

# The Excalibur II



Vol. 2, Issue 3

Nazareth Alumni Newsletter

July 2025



## The Newest Alumni

84 More Grads—Pages 2-3

**Hugs, Smiles  
Fill Venue For  
Class of 2005**

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At the microphone, center right, Nancy Roberts, the assistant principal for academics, called students who then posed with Robert DiRe, the principal, at left, as their name and photo appeared at the back. On stage in back, administrators and faculty.

## Class of 2025 Becomes the Newest Alumni

Members of the Class of 2025 had their shot at the spotlight on June 6 as the school conducted its 60th commencement exercise.

The ceremony, at the Christian Cultural Center on Flatlands Avenue, began with a prayer from **Father Liju Augustine** and then the singing of the National Anthem by graduating senior **Melody Lebron** (who went on to win the the Semper Fidelis Award for Musical Excellence presented by the U.S. Marines Youth Foundation).

Principal **Robert DiRe**, who has been in the job four years, told the assembled graduates, family and friends that a student had told him earlier that he was her favorite principal, only to qualify the compliment by saying, well, "one of her



Graduation caps, some of them decorated, flew at the end.

favorites" and then pointing out that she had only had two principals in her life.

However, "with no qualifications," he told the students in the auditorium, "you are my favorite graduating class."

The sentiment was seconded by **Nancy Roberts**, the assistant

principal for academics, who said, "It's not just the top top students that's true of ... People have grown so much while they're here and accomplished so much, and that runs throughout the class."

Speeches were made by Valedictorian **Robert King**, who is planning on attending Cornell

University, and by two salutatorians who tied for the position: **Kino Vitel Jr.**, who is bound for the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and **Zariya Edwards**, who is going to Stony Brook University. Speech excerpts appear on the next page.

Other schools the 84 graduates are planning to attend include: St. John's University, Molloy College, Penn State, Clark Atlanta University, Rutgers, Georgia State, Roberts Wesleyan, University of New Haven, University of Albany, Pace University, Binghamton University, Manhattan University and Fairfield University.

The ceremony ended with the students being instructed to move their tassels from one side of their caps to the other, signifying their transition from students to alumni.

## EXCERPTS FROM THE SPEECHES

### Valedictorian Robert King

The point is, the future is unknown—there will be twists and turns and trials and tribulations, there's going to be challenge after challenge.

But we don't get to the finish line by playing it safe. We get there by trying, by failing, and by trying again.

And there will be failure. And there will be mistakes. Like showing up after the senior prank

and having to clean up anyway. Or like waiting until the night before to write a graduation speech. (I'm kidding.)

Or getting a zero on an assignment because even though you did the whole thing, you forgot to highlight your answers.

But don't be afraid of failure. Be afraid of not changing. Not growing. The only true failure is not trying to begin with.



### Salutatorian Zariya Edwards

From freshman to senior year, time has given us something special; the chance to change. We grew—not just in height, but in mindset, beliefs, and perspectives. Of course, that change was inevitable. But sometimes, it takes a quiet moment for us to stop and realize just how far we've come.

And as I look out at all of you, Class of 2025, I see young men and women who have accomplished so much socially, academically, athletically, and beyond. And if we had, even for a second, let the late assignments, awkward comments, or missed deadlines define us, many of us, including myself, wouldn't be here today. So instead of getting caught up



over past mistakes made, look more at the present.

. . . it is okay to worry about the future, the past, all of it. However, we should never let that stop us from being present in our moments. We shouldn't let life slowly slip by unnoticed or unappreciated.

Pause. Breathe. The future will come. The past will stay. But the present is yours—so live in it.

### Salutatorian Kino Vitet Jr.

In those four years; God, willpower, and purpose have each played an important role in shaping me into the person I am today. But it wasn't easy, these past four years involved way more than just completing assignments and exams. These four years also involved many hardships and obstacles. But thanks to God and our willpower we were able to push past all those things and reach our goal. The reason God woke us up today and everyday since we were born is because He isn't done with us yet. We still have a purpose to fulfill in this world.

. . . Would I say all the hard work, sleepless nights, and emotional turmoil is worth it? Yes, I would. Even though the end goal was this diploma that gives the



key to college, I want you to know that this is just the beginning. Outside of that diploma, remember all the bonds we've built, memories made, and moments shared.

And yes, even though not all of them were good, you should feel a little glad that it all happened. Because those experiences shaped us into who we are today, and we're only going to grow and get better from here.

**What the Students Saw: Read More Coverage in [the Excalibur Here](#)**





Photo by Eddi Cruz

Organizers Alexandra Charles and Kajuan Hall, spoke briefly.



As an ice-breaker and to encourage mingling, early arrivals asked each other questions in a game of reunion bingo.

# Class of 2005 Runs A Spirited Reunion

About 40 members of the Class of 2005 and their guests held a lively reunion on Saturday night, July 5, in Crown Heights.

