our community."



5/1 CLEVELAND CENTRAL CATHOLIC'S ANNUAL DAY OF GIVING

This year Cleveland Central Catholic held its annual 5/1 Day of Giving, with a twist. Because our families' needs are so great during these uncertain times, we extended our 5/1 day of giving so that it went through May 5th, coinciding with the national giving day #GiveTuesdayNow. All proceeds from our 5/1 campaign went directly to the Central Catholic Fund benefitting tuition assistance.

We are thrilled to announce that we raised \$6,095 from 30 donors in this year's campaign. There was an anonymous donor that matched each gift, dollar for dollar, bringing our total to \$12,190. We also had a generous board member donate the use of a Lake Tahoe condominium that was raffled off to one of our lucky donors.

Thank you to all our generous donors. Our families' financial needs are greater than ever due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our school community has been hit particularly hard. Your gift makes a difference. If you are interested in making a gift, please go to our website

<https://www.centralcatholicshs.org/giving/donate/>.



Sister Nicole Varnerin, SND and Robotics Club Make Face Shields for Medical Workers

Sister Nicole Varnerin, SND is using a 3D printer at Cleveland Central Catholic High School to make face shields for medical workers. Sister Nicole is the facilitator for CCC's Robotics Club and, with the input from her students via computer, she created shields to be donated to Cleveland Clinic.

According to Sister Nicole, "Sister Erin Zubal, OSU, was the first to come up with the idea. She saw articles about other people using 3D printers to make PPE and asked if it was possible for us to contribute. After extensive research, I found several online communities that made proven designs available to the public to make PPE for medical workers."

Sister Nicole says some options were "mask buckles," connectors that take pressure off the ears when wearing the mask too long, and face shields. She immediately went to work finding hospitals that needed the donations.

"I know these face shields are not industry standard, and I wanted to make sure our hospitals could use them," Sister Nicole explains. "The Cleveland Clinic has a team working specifically on COVID-related PPE donations. When I asked, they said they just approved those donations for use, and they needed face shields but not as much with the mask buckles."

To fulfill the need, Sister Nicole worked with students in CCC's Robotics Club – Robert Frost, Tariq Shabazz and Christopher Torres – to choose the design out of several online options. She reports they are in the process of making face shields for medical workers. "We can make two in about 2.5 hours, so it depends on how many hours we can get the printer working," she says. "We have materials to make 200 face shields, but I doubt we could invest 250 hours of printing."



"I am also collaborating with St. Francis School," Sister Nicole adds. "I live next door, and they have a 3D printer as well. Their principal, Scott Embacher, gave me permission to use their materials and printer. Sisters Karen Somerville and Renee Pastor, SND, are making sure I have access to the St. Francis building to use the 3D printer." To date, Sister Nicole has made more than 100 face shields for the Cleveland Clinic and a Mentor dentist. ■





School Snapshots



Students attend First Friday Luncheon

A group of Cleveland Central Catholic students had the privilege of attending the First Friday Club of Cleveland luncheon in January to listen to featured speaker Bishop Nelson Perez, prior to the Bishop relocating to the Diocese of Philadelphia.

