SJU Welcomes New President

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SAINT JOHN’S

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My Perspective
Michael Hemesath ’81, President

When I’ve returned to campus in the 31 years since graduation, I’ve often gotten nostalgic. Like many people, I can be tempted to think that the time I spent at a place—especially a place as transformative in my life as Saint John’s—was almost magical.

In his commencement speech to the SJU Class of 1984, Garrison Keillor said, “Nostalgia is the work of people with poor memories.” I have to admit that he has a point. The past often seems rosier as it recedes. But as nostalgic as I can get about my student years here, nostalgia isn’t what brought me back to be president. The transformative power of my SJU education was real—not magical. SJU was—and is—transformative because it changes when it needs to. At the same time, its fundamental values endure, anchoring us where we need to be moored.

When I was a junior at Saint John’s in 1980, the undergraduate enrollment was 1,788. I was a bit exotic as an Iowan—approximately 73 percent of SJU students were from Minnesota, and only one percent were international students. Three percent of the students were American students of color, and 90 percent identified themselves as Roman Catholic. I was one of a handful on my floor who had an electric typewriter, and we all shared those coveted technological masterpieces to prepare our term papers. Out of my group of 10 close friends from freshman year on 3rd Mary, only one of us eventually studied abroad.

How does this compare with SJU today? This past year, our undergraduate enrollment was 1,865. Our students come from all over the world, including 36 states and 29 countries. More than six percent are international students, and 10 percent are American students of color. Now, 41 percent identify themselves as something other than Roman Catholic. We have multiple computer labs on campus. Few students do not have a personal computer in their room (and several other electronic devices!). Last year alone, 214 Johnnies studied abroad.

For more than 150 years, Saint John’s has responded successfully to the changing needs of our students in a changing world. At the same time, Saint John’s Abbey founded the university on a 1,500-year Catholic Benedictine tradition that continues to serve as the unchanging bedrock for our university’s identity and approach to teaching and learning.

The relationships between students, faculty and staff continue to provide invaluable learning opportunities both in and out of the classroom, as they have in every era. Most of my classmates, as well as our current graduates, have a professor or staff member who has become a mentor for them in their professional, intellectual or spiritual lives.

And our residential life program, rooted in the Benedictine values of hospitality and community, has always been and always will be an essential part of what it means to be a Johnnie. Modeling a healthy community has helped students learn how to live, work and play with different kinds of people from diverse backgrounds with different gifts.

It is an honor to be president of Saint John’s University. I look forward to leading this community as we shape the next generation of Johnnies.
Members of the Class of 2012 join more than 24,000 Saint John’s alumni. Meet four from ’12 who give us a glimpse into the variety of paths SJU graduates are pursuing, from employment in the private and not-for-profit sectors to volunteer service and graduate school.

**Evan Cobb**, a peace studies and psychology major from Becker, Minn., is teaching English in Cambodia in the Peace Corps. “I am excited to put these concrete skills and knowledge to use in an ever-changing and progressing world, no matter where I am,” says Cobb.

**William Liedl**, a history and Asian studies major from Breezy Point, Minn., is enrolled in the Alliance for Catholic Education’s (ACE) Service Through Teaching Program. He’s teaching 4th grade at a Catholic school in Oklahoma and taking graduate classes at the University of Notre Dame in the summers. “I am excited to share my passion for learning and my faith with the next generation,” says Liedl.

**Anders Palmquist**, a third-generation Johnnie from Plymouth, Minn., accepted a position as a demand forecast analyst at Best Buy Co., Inc. “For me, work is more than just a paycheck. … I look forward to learning more and contributing my skills to help the company become more efficient,” says Palmquist.

**Xiao Wang**, a computer science and mathematics major from Shanghai, China, is in a Ph.D. program in electrical engineering at Purdue University. “I knew nothing about religion when I came to Saint John’s,” says Wang. “A monastic retreat helped me contemplate my future life path—what I want to do with my life and who I want to be.”

Musician and composer John McCutcheon delivered this year’s SJU Commencement address. McCutcheon, a critically acclaimed folk musician, graduated *summa cum laude* from SJU. He has more than 30 recordings, six Grammy nominations and has mastered a dozen traditional instruments. He was described by Johnny Cash as “the most impressive instrumentalist I’ve heard.”

McCutcheon advised the graduates to use their gift of youth, “To challenge the limits. To upend the paradigm. To revolutionize this world. You are given this gift for only a little while, so use it wisely, but use it boldly.”
SJU and CSB Honored with 2012 Senator Paul Simon Award

SJU and CSB are among six schools who have received the 2012 Senator Paul Simon Award for Comprehensive Internationalization. This prestigious award honors institutions that have integrated international concepts and experiences into their entire campus community. The award, given by NAFSA: Association for International Educators, honors the late senator from Illinois.