Nostrand Station, the bar and lounge just off Eastern Parkway, became a room full of smiles, hugs and conversation as the alumni showed up to enjoy a DJ, Caribbean food and an open bar. The lounge even created four special cocktails for the event that were named after Nazareth staff from the 2005 era. The Herszenhorn, for example, was a variation on the Old Fashioned.

The class originally planned to hold the reunion in Kingsmen Hall but early tickets sales were slow, prompting them to move to a “more intimate venue.” After they switched and the reunion date approached, ticket sales surged, according to **Jody-Kay Grant**, one of the organizers.

The group took a brief timeout to remember classmate **Stacy Callender**, who died in 2020, and to say a prayer for another classmate, **Ronnie Rojas**, who was seriously injured in an accident.

There were not a lot of speakers, but the organizers gave a bouquet to thank one of their own, **Daphne Chanoine**, for keeping the planning process going when others thought of giving up.

In addition to Chanoine and Grant, organizers included **Myriam Gillis**, **Brandon Haynes**, **Kajuan Hall**, **Alexandra Charles** and **Nadine Latouche**.



Outside the venue, from left, Sedrick Jean Baptiste, Tristan Dolcy, Teddy Duverce, Sharon McFarlane, Juan Carlos Matos, Dina Duverce, Khadijah Cooper-Carr, Leonard Milfort, Daphne Chanoine, Myriam Gillis, Shelly Millien, Tyrone Benjamin, Sadie Hyppolite, Carl Palmer, Alexandra Charles, Jody-Kay Grant, Dane Francois, Stanley Delva, Colleen Hinkson, Kajuan Hall, Christina Blackett, Karen Thom, Errol Johnson, Shelly Baptiste, Melissa Nichols, Dwight Shaw, James Legerme, Sherise Lovell, Allie Kennedy, and many more who were inside but camera shy. Group photo by Eddi Cruz. For more photographs, [click here](#).





Above, the special cocktail menu at the open bar. At right, Sharon McFarlane and Juan Carlos Matos, who was the valedictorian. Below, members of the class released balloons on Nostrand Avenue in memory of classmate Stacy Callender.



# Reunions In the Works

## CLASS OF 2000

Saturday, August 2, from 6 to 10 p.m. at the school. Contact **Undrea Wilson '00** at [347-414-6100](tel:347-414-6100) for more information. Or [order tickets here](#), where you can get details on the event (photo booth, souvenirs, t-shirts, buffet food selection, drinks, DJ, etc.) or take the option to donate to Nazareth on the behalf of your graduating class.

## CLASS OF 1995

Class Captain **Michael Bailey** reports that **classmates** plan to gather on Saturday, July 26, at the 333 Lounge & Restaurant on Flatbush Avenue, north of Grand Army Plaza., described as a “down-to-earth watering hole with a cool vibe, and classic & Caribbean pub fare.

## CLASS OF 1985

**Doreen Pender-Schindler '85** is leading efforts to have a reunion. There's a [Facebook group](#) you can join (Nazareth Regional High School Class of 1985), a [Google Survey](#) you can fill out, or contact her via email at [dmschin@gmail.com](mailto:dmschin@gmail.com)

## CLASS OF 1975

**John Keenan** is contacting classmates for a 50th. To catch him (or help him), write to [jvkeen2009@gmail.com](mailto:jvkeen2009@gmail.com)



# Girls Basketball Team Wins State Title

Nazareth's girls Varsity Basketball team capped a successful season by winning the New York State Catholic High School Association's AA division championship.

"Extremely happy and excited," Coach **Ron Kelley** described the girls. And they had "a feeling of relief for accomplishing their goals."

They had finished third in the diocese for the regular season but powered through the playoffs there, beating Christ the King to advance to the statewide matches.

In the semifinals on March 7, Nazareth snapped an eight-game winning streak for Cardinal O'Hara, from the Buffalo diocese, 77-50.

They went on the next night to defeat St. Mary's, from Manhasset, 51-47, for the championship.

The coach, who has led the team for 16 years, described **Makylah Moore**, one of four seniors, as the team's MVP, averaging 23 points and seven rebounds a game.

It was the fifth time Nazareth girls won the state title, the last one in 2015.



In the front row, players Mia Vernon, Sanai Yates (standing), Madison Mayas, Madison Adams, Johlana Tatum., Second row, Coach Dwight Shaw, Makayla Townsend, Makylah Moore, Arly Zapata, Tierra Hendricks, Janell Charles, Coach Tramaine Oxley. In the rear, Head Coach Ron Kelley hoists the big round trophy alongside Coach Darien Best.



Several of the plaques in the gym balcony Hall of Fame.

## Plans to Revive Halls of Fame

Nazareth has two sports Hall of Fame displays, one until very recently above the lobby entrance to the gym and a larger one on a gym balcony.

A committee has begun to discuss consolidating them, filling in the gaps between them and formalizing the process for getting into them.