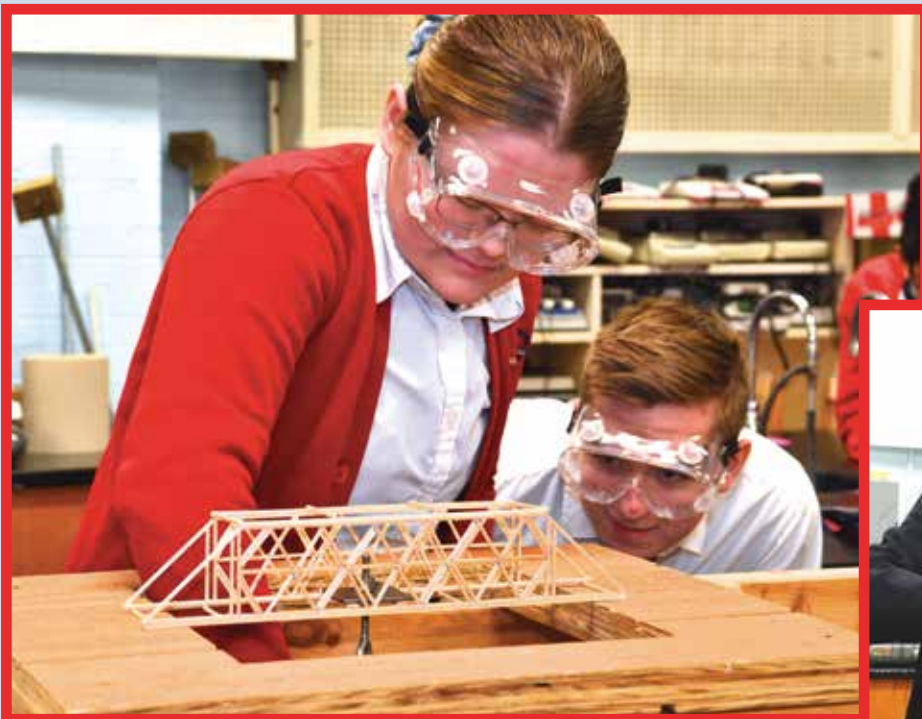
The Bishop spoke candidly on a variety of topics as he updated the group on what's new in the Diocese since he last spoke to the club a year ago. "We have new leadership in education," he said, introducing Frank O'Linn who serves as superintendent of Catholic schools for the Diocese. "We are looking at ways to strengthen and ensure the future of Catholic education," he added.



Central Catholic is a COOL SCHOOL

WJW Fox 8 recently recognized Central Catholic as a Cool School. Reporter Roosevelt Leftwich described how CCC students make their mark through community service and values that encourage them to be not only good students but good people.

"At CCC, in the heart of Slavic Village, students work not only to be the best in the classroom but in the community... It's more than going to school, it's about being part of a family and part of something greater than yourself," describes the Fox 8 reporter on air.



Senior Elizabeth Neace's bridge held 19 pounds!



Physics class tests strength of bridges

Students in Mrs. Martha Croll's '77 physics class, were given specifications to design, construct and test the most efficient bridge either as an individual or a team. These bridges intended to be simplified versions of real-world bridges, which are designed to permit a load to travel across the entire bridge. The students tested the strength of their bridges on January 23.



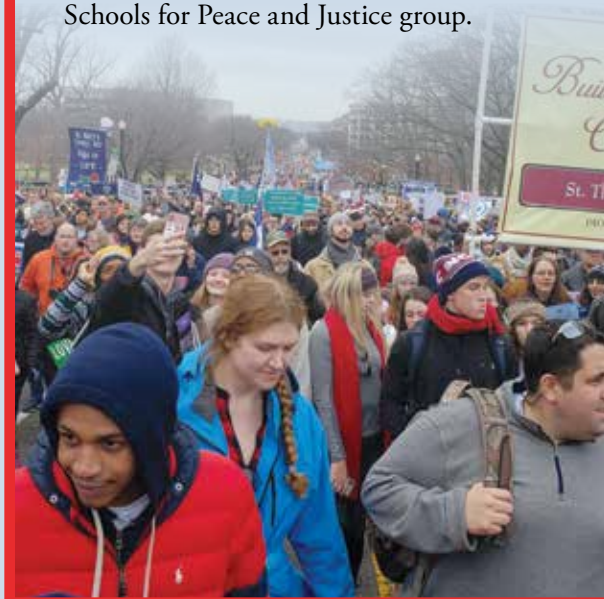
Sr. Allison Marie and Mrs. Martin appear on WKYC-TV3

On January 27th, WKYC TV 3 "IT'S ABOUT YOU" program featured CCC Principal Sister Allison Marie Gusdanovic, SND and Mrs. Deborah Ann Martin, Principal, Saint

Stanislaus Elementary School. They talked about the opportunities available to students who attend our wonderful Catholic schools. The high school and elementary school have a unique relationship since they share a campus. During the segment Sister Allison Marie and Mrs. Martin discussed how parents can drop their students off at kindergarten and pick them up when they graduate.