Upon hearing news of the award, Fr. Bob Flannery ’69 SOT ’73, wrote how proud he was that SJU and CSB were associated with Paul Simon. Flannery served as pastor of the parish where Paul’s wife, Jeanne, attended, and where Paul, a devoted Lutheran, would on occasion worship. Flannery officiated at each of their funerals. “Paul was a wise and gentle man, encouraged international travel for students and is greatly missed in southern Illinois,” writes Flannery.

SJU and CSB will be honored at an event during International Education Week in November in Washington, D.C.

Remembering Monk 100 Years after Titanic

Three Catholic priests died when the Titanic sank on April 15, 1912. Among them was Joseph Peruschitz, OSB, of Holy Cross Abbey, Scheyern, Bavaria, a teacher of mathematics, music and gymnastics in his monastery’s preparatory school. Fr. Joseph boarded the Titanic en route to Collegeville to take up a position at Saint John’s.

Though offered a seat in a lifeboat, Fr. Joseph remained on board to comfort the remaining passengers instead. Eyewitnesses reported seeing him pray the rosary as the last lifeboat was lowered into the water.

Fr. Joseph is honored with a limestone plaque in the cloister of Holy Cross Abbey. In Latin it reads, “May he rest in peace - Father Joseph Peruschitz, OSB, who died on 15 April 1912, dutifully gave his life on the ill-fated ocean liner, Titanic, in the 42nd year of his life, the 17th as a priest and monk.”
Extra! Extra!

SJU endorsed the St. Francis Pledge to Care for Creation and the Poor, a nationwide effort being led by the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change.

60 CSB/SJU students were inducted into the Theta of Minnesota Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa, the nation’s oldest academic honor society.

Dalton Buysse ’12, Chris Hagen ’12, Joe Smith ’12 and Ariel Reischl CSB’13 completed the Mayo Innovation Scholars Program, an experiential learning program offered through four different areas of the Mayo Clinic. The students worked with the Center for Innovation at Mayo Clinic and presented research on virtual pre-natal care.

New Weather Station Keeps 120-Year Tradition Alive

A new weather station was installed on the roof of the Peter Engel Science Center thanks to a faculty development grant and countless volunteer hours from Paul Beniek, information technology services, and Stephen Sauer, professor of biology. Weather enthusiasts can now get real-time and historical weather reports from Collegeville at weatherstation.csbsju.edu.

The weather station at Saint John’s was established in 1892, when Peter Engel, OSB, a professor of natural philosophy, physics and chemistry and later Abbot from 1894-1921, opened the first weather station on the roof of the Quad. While the weather station has changed locations and operators several times in its history, one thing hasn’t changed—for 120 years, daily weather observations have been recorded and sent voluntarily to the Minneapolis Weather Bureau. Thanks to Fr. Peter’s vision, there are detailed records of the ups and downs of meteorological life in Collegeville for more than a century. It’s fitting that today’s weather station is atop a building named in honor of Saint John’s first “weatherman.”

The Saint John’s weather station has had at least five locations since the 1890s. It was housed in this fieldstone building from 1942-1951, when it was moved to make way for the construction of Mary Hall.
2,000 Trees Down in 15 Minutes

Gale-force winds with gusts likely exceeding 70 m.p.h. wreaked havoc on the woods at Saint John’s last August. In less than 15 minutes, approximately 2,000 trees were broken or ripped beyond repair. Some of the trees were of great historical significance—part of the first documented forest plantings in Minnesota, planted after the 1894 tornado in Collegeville.

The abbey forestry staff, led by land manager and arboretum director Tom Kroll, worked for months to salvage the most valuable wood before it decayed or was damaged by insects. Kroll estimates that the trees lost equaled approximately one year’s worth of allowable harvest.

Ben Carlson ’13 paints lumber salvaged from the oldest documented plantings in Minnesota—the white pines planted in 1896 and 1918. The purple remains after the lumber returns from the sawmill, so Abbey Woodworking will be able to identify this “royal” lumber for specific projects on campus.

HMML Highlighted in National Geographic Cover Story

Columba Stewart, OSB, executive director of the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library (HMML), is quoted in the March 2012 cover story of National Geographic. “In the Footsteps of the Apostles” traces the evangelization paths of St. Thomas and the other apostles.

HMML has been part of a team digitally preserving the cultural heritage of the St. Thomas Christians, one of the largest Syriac communities in the world. The history of this ancient Christian culture is handwritten on palm-leaf manuscripts and tells the story of St. Thomas in Kerala, India in the first century. Since 2006, the team has digitized one million images of manuscripts.