"It's something that has to be honored," Athletic Director **Mike Camacho** said, "because of the

dedication [of athletes] and what we want to teach these kids — a foundation of what Nazareth is."

Details on the criteria for making nominations and a [form are available here.](#)

**Rick Dolan**, **Gary Gooden '85**, **Monique Fischer '82**, and **Joe Keenan '73**, a trustee, are with Camacho on the committee, which is aiming for an event in the spring to unveil its work.





Members of both teams, plus a few friends, gather around coach during reunion. For more photos and some videos, [click here](#).

## Recalling 1980s Championship Seasons

The coach was the star of the evening.

More than 65 people turned out on May 31 for a reunion of the football teams that won back-to-back citywide championships in 1984 and 1985.

Organized by **Gary Gooden '85**, the MVP of the 1984 game, the party brought together former players, cheerleaders and support staff, along with current school administrators and 15 players from the present-day football team, which Gooden coaches.

People seemed most excited to see **Dom Laurendi**, the coach who led the teams to the two consecutive Metro Bowl Division "B" titles.

"My father was a great man,"

**Alexandria Pertose Capra** led the cheerleaders in the 80s and got a bouquet of flowers from the current players at the reunion, one of several people honored for their support of the teams.



John Walsh '86, the 1985 MVP; Coach Laurendi, Gary Gooden '85, the 1984 MVP.

Gooden told the crowd, "But Dom . . . if I didn't have a father, I'd be calling you 'Dad.' Seriously. We all appreciate you."

The coach then spoke about his time at the school:

"I have learned more from the kids at Nazareth and the people in the building," Laurendi said. "I learned the dedication they had to the school, to their families, to their friends."

Laurendi founded the Nazareth football program in 1981 and coached the team for 14 years

before leaving to start a football program at Xaverian.

In addition to the back-to-back championships, Nazareth won the "AA" Division title in 1989, when Laurendi's son was on the team.

The coach taught government and social studies before leaving for Xaverian.

The event also served as a fundraiser for the team, with a 50-50 raffle. Organizers auctioned off two chess sets that students made in the school's 3-D printing lab.



## SCHOLARSHIP SEASON

*Fifteen grateful students received donor-sponsored scholarships this semester at two ceremonies. Here are the details on these two pages.*

# Class of '67 Endowment Has First Recipient

**Makeila Piper** was awarded the first scholarship from the Class of 1967 Endowment on March 27th at Nazareth.

She was chosen by the school as an “outstanding overall student in need of and deserving of financial aid,” according to the school, and the scholarship provides for full tuition for the 2025-26 academic year. Tuition and fees for next year would be \$10,150.

The scholarship was presented by **Steve Gandley** and **Arthur Nintzel**, members of the class, which started building an endowment of more than \$170,000 a few years ago (you can read about it in [this previous newsletter](#)).

“Well boys, we did it!” Gandley wrote to classmates after the award was given.

“Whether or not you’ve contributed to our endowment, you should take pride in our accomplishment.”

Gandley also encouraged further contributions. “I am so proud of you guys for stepping up. This is our legacy. After we’re all gone, the Class of 1967 Scholarship will continue to be awarded year after year after year!”

To contribute to the endowment [click here](#).

**AT RIGHT:** Steve Gandley, Makeila Piper and Arthur Nintzel at the scholarship presentation in the gym in March.



# Two Students Tapped by the Russo/FDNY Fund



**Brianna Francis** and **Max Abel** are to receive \$2,500 each for the 2025-26 school year from the **Lt. Michael T. Russo** FDNY Scholarship Fund.

The two were chosen “for exhibiting outstanding courage, service and sacrifice,” according to the school.

The scholarship fund was created in memory of Lt. Russo of the FDNY, who graduated from Nazareth in 1975 and was killed in the line of duty while responding to the attack at the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001. The fund was established “to honor his memory and in remembrance of the courage of all of those who gave their lives to save others, several of whom were also graduates of Nazareth Regional High School.”

To donate directly to this fund, [click here](#).

**Brianna Francis and Max Abel flank Principal Rob DiRe**



## Brother Matthew Fund to Help Nine Students

Nine students were named recipients in the **Brother Matthew Burke** scholarship program on June 20 in a ceremony and prayer service in the chapel.

Brother Matthew was a former teacher and principal at Nazareth during the 1960s and and 1970s who was beloved by many. He died at age 82 in November 2020.

The students were nominated by the faculty, staff and administration, and they had to write an essay and be interviewed by members of the funds' alumni committee.

**Denis Wuestman '73**, one of the founders of the fund and a member of the Board of Trustees, said the interview-



At the ceremony in the chapel, front row: Shane Graham, Teresa Gaston, Analiz Ortiz, Marcus LaCorbiniere, Davon Jean Francois. Back row: Principal Robert DiRe, Jaden Blakemore, Tyler Boone, Maximum Abel, Kyle McCarthy and Denis Wuestman, one of the founders of the fund.

ers were looking for students who demonstrated how they lived Brother Matthew's values. It's through your beliefs, your values and your ultimate actions," Wuestman said.