CCC Students March for Life

A group of Cleveland Central Catholic students and chaperones attended the March for Life in Washington DC this January. The group traveled with the larger Catholic Schools for Peace and Justice group.





winter sports



Senior Chantel Barnett

North Coast League Offensive Player of the Year

*Northeast Lakes All-district Division 2
– First team*

*Third team All-Ohio by the Associated Press
– Division 2*

Senior Phylcia Jackson

North Coast League Honorable Mention

Girls Basketball

The Lady Ironmen basketball team earned many accolades throughout their (17-7) record season. The girls were defeated in their district semi-final game vs. Cuyahoga Valley Christian Academy



Coach Dave Murphy

*North Coast League Girls Basketball
Coach of the Year*





Boys Basketball

The Varsity Ironmen basketball team finished their season with a loss at the regional semi-final. The Ironmen, under the guidance of third-year head coach Jordan Duke, earned many honors.

Arthur Fayne `20

*Northeast Lakes All-district honors
for Division 2 – Third team*

Deshaun Nettles `20

*Northeast Lakes All-district honors
for Division 2 – Second team
All-Ohio Honorable Mention
Division 2*

Terran Mack `20

*Northeast Lakes All-district honors
for Division 2 – Honorable Mention*

Tevin Jackson `20

*Northeast Lakes All-district honors
for Division 2 – Honorable Mention*



Coach Jordan Duke

North Coast League Boys Basketball Coach of the Year



Alum and former CCC basketball player **Jerry Petkoff `72** addresses the current Ironmen basketball team prior to their postseason match-up against East Tech!

Wrestling

The Lady Ironman wrestlers had outstanding performances throughout their season culminating with strong finishes at the girl's state meet. Juniors Madeleine Wadesisi placed 2nd in her weight class and Myishea Smith finished 3rd. Myiesha was named All-Ohio and also earned All-Ohio Academic honors.

Not to be outdone, for the first time in five years, the boys had five district qualifiers and one alternate. The following were district qualifiers: junior Trent Proctor 113 pounds, senior Justin Thrash 152 pounds, senior Alex Mathis 160 pounds, junior Johnny Black 182 pounds and senior Maurice Inge 195 pounds. Jesus Bermudez `21 was the district alternate at 106 pounds.

In addition, Trent earned his 100th wrestling win at the district tournament, while placing 6th overall. Trent is the first Ironman to place at districts in five years! Congrats!! He finishes his junior year with a 34-10 record.





Lady Ironmen Show Their Strength

This winter season, four CCC girls took to the mat adding dimension, competition, energy and spirit to a traditionally male-dominated sport, wrestling. While high school and college female wrestlers grapple for respect, CCC's female athletes applaud their male teammates for their inclusivity, support and respect.

CCC wrestlers Madeleine Wadesisi '21, Marcella Hatcher '21, Myiesha Smith '21 and Adria Ingram '23 do not let the occasional heckle or teasing from opposing teams impact their match. Rather, they remain focused on their personal performance and on being role models for little girls everywhere who desire to follow in their footsteps.


"Raya Brachens was the first girl wrestler at Central Catholic that we know about. She wrestled for four years for the Ironmen, graduating in 2015," says Isaiah "Ike" Hill, CCC Head Wrestling Coach and Head Cross Country Coach. "I personally feel girls in the sport of wrestling is amazing. They are just as capable, skilled and talented as the boys. Our girls are just as passionate and, in some cases, work even harder. Having girls as a part of our program has made a positive impact, and we are excited about the future of this team and program as a whole.

Coach Ike continues, "The girls are doing amazing. They are all competing at high levels and getting better every day. Madeleine and Marcella are both undefeated against the girls. Myiesha has had a lot of nail biters along the way but is quickly improving. This is Adria's first



"Having girls as a part of our program has made a positive impact, and we are excited about the future of this team and program as a whole."

– Isaiah "Ike" Hill, CCC Head Wrestling Coach and Head Cross Country Coach



season. She is picking up the sport quickly. We are expecting great things throughout her high school career."