“To study the lives of the apostles is a bit like what we’ve been doing with the Hubble telescope—getting as close as we can to seeing the earliest galaxies. This was the big bang moment for Christianity, with the apostles blasting out of Jerusalem and scattering across the known world.” —Fr. Columba Stewart
Since the storm, more than 30 semitruck loads of wood have been shipped to various locations worldwide. The 1896 Norway Spruce was sold for use as handmade guitars and other musical instruments. The high quality oak veneer was sold as far away as Japan. Much of the red oak and pine will be used in the Abbey Woodworking Shop to make new furniture for SJU residence halls.

After salvaging the timber, the abbey forestry staff plans to regenerate the forest with seedlings grown from acorns harvested from arboretum trees along with natural seeding. Kroll anticipates that someday, remnants of the windstorm of 2011 will be as difficult to find as the tornado of 1894.

Eisele ’58 Pays Tribute to Abbey Church in Commonweal

In honor of the 50th anniversary of the completion of Saint John’s Abbey and University Church, Albert Eisele wrote a historical reflection for Commonweal. In his article “The Monks & the Modernist: What the Benedictines Built at Collegeville,” Eisele, the Editor-at-Large of The Hill, sheds light on the building process of this historic space.

Eisele focuses on the unique partnership between Abbot Baldwin Dworschak ’29, the visionary abbot who led the process, and architect Marcel Breuer, the Hungarian-born New Yorker chosen by Saint John’s. He harkens back to when Abbot Baldwin first called for building plans for the church. Abbot Baldwin said, “The Benedictine tradition at its best challenges us to think boldly and to cast our ideals in forms which will be valid for centuries to come, shaping them with all the genius of present-day materials and techniques.”

Abbot Baldwin (L) and Marcel Breuer (R) with Breuer associate Hamilton Smith (standing) review blueprints for the Abbey Church in 1957.
Thank You and Farewell

This May, eight longtime faculty members retired and were honored for their years of service.

37 years
Professor emeritus of French
Charles Rambeck
31 years
Professor alumna of education
Nathaniel Dubin
37 years
Professor emeritus of economics
Christine Manderfeld CSB ’60, OSB
18 years
Professor emerita of sociology
Janet Hope

CSB/SJU Fine Arts Calendar

Keb’ Mo’
Saturday, September 8, 7:30 p.m.
Escher Auditorium, CSB

Hot Club of San Francisco – Cinema Vivant
Saturday, September 15, 8 p.m.
Stephen B. Humphrey Theater, SJU

Live Action Set – The 7-Shot Symphony
Saturday, October 13, 7:30 p.m.
Gorecki Family Theater, CSB

BeauSoleil avec Michael Doucet
Friday, September 28, 7:30 p.m.
Escher Auditorium, CSB

Lucky Plush – The Better Half
Saturday, September 22, 7:30 p.m.
Gorecki Family Theater, CSB
28 years
Professor emerita of theater (shown here with actor and former theater student Michael Hayden ’87)

33 years
Professor emeritus of biology

32 years
Professor emeritus of music

Acoustic Africa
Saturday, October 20, 8 p.m.
Stephen B. Humphrey Theater, SJU

The Second City
Saturday, October 27, 7:30 p.m.
Escher Auditorium, CSB

David Wax Museum
Friday, November 9, 8 p.m.
Stephen B. Humphrey Theater, SJU

Accidental Hero
Friday, November 16, 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, November 17, 7:30 p.m.
Colman Black Box Theater, CSB

Jim Brickman with the CSB/SJU Orchestra
Saturday, December 8, 7:30 p.m.
Escher Auditorium, CSB

The Good Lovelies
Saturday, December 15, 8 p.m.
Stephen B. Humphrey Theater, SJU

For tickets, contact the box office at 320-363-5777 or order online at csbsju.edu/fine-arts

Get information and tickets on your smart phone.
Author and poet Kathleen Norris first came to Saint John’s in 1991 as a resident scholar at the Collegeville Institute to work on the manuscript of her first book, *Dakota: A Spiritual Geography*—a reflection on small-town life in northwestern South Dakota, the harsh climate and prairie landscape of the High Plains, and her own spiritual awakening there—was accepted for publication that October and revised during that year.

“Holy Week was amazing,” Norris said. “I heard from my editor on Maundy Thursday that I needed to cut the manuscript from 400 to 300 pages. I went back and started cutting between participating in the Triduum liturgies of Good Friday and the Easter Vigil. Two weeks later, I had cut 99 pages and the manuscript was complete.”

*Dakota* went on to become a New York Times Best Seller and Notable Book of the Year, while Norris went on to become one of our nation’s most respected writers and a close friend of Saint John’s. Her journey as an author has been closely intertwined with the Benedictines of both Assumption Abbey in North Dakota and Saint John’s.