**Kyle McCarthy** and **Max Abel** will receive

\$5,000 each; **Tyler Boone, Teresa Gaston, Analiz Ortiz** and **Marcus LaCorbiniere** won \$2,000 each; and **Davon Jean Francois** will get \$1,000.

In addition, \$500 each will be given to **Jayden Blakemore** and **Shane**

**Graham.**

This year the fund raised more than \$60,000 for a total of more than \$220,000 since its inception in 2020.

You can contribute directly to the fund by clicking [here](#).

## Five Students Chosen for the Kennelly Award

Five students were awarded a **Donald Kennelly** Scholarship, which will provide \$1,000 each for the 2025-26 academic year. The five are **Ruth Pierre, Zaria Jacob, Davon Jean Francois,**

**Kimora Samuel** and **Amiyah Holder.**

The school said they were chosen because they "embody the spirit of Nazareth and display serious financial need.

**James Kennelly '79**, who once served as a school trustee, created the Donald Kennelly Scholarship in honor of his late father.

It aims to help recipients achieve their goals of attending Catholic colleges and universities.

The students were named during an underclassman scholarships and awards ceremony on March 27.



Kimora Samuel, Ruth Pierre, Zaria Jacob, Amiyah Holder and Davon Jean Francois.



# Encouraging Words From Future Student Leaders

‘Nazareth makes me (us) feel like part of a family.’

‘Faculty and Administrators have our best interest in heart and want us to have a good future.’

‘It is a very welcoming place” and the “community is comforting.’

‘Helps me find out more about myself and keeps track of me, especially my coaches.’

‘I feel recognized and that people care about my future.’

On April 9, Nazareth hosted its annual “Career Day” for the student body, presented by a volunteer group of alums who explored careers in education, the financial world, the healthcare industry and a general discussion about college preparation.

I had the opportunity to help lead a mini-Leadership Workshop with approximately 25 freshmen and sophomores selected by the administration and **Ms. Tiffany Davis**, the student council moderator and English teacher.

In the few-hour session we explored the values and character traits of leaders, dealing with peer pressure, and the importance of organized planning, ac-

countability and service.

What a promising group of young men and women leading the way as juniors and seniors in the next few years! We concluded our session with students filling out cards with their answers to the question: “Would you recommend Nazareth to your friends?” Five of their answers appear at left.

What struck me in the answers were the same refrains I have heard from many alums over the past years at various reunions and group gatherings.

They sounded familiar to me from my time at Naz as a student, teacher and board member. It is good that some things remain the same.

Thank you to all of the alums who support us.



**JOHN WUESTMAN**  
*Board Chair,  
2024-25*



John Wuestman, sixth from right, with a group of freshmen and sophomores at the Leadership workshop in April.





Onstage, Erin Schiffman, Keesha Duncan, Marvin Guitad, Mark Hehl, Leon Dinham, Shari Andrews, Makini Beck and Joe Keenan.

## Alumni Come Back With Some Career Advice

One panelist spoke about her life-long ambition to teach, and how as a young child she would line up her dolls and hold a class.

Another spoke about how he wasn't the sharpest student, but Nazareth set him on a good course anyway.

They were among five alumni who took part, along with parents and friends of the school, in a Career Day presentation for sophomores, juniors and seniors on April 9.

The panel took questions about their careers, what training or experiences they needed, what challenges they faced and what rewards they found from work.

They later took part in smaller classroom discussions about resume building and interview skills. Students were able to ask follow-up questions of individuals from the panel there.

The panelists were:

**Shari Andrews**, a doctor at Northwell Health and the mother



Keesha Duncan with a student during one of the classroom sessions.

of a current Nazareth student.

**Makini Beck '97**, an assistant professor at the Rochester Institute of Technology.

**Leon Dinham**, an NYPD police officer and father of a current student.

**Keesha Duncan '89**, a nurse anesthetist at Hackensack University Medical Center.

**Marvin Guitaud, '92**, a CPA

with an accounting firm in the city.

**Mark Hehl '67**, an author and retired engineer.

**Joe Keenan '73**, a lawyer and school board of trustees member.

**Erin Schiffman**, a media company executive who does photography for the school's athletic department.





High school athletes were among the first to bolt out of the starting gate at the beginning of the race on June 21.

# McCarthy Run Back In Marine Park

Nearly 50 runners and walkers set off on a warm Saturday morning, June 21, for the annual McCarthy Brothers run, which returned to Marine Park this year.

The event — run by the Rockaway Track Club, thanks to **Jimmy McVeigh '76** — included a number of high school athletes.