"Wrestling is not a boy sport or a girl sport. It's a sport for any student athlete," he insists. "We hope to set the standard in sports that we are all equal and can all achieve great things if we work hard. Hard work pays off is one of our mottos, no matter the gender."

When asked about her pioneering role on the wrestling team, Wadesisi says, "I feel more women should give it a try. Wrestling teaches you so many things: time management, effective dieting, and gives you a sense of power. I love it."

"Once you learn all the moves, it's easy; having the courage to try it is the hardest thing," the CCC junior admits. Wadesisi is currently ranked fourth in the state among female wrestlers in her weight class.

"Madeleine is one of the most out-going, talented, passionate, hard-working individuals I have ever met," Coach Williams describes. "She has completely bought into the sport of wrestling. Her passion for the sport has created many opportunities – from traveling to Fargo, North Dakota, to competing in a national tournament, to being nationally recognized in the girls ranking. Madeleine is an advocate for women in the sport of wrestling. She encourages and motivates others to keep pushing forward when things get tough. She is a special young lady that is destined for greatness."

Teammate Myiesha Smith has wanted to wrestle since the eighth grade. "I attended St. Adalbert Catholic School which did not have a wrestling team. Part of the reason I came to CCC was to wrestle. The boys on our team support us and cheer for us even harder than for their male teammates," Myiesha says. "We've

earned their respect. They treat me like a sister."

"The team is a family environment, and the girls are accepted as one of the 'guys.' The males look at the girls as sisters, so they are protective of them but also aware they can take care of themselves on and off the mat," Coach Ike reiterates.

Freshman Adria Ingram is the youngest girl competing on the CCC wrestling team. "I have always loved competing in sports. I played basketball, football, rugby, and volleyball. I am also a swimmer and cheerleader. Wrestling is my favorite sport. I am tough for a girl, and it's fun to be really physical. While my male opponents try to intimidate me, I have earned their respect. The hardest part of this sport is going into competition. I am a shy, quiet person and tend to overthink a lot in competition."

continued on page 26





continued from page 25

Ingram says her mom initially found it difficult when she heard her daughter wanted to wrestle. “She thought it would be dangerous,” Ingram explains. “But my mom has always supported me.” For Ingram, the hardest aspect of wrestling is getting used to the holds, and not feeling uncomfortable. “The boys on our team are like brothers,” she adds.

"The team is a family environment, and the girls are accepted as one of the 'guys.'"

- Isaiah "Ike" Hill, CCC Head Wrestling Coach and Head Cross Country Coach

Fellow teammate Marcella Hatcher has always been active in sports, but started wrestling her freshman year. In addition to wrestling, Hatcher is a member of the CCC track team, competing in the 200, 4x100, 400 and sometimes the 4x200 relays.

“I have been a member of the CCC wrestling team for three years now,” Hatcher says. “My parents still have issues with it – particularly my cutting weight, coming home late, and coming home with bruises. But they don’t have a problem with me wrestling boys.”

Hatcher acknowledges she was uncomfortable with certain holds her freshman year, but she has become comfortable with them now that she knows her male teammates. “I trust everyone on my team,” she emphatically states.

“Most guys prefer not to wrestle girls and forfeit. The hardest issue we continue to overcome is gaining the guys’ respect. As a freshman, they did not give me a chance to work a move. I considered quitting the team sophomore year but decided to stick with it because my coach and teammates had faith in me.

“Wrestling boys can be very hard for some women. They don’t like the sweat involved in this sport, the holds, and getting their hair messed up. Believe me, after a match, my hair is a mess. I love wrestling. I am aggressive and a “tomboy.”

“It’s hard to be a pioneer in this sport. Some boys did not want me as a drill partner. My drill partner this year, Jason Negron, is great,” says Hatcher.

Negron is quick to return the compliment. “I treat her no different but actually push her harder than I would one of my male teammates. All of our female wrestlers have winning attitudes and chase after wins more than the boys.”

“Coach Ike also respects us,” Hatcher adds. “He wants us to be more physical. Wrestling has brought me a lot of happiness. Now I know how to counterattack,” she adds with a grin. “I believe female wrestlers are as good as the males.”