After living for more than two decades on her grandmother’s farm in Lemmon, South Dakota, with her late husband, the poet David Dwyer, Norris now lives where she grew up, in Hawaii. She sat down to talk with me on a chilly November day last fall, swathed against the unaccustomed cold in layers of SJU clothing. She was on her third Collegeville Institute residency. The draw for Norris has been, from the beginning, the monastic community and the ability to pray the Liturgy of the Hours daily with the monks in the Abbey Church.

Norris first met Benedictines in 1982, when the Presbyterian minister in Lemmon recommended she visit Assumption Abbey in Richardton, North Dakota. In 1986, she became an Oblate of that community, a layperson who commits to live according to the *Rule of Benedict* in her daily life and attaches herself to a community of Benedictines.
During one of her visits to Assumption Abbey, she met Fr. Hilary Thimmesh, OSB, former president of Saint John’s University, and he mentioned Saint John’s. “Is that a Benedictine place?” she asked. All the monks in the room laughed.

Norris made her second visit to Saint John’s in 1993-94. It was during this second Collegeville Institute residency that Norris wrote her second New York Times Best Seller. The Cloister Walk introduced a large swath of the United States population to Benedictine spirituality. “I didn’t intend to write about Benedictines at all,” she said. But when she was touring for Dakota, she realized that “they [Benedictines] are so hidden in the culture and doing such extraordinary things with their lives. Someone had to tell the story. I had lots of fun writing that book.” What she first conceived of as a single book quickly became two, and she also generated much of the material for another bestseller, Amazing Grace: A Vocabulary of Faith during that fruitful year. In Amazing Grace, she elucidates challenging theological concepts such as grace, repentance, dogma, and faith, making them more accessible by grounding them in stories from everyday life.

During this third residency, Norris was busy digitizing her husband’s manuscripts for placement in the South Dakota State University archives, where her own papers are kept and where the papers of South Dakota writers are being collected. She was also going through her notebooks and writing new poems. After a couple of years traveling...
and speaking on her latest book, *Acedia & Me: A Marriage, Monks and a Writer’s Life*, she was eager to get back to her first love, poetry. She also took time out to lead a well-attended panel discussion for the community and public on the topic of acedia.

Written in the aftermath of her husband’s death from cancer at 60, *Acedia & Me* explores the meaning of the term *acedia*—an ancient word for the spiritual side of sloth—unfamiliar to most moderns but common in the early and medieval church. She first discovered it in *The Praktikos*, a manuscript by the fourth-century monk Evagrius Pontikos.

Norris interprets acedia to the modern reader as a condition of being unable to care about what is important. The term resonates deeply with Norris’s experience, and she shares the effects of acedia on our society and her life and marriage.

She feels that acedia, although well understood among monastics, encompasses an important concept for all in our contemporary times and should be restored to our vocabulary. “Lethargy, acedia: in some ways I think they define American culture today. The plethora of 24-hour news sources are perfect carriers of the disease, bombarding us with so much ‘information’ that we can no longer distinguish between what is important and what is not, and discern what we truly need to care about,” is how Norris put it.

Norris has become increasingly active in the university over the years. “Br. Dietrich Reinhart kept asking me to consider becoming a Regent,” she said. “I told him I didn’t have any expertise to offer, in higher education, finance, business.” But the late Br. Dietrich, president of the university from 1991-2008, insisted that she would offer something important to the Board, a perspective on what the monastic community brings to the university. “I’m so glad he kept asking,” Norris said, “because it has been a wonderful experience.”

Norris is in the first year of her third and final term as a Trustee (formerly Regent), serving on the Board of both the university and the graduate school of theology.

Written in the aftermath of her husband’s death from cancer at 60, *Acedia & Me* explores the meaning of the term *acedia*—an ancient word for the spiritual side of sloth—unfamiliar to most moderns but common in the early and medieval church. She first discovered it in *The Praktikos*, a manuscript by the fourth-century monk Evagrius Pontikos.
prayer life of the monastic community is at the center of everything that happens at the university,” she said. “Because of the monastic community living and present here, praying is at the center of the institution. And it affects everyone, even if they don’t go participate in the prayer or liturgy themselves.

“There are lots of Catholic colleges,” she continued, “but there’s something different here because of the resident, worshiping community. People who are visiting say things like, ‘There’s such an amazing spirit here,’ and ‘I have to get back here.’

When asked how she sees the effect on the university, she talked about chatting with a young man who has a Trustees’ scholarship. He told her that when he had his interview for the scholarship, the professor gave him an hour and a half of his time. He wasn’t put into a 20-minute time slot. “At most colleges, that would not be likely to happen,” she said. “It’s a way Benedictine hospitality permeates the culture.”

Norris emphasized the importance of maintaining connections between students and the monastic community, especially now that the university and the abbey have become separate corporations