The memorial run began in honor of **Eugene T. McCarthy '73**, a major in the Marines who died in 1991 during the Persian Gulf war when his helicopter gunship crashed. (Story on a memorial on next page.)

Last year the race was renamed to include his brother, **Dennis**, a special agent for Homeland Security who died in 2018 of a 9/11-related illness.

The event, run in the Rockaways last year, raised about \$2,000 for the school.



Members of the McCarthy family gathered before the race.



Organizer and Trustee Denis Wuestman '73 with Dr. Mike Cannella '72 after the run.



Joe Keenan, '73, a school trustee, with wife, Anne, and daughter Maura Watson, left, the first female finisher.





# Rededicating the Memorial



Marine pilot  
Major Eugene  
McCarthy '73

A dozen Nazareth students, along with Principal **Robert DiRe**, **Rick Dolan**, and Athletic Director **Mike Camacho**, joined veterans and members of the community on May 18 to rededicate a memorial to **Major Eugene McCarthy**, a member of the Class of

1973 who was killed in the Persian Gulf war. McCarthy's helicopter crashed on Feb. 2, 1991, while he was flying a medevac support mission during Operation Desert Storm. The memorial, is at Avenue N and East 31st Street, above.



Melody Lebron sings the National Anthem at ceremony with part of the Nazareth contingent.



Nazareth students, staff and alumni gathered afterwards in a shady spot along the Marine Park path used for the McCarthy race.



# Pursuing a Life in Psychology and the Clergy

**Deacon Joseph Ferrari**, a member of Nazareth's Class of 1974 who has a PhD and has been a research scientist and professor of psychology at DePaul University in Chicago since 1993, received the 2025 Excellence in Research Award from his school earlier this year.

The social personality/community psychologist goes by "Deacon Joe" and in announcing the award the university's College of Science and Health cited his "significant scientific contributions" in his areas of research.

He is best known for his work on chronic procrastination, which he has researched since the late 1980s. He chose the topic because there was so little existing research on the field.

"You can do research that everybody else does, and join the bandwagon," he explained. "Or you can do research that nobody studies. And everything you touch will be new."

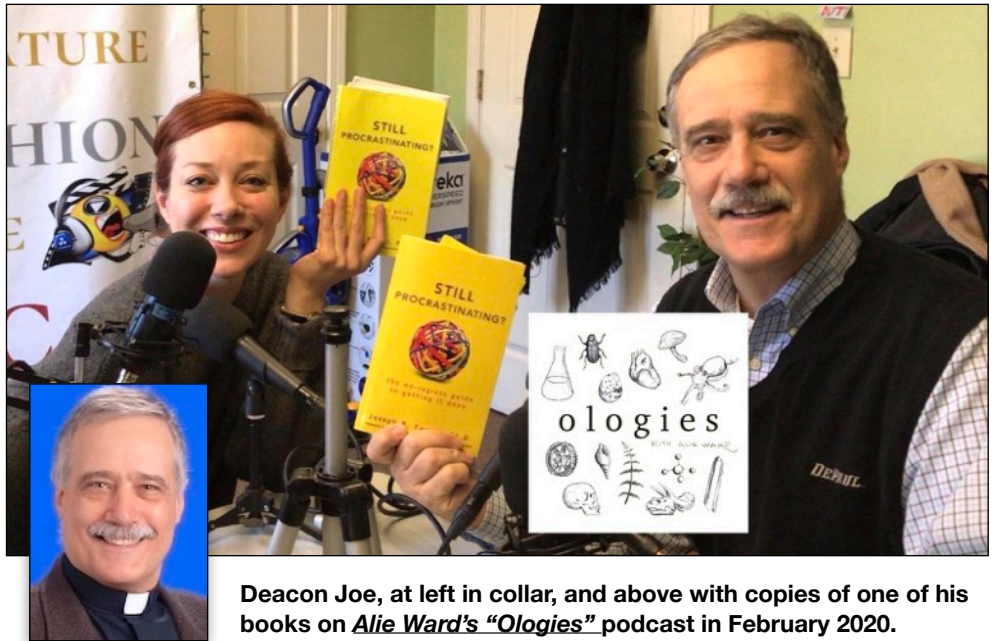
"The problem with that, he continued, "is that you don't have anyone to rely on to back you up. But everything's original. And I kind of like that idea."

In 1995 he published with two others his first book on the subject: *Procrastination and Task Avoidance: Theory, Research, and Treatment*.

"Still the cornerstone book," he said.

And then in 2010 he published a book aimed at a more general readership, *Still Procrastinating? The No Regrets Guide to Getting It Done*. He also has hosted a blog for *Psychology Today* on the subject, as well as many other published works.

His work has involved a mix of gathering and analyzing survey data, and putting volunteer subjects through experimental situations that are studied in a



Deacon Joe, at left in collar, and above with copies of one of his books on *Alie Ward's "Ologies"* podcast in February 2020.

laboratory setting.