Coach Ike encourages girls to give the sport of wrestling a try. “With women wrestling being one of the fastest growing sports in the NCAA, the opportunity for scholarships is increasing substantially. Young ladies, take advantage of this opportunity to potentially obtain a free education.”

“Since starting coaching at CCC, one of the things I am most proud of is that our program has consistently had one of the highest team GPAs,” adds Coach Williams. “We’ve had valedictorians, and many of our kids have been on the honor roll. As for on the mat, our team has consistently had winning records in dual matches with every year showing consistent improvements. We’ve had several OHSA district qualifiers every year and several students recognized throughout the state of Ohio in various rankings.”

“To all the little girls out there interested in wrestling, I encourage you to try it,” Hatcher concludes. “Wrestling brings an amount of pain, but also happiness. I was able to gain control of my weight, learn moves, and meet a lot of great friends through wrestling.”

You go, girls!





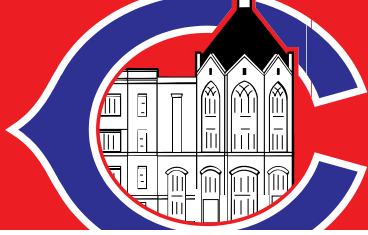
Jantel Lavender's Jersey Retired

On Tuesday, December 17th, Cleveland Central Catholic High School retired the jersey of alumnus and WNBA superstar Jantel Lavender '07. Lavender's #42 jersey was retired in a ceremony prior to the start of the Cleveland Central Catholic girls' basketball game vs. Lake Catholic in the Saint Stanislaus Social Center.



While at CCC, Jantel compiled 1,978 points, 1,278 rebounds and 527 assists in four varsity seasons. She became the school's all-time leading scorer and rebounder as a junior and led the school to the 2007 Ohio Division III state title. She was selected as the Gatorade Ohio Player of the Year (2007). Jantel also played volleyball in high school and was named all-state and all-league. Upon graduation from CCC, Jantel attended The Ohio State University where she played for the Buckeyes' women's basketball team. At OSU she was the only player to be selected Big Ten Conference Player of the Year four straight seasons. Jantel scored in double figures in each of her 136 games as a Buckeye, an NCAA record. When she graduated, she was OSU's all-time scoring leader with 2,818 points. Her 1,422 rebounds is also a Big Ten record. Jantel was the fifth player taken in the first round of the 2011 WNBA Draft, by the Los Angeles Sparks. In 2016, Jantel and her teammates were the WNBA Champions. That year she was also named the WNBA's Sixth Woman of the Year. She is currently a member of the Chicago Sky.





In Memoriam

William R. Bican OLL '67 - Passed away in November 2019 at the age of 70. Beloved husband of Betty Ann. Loving father of Billy, Amy and Joey (Amy). Dearest papa of Allison, Andrew, Madilyn and Molly. Loving son of Joyce, and the late William J. Bican, Jr.

Mary F. Bunner '76 – Passed away on December 30, 2019. Beloved wife of Michael, loving mother of Michelle (Jeremy) Semon and cherished grandmother of Addison. Beloved daughter of the late Charles and Lillian Kowalski. Mary had been a resident of Hiram since 1996. She worked for the Cleveland Clinic for 25 years and most recently was employed by Ravenwood Health in Chardon.

Robert “Bobby” Burian '91 – Passed away in December 2019 at the age of 46. Beloved son of the late Maryann (nee Behum) and James J.; dear nephew of Patricia Szabo (nee Behum); dearest brother of Theresa Marie, James J. Jr., Joseph D., Patricia Ann and Benjamin F.; Loving Uncle of Eric Jr., Joseph Jr., Alyssa, Kaiya, Gavin, Benjamin, Noah, Carly (deceased), Olivia and Nino.

Chuck Calovini – Passed away on December 11, 2019 at age 83. Chuck served as Dean of Students at Cleveland Central Catholic many years ago.

Barbara (Bojerski) Cech – Saint Stanislaus '64. Passed away May 25, 2019 at the age of 73. Beloved wife of Ladd; Mother of Ladimer (deceased), Mathew, Jakub and Lucas and daughter-in-laws Maureen, Cindy and Heather. Grandmother of 12 and great-grandmother of 5.

Dennis J. Jamiot '71 – Passed away on January 19, 2018 at the age of 64. Beloved husband of the late Annie (nee Maier); loving father of Danielle and Dennis E (Sommer); devoted companion of Linda Martin.

Carol Mrazik – St. John Cantius '56. Passed away April 2019. Carol was predeceased by her parents, Anna and Joseph Mrazik, and her brothers, Joseph and Edward. She is survived by her sister Florence Ryan and sister-in-law Elnora, and 17 nieces and nephews.

David Anthony Nolan '82 – passed away December 26, 2019 at the age of 55. Beloved husband of Tracie and daughters Savannah and Courtney and stepson Frankie. In 2012, David became an ordained minister and was an active member in his congregation at Beyond the Walls church in Elyria.

Jerome F. Pekarek '71 – Passed away November 8, 2019 at the age of 65. Beloved son of the late Clarence and Mary; dear brother of Charles (Margaret), Lawrence (deceased) and Catherine Gudaitis (Gary).

Randall Proehl OLL '62 – Passed away on August 1, 2018 at the age of 73. Loving father of Robbie (Teresa) and RJ (Zach). Special “Grandpa Randy” to Zack. Brother of Pamela Skernivitz (Thomas), Doug, Eric (Janet) and Bonnie Dansereau. Proudly served as an Army medic in Germany during the Vietnam era.

RoseAnne Richnasky '70. Passed away January 3, 2019 at the age of 66. Beloved wife of Dennis G., loving mother of Lauren (Brandon Hunter), aunt of Douglas Biro (Gigi), Denise Biro and David Biro (Toni).

Marian Picciano Roccasalva – Passed away January 2020. Loving wife of George G. (deceased); beloved daughter of the late Lena and Libert Picciano. Loving mother of Kathleen Neff (Thomas), Janice, John and David.

Thomas Tamasi – Tom passed away in April 2020 after retiring from Cleveland Central Catholic in January 2020. Tom held many roles at CCC throughout the decades of his service, and most recently was the Coordinator of Student Records and reports. Tom was born in Brooklyn, New York and moved to Cleveland in the 1980's to work in the insurance industry. Tom will be fondly remembered by his colleagues for his dedication to the CCC community. Tom was the best source of institutional knowledge regarding the school and the many changes that occurred during his years at Central. He always had a witty story or anecdote to share when he visited your office or passed you in the hallway.

CCC alumni and Friends Golf Outing has been rescheduled for Saturday September 26th 10am at Valleaie Golf Course, Hinckley Ohio. \$90 pre-pay only includes lunch, all-day free drinks, dinner, gifts and prizes. Reserve thru Jerry Fasko 440 829-8827 or Hallie Gallagher hgallagher@ccc-hs.org (216) 441-4700 x281.

Class of 1970 Alumni Update:

Due to the current issues with the COVID19 pandemic and the gathering restrictions in place, the 50th reunion for the Class of 1970 has been postponed to September 17 - 19, 2021. Detailed information will be sent early next year. The current plan is to hold the reunion at the Brennan's Party Center. Hotel accommodations at the Airport Marriott, West 150th Street (block of rooms reserved for CCC 50th Reunion), cost \$89/night, 9/17-18; free parking for overnight guests). Reunion cost is \$70/person (includes dinner reception. Any remaining funds will be donated to CCC on behalf of Class of 1970.

Plans include an informal get-together on Friday evening, Reunion Dinner Reception on Saturday, and Mass at Saint Stanislaus, followed by continental breakfast and optional tour of CCC on Sunday. If you have any e-mail or address updates, send to Janice (Stadnik) Gallagher at: jgallagher519@gmail.com. If you have any questions, please contact Fran Fogliano franfogliano2002@yahoo.com or Rose (Lopushansky) Dziak dziak@att.net.