"One of the myths people like to say is 'I work best under pressure' as a reason for procrastination," he gave as an example. So researchers in a lab gave procrastinators a series of tasks and found they did worse when given a time deadline.

Twenty percent of adults categorize themselves as chronic procrastinators, he said. "That's more than depression, than panic attacks, than phobia, than alcoholism, substance abuse. And yet all of those areas we take serious."

Among other topics, his more recent research involves clutter, including why people accumulate it and how mental health is affected by it.

Alongside his academic career, Deacon Joe was ordained as a permanent Roman Catholic deacon for the Joliet

Diocese in 2013. It is rare, however, to see people pursue both vocations. In another survey, Deacon Joe polled 1,300 deacons in the Chicago and Joliet area and found just two who were also full-time faculty.

Yet he sees overlap between his role as an academic and as a deacon.

"We are ministers of charity and social justice," he said of deacons. "They work with the marginalized, they work with the poor. I'm a community psychologist — that's what community psychologists do."

Unlike what a more clinical psychologist would do (there are 55 specialties in psychology), "What I do as a community psychologist is I'll say 'How do I help you? How can I use my skills to enhance what you do, to make you make you better.' So I look at the strength, not at the weaknesses."

This turns up in his work on retreats for homeless men, or the assistance he is giving to a mobile health clinic in Appalachia.

"My science and my spirituality go together," he said.

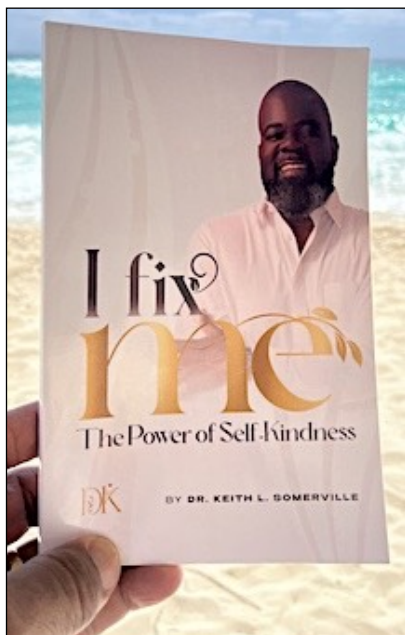
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## Want to Listen to More?

- [Why clutter stresses us out](#), with the American Psychological Association.
- [Why we procrastinate](#) on the "This Is Your Brain" podcast



# Updates from the Alumni



## CLASS OF 1988

**Dr. Keith L. Somerville, Dallas**

**Texas:** Hey guys, check out my new book "I Fix Me — The Power Of Self-Kindness" (at left). You can order online at Barnes & Nobles or Amazon. ksome1@outlook.com

## CLASS OF 1992

**Dan Wiatre, Staten Island, NY.**

Naz Pride! I'm 29 years in teaching and coaching in Brooklyn at St. Edmund Prep High School (Marine Park). I'm still into sports as the Athletic Director and Boys Varsity Basketball Coach (250+ wins and counting). dwiatre@stedmundprep.org

## PASSINGS

**Kevin Davitt '72** died on May 31 after a long fight with lung disease. He had just turned 71.

A writer and public servant known also for his musical talents, he was a member of a few bands that played school dances in the 1970s. He was later on the school's board of trustees.

His survivors include a wife and three children. There was a well-attended service in Glen Rock, N.J., on June 19. To read an obituary, [click here](#).



Got an update? <https://nazarethrhs.org/alumni/alumni-news-updates/>

## Sporting Life '67

Members of the Class of 1967 got together for a Red Sox game and other activities in Boston in early May and then, for the third year, went to Monmouth Park racetrack in New Jersey, on June 28, where they sponsored one of the races as "Nazareth HS Class of '67 Saturday Jug"

**Lou Barretti '67** came up with the title, which refers to a nickname for detention (short for Justice Under God).

### In the meantime...

**Dave D'Agostino '67** is running an effort to get a foot stone at the gravesite of **Brother Tom Culley** (known to some as Brother Russell), who died in September. About 30 classmates have agreed to split the cost, estimated in the \$600-\$900 range.



**BOSTON TRIP:** Grabbing a bite, from left, Russ Salemi, Tom Quaranta, Jim St. Clair, Steve Gandley, John Butts, Tom Temme and John Wright.



6			
Purse \$21,000			
MONMOUTH PARK			
3rd Annual Nazareth HS Class of '67 Saturday Jug			
(Plus 40% N.J. Bred Enhancement)			
FOR THREE YEAR OLDS AND UPWARD. Three Year Olds, 120 Lbs. Older, 124 Lbs. Non-winners Of Two Races At A Mile Or Over On The Turf Since April 28 Allowed 2 Lbs. Such A Race Since Then Allowed 3 Lbs. Claiming Price \$12,500. For Each \$1,000 To \$10,500 1 Lb. (Races Where Entered For \$10,000 Or Less Not Considered In Allowances). One Mile And One Sixteenth, (Monmouth) Chute Start. (Rail at 24 Feet)			
MAKE SELECTION BY PROGRAM NUMBER		MORNING LINE	
TWOSE RACING STABLE, INC.		JOCKEY	
Black and White Stripes, Black Horse Head on Yellow Saddle, Black Cap		JUAN C. AVILA	
1		JEIRON BARBOSA	
VENEZUELAN TRIUMPH		(L) 119	
		\$10,500	

**AT THE TRACK:** From right, Alumni Nick Ponzio, Lou Barretti, Matt Gunn, Steve Gandley, Arthur Nintzel and Mike Dean. Above, a portion of the program listing the sixth race at Monmouth Park.





# School Is Voted 'The Best'

Nazareth was voted "Best Catholic School" in the annual "Best of Brooklyn" competition this spring.

The contest, run by publishing company Schneps Media and sponsored by Ponce Bank, has the public voting on businesses, service organizations and other institutions in the borough. Categories include arts and entertainment, automotive, bars and night-clubs, education, fashion, food, health and beauty, home and garden, restaurants, shopping and sports according to the [competition's website](#).

Winners get the right to use the contest's logo in marketing material, email signatures and social media. Last year, St. Joseph the Worker Catholic Academy in Park Slope was honored and in 2023 it was Midwood Catholic Academy in Flatlands.

According to material published with the awards, "the school maintains a rigorous academic environment, allowing students to develop a life-long intellectual curiosity that empowers them to think independently."

You can [read more here](#).

## Meanwhile, In That Other Excalibur

In a recent edition of the original Excalibur, the student's online newspaper, you can find:

- A story about students **Lizmarie Recio** and **Zariel Archie**, at right, who got to attend a program for STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) at the Intrepid Museum in Manhattan in October, where they learned about space, built a small satellite and got to meet some former astronauts.

- A first-person story about the lessons learned by a student finding her place as a rookie on the cheerleading team.

- A profile of **Father Liju Augustine**, the school's priest, that traces his life from India to his work at Nazareth and at a parish — how he became a priest and what he does for his community.

- A description of two new classes at Nazareth. One, for juniors, gives them the opportunity to mentor younger students and work on their leadership skills. The other, for seniors, teaches about the tenets of social justice and



shows how to apply them to service projects they undertake.

- A feature about the school's Technology Club, designed to help students "create projects, learn new skills, and help the school by recording and taking pictures of school activities."

To see these and more, [click here](#).

## Two Students Represent School At the Vatican

Nazareth seniors **Alani Acevedo** and **Bianca Deceus** represented the school's Scholas chapter at an international Synod in Rome in May.

The conference was designed to honor the legacy of **Pope Francis** and celebrate a new chapter with **Pope Leo XIV**.

Scholas is a global initiative created by Pope Francis in 2013 to allow high school students to connect with each other and their community from all backgrounds, cultures, and faiths.



Nazareth students in St. Peter's Square.





Two more grads have agreed to become Class Captains: Michelle Taylor from the Class of 1983 and Doreen Penner-Schnidler from the class of 1985,

Class Captains help Nazareth help maintain current contact information with alumni, share information on reunions and alumni events and offer guidance on enriching alumni connections.

If you would like to represent a class not already on the list or to learn more about the program, contact: Denis Wuestman at: [dwuestman@nazarethrhs.org](mailto:dwuestman@nazarethrhs.org).

#### **Class Captains**

1967: Steve Gandley  
1968: John Wuestman  
1969: Dan Jordan  
1971: Marty Keating  
Tim Healy  
1972: Bob Stack  
Brian Kilgannon  
Stu Fitzpatrick  
1973: Mike DiFede  
1974: Jude Hayes  
Steve Melsom  
1978: Gary Brasco  
1979: Rich DiMatteo  
1980: Kevin Dowd  
1982: Chris Buckley  
1983: Richard Pierre  
Michelle Taylor  
1984: Patrick Mullee  
1985: Doreen Penner-Schnidler  
1989: Bev Chanoine  
Margarita Argento  
1993: Renée Volney Darko.  
1995: Michael Bailey  
1999: Deanna Phillippe  
2002: Sheldon Sucre  
2004: Calvin Fletcher

# We Want To Hear From You

Wondering why you're not in here? You have a few options for changing that:

■ **EVENTS:** If you want to let us know about an alumni-related event or activity of yours, please email us: at [advancement@nazarethrhs.org](mailto:advancement@nazarethrhs.org)

■ **PERSONAL NEWS:** If you would like to send a short update about yourself, something you've accomplished or something you'd like to share with classmates, use the form on the school's website. <https://nazarethrhs.org/alumni/alumni-news-updates/>

■ **WRITE A STORY:** If you want to take it a step further, we're looking

for people who can help write stories for this newsletter. Taking on an assignment can be as simple as doing an interview or two over the phone and arranging for a photo. Or, if you want, you could wind up going to an alumni or school event and writing about it. Either way we'd go over the piece with you before publishing it. Interested in taking a shot? Send an email to: [advancement@nazarethrhs.org](mailto:advancement@nazarethrhs.org)

■ **RUN A REUNION:** And if you'd like to get a reunion going for your class, write to the same email. The school doesn't run reunions but we have advice for how to find your former classmates and select a venue to get one going.