Anniversary

Marlene Fennell (Rutkowski) '71. Marlene and her husband Frederick celebrated their 47th wedding anniversary in May. They have seven children and 12 grandchildren (six boys, six girls) and two great grandsons. Marlene stopped working in 2013 and Frederick hopes to retire at the end of 2020. Marlene likes to crochet, knit and sew quilts and dresses for her church clubs. She also donates items she makes to local hospitals, nursing homes and the homeless.

Recognition

Dave Pusti '70, is the recipient of the Berea Chamber of Commerce's 2020 Grindstone Award as an outstanding citizen. Dave graduated from Kent State University in 1975 with a degree in architecture. He is now president and managing partner of Makovich & Pusti Architects Inc. Additionally, Pusti coached soccer and Little League baseball, supported the Berea Arts Fest, served on the Berea Planning Commission, served on the Little Red School House Foundation board, and was a member of the Kiwanis, president treasurer for the Education Foundation for five years and member of the board for 10, member of the Berea Board of Education for 13 years member of the Polaris Career Center Board of Education and lector at St. Mary Church for 25 years.

Birthday

Happy 90th birthday to beloved Advisory Board member and civic leader **Betty Ann Skrha.**

Desire Peters '17 was among 26 Baldwin Wallace University students who dedicated their 2020 spring break to making a difference through the BW Alternative Break service program. The program facilitated diverse community engagement projects with student volunteers traveling to Alabama, Georgia and Louisiana. Each experience was planned and led by a BW student with support from a university adviser. Peters, who is majoring in sustainability, volunteered for the trip to New Orleans that focused on the theme of food insecurity

Jessica Weaver '98 graduated cum laude from Baldwin Wallace University with a bachelor of arts in organizational leadership.

CCC Alumni Update



We would like to hear from you!

NAME: _____ CLASS: _____
LAST FIRST MAIDEN

ADDRESS: _____ BIRTHDATE: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: () _____ E-MAIL: _____

YOUR NEWS: _____

Are you interested in working with your alumni association as a class representative? ☐ YES ☐ NO

Email: hgallagher@ccc-hs.org or mail to: Cleveland Central Catholic High School, 6550 Baxter Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44105. Attention: Hallie Gallagher

We need your help!

Send us your current contact information:
alumni@centralcatholicchs.org

2020 Calendar of Events

Advancement & School Schedule

Dates Subject to Change

Alumni Golf

Sat., Sept. 26

Lunch & Learn

Wed., Oct. 7

Wed., Dec. 8

Wed., Feb. 10

Wed., Apr. 7

Alumni Hall of Fame Induction

Sat., Sept. 5

Welcome Back Day

Fri., Sept. 14

Calcutta

Wed., Mar. 17

Calcutta Recap

These are unprecedented times. Schools are closed. Government orders are in place to limit the gathering of 10 or more individuals. These decisions affected everyone in our community. But the situation really hit home when the NCAA Tournament, March Madness, was canceled. Not only was it unprecedented in sporting terms, but it also was a blow to the Calcutta Auction, in which people bid on teams and hope to come up with the eventual NCAA champion. But somehow, somehow, you must go on and figure out a creative approach to helping our students. Students are depending on us. Families are depending on us. The community is depending on us.

The Calcutta Auction is the school's major fundraiser and 100% of the proceeds go towards tuition assistance. When Governor Mike DeWine announced that schools would be closed, and gatherings of 10 or more individuals were banned, it was less than a week before Calcutta was to take place.

The Calcutta committee, along with the Cleveland Central Catholic Advancement staff, quickly developed a new game plan that would allow the 17th annual Calcutta auction to take place, albeit in a different way than in the past.

With the NCAA Tournament gone, we lost the central focus of a March Madness-themed fund raiser. But like any team with good leadership, Central Catholic was able to adjust and make the best of the situation. Our team put together an online auction using the elements of Calcutta that were salvageable. This allowed us to auction off items such as gift baskets, theater tickets and tickets to future sporting events.

Overall the online Calcutta auction raised \$95,995, compared with \$144,280 in 2019. A large part of that revenue came from the generosity of our Calcutta sponsors who allowed Central Catholic to keep their dollars even though the live event was canceled.

Thank you to all of our 2020 Calcutta Sponsors!

Presenting Sponsor:

Third Federal Foundation

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