## Nazareth 2025 Golf Outing

September 15 at 9:30 a.m.  
Marine Park Golf Course  
[To register, click here](#)



## Beware: Good Merch vs. Bad Merch

Nazareth is looking into setting up an online store to sell a limited line of school-branded merchandise — shirts, hats, etc.

Planning is in the early stages so don't expect to see something until 2026. In the meantime, the school's sports teams sometime run short-

term online sales to raise funds.

However, a number of alumni have mentioned seeing offers on social media for Nazareth-branded clothing from vendors who have nothing to do with the school.

Beware, and make sure you know who you are buying things from.



# Students and School Say ‘Thanks’ to Donors

Mass was said in the gym on Wednesday, April 16, to remember “alumni, parents and friends, members of the community, who donate and support” the school.

Before the service began, the principal, **Robert DiRe**, asked for and received a round of applause for the donors, and then asked two students to lead the others in the school prayer:

*“Loving God, nurture our hearts with the Xaverian virtues of simplicity, trust, zeal, compassion and humility. Help us to better love and serve you and your people. We ask this in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.”*

“Now we say that prayer every morning before we start our day,” DiRe explained, “but



Father Johny Thomas celebrating Mass in the Nazareth Gym.

with our intention, it has struck me specifically that in many ways, while . . . we ask God to nurture our hearts, while we ask God to help us better love and serve his people, I want to express my sincere appreciation to the many, many people, our donors especially, who make that possible, who are helping us nurture the hearts of our young

men and women here, who are quite literally helping us to better love and serve God’s people.”

The principal said that over the past three years, donors have given over \$600,000 to Nazareth for scholarships and financial aid and to support the school’s clubs, academic programs and other activities.

That includes the Brother Matthew scholarship, which has over \$220,000 in four years.

“It’s really an important part of what goes on here . . . and we are extremely grateful,” DiRe concluded.

“And I hope you guys all realize the opportunity that it gives you. And every year, more and more alumni, friends, community members come out to show their support and show their belief in the mission of Nazareth High School and really their belief in you guys.”

The Mass was said by Father Johny Thomas and was live-streamed for donors, who received an email invitation with a link. Sixty-two people tuned in. The service was followed by the Stations of the Cross.

## Fundraising Wraps Up for the Current Fiscal Year

**By Denis Wuestman ’73**

*Development Committee Chairman*

We are extremely grateful for the generosity of all our donors as we concluded the school’s fiscal year in June.

We are pleased to share that we have received over 465 donations from over 315 individual donors totaling \$251k. These donations have funded the following:

■ **Spirit of Nazareth Annual Appeal Unrestricted Fund (\$115k).** Includes our Annual Appeal, Golf Outing and McCarthy Run/Walk proceeds,

donations from alumni reunions, general contributions.

■ **Designated Scholarship or Purpose Funds (\$74k).** Includes the following scholarship funds: Brother Matthew Burke, Don Kennelly, Jean Michel, Catherine McAuley, Coach Will Naz Track, Lt. Michael T. Russo.

■ **Endowments (\$62k).** Includes the 1967 Endowment Fund, Charles and Nora Reiter Fund, Girardi Family Scholarship Fund and the General Endowment Fund (new this year).

All donations support the school’s goal of focusing on the

spiritual, intellectual, social, and personal growth of the student population.

On the following pages we recognize the many donors who have made the sacrifice to support Nazareth over the past school year. We thank them for their kindness and generosity.

Giving to Nazareth is now easier, streamlined and focused. Check out our [Nazareth Giving Menu](#) where you will see our ongoing year-round Spirit of Nazareth appeal as well as our various Scholarships/Endowments.

— **See Next Page**



## NAZARETH 2024-25 DONORS

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		Thomas Holian '68

### School Wraps Up Fundraising

#### — From Previous Page

If you have interest in starting or funding a scholarship, purpose or endowment fund, please contact Robert DiRe

(Principal) at [rdire@nazarethrhs.org](mailto:rdire@nazarethrhs.org) or Denis Wuestman (Board of Trustees and class of '73) at [dwuestman@nazarethrhs.org](mailto:dwuestman@nazarethrhs.org)

If you are interested in donating appreciated securities, you can access [this checklist and process](#) to help you. Or [visit here](#) to just donate.



## NAZARETH 2024-25 DONORS

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*The list excludes anonymous donors and is for the period from 7/1/24 through 6/30/25 (our school fiscal year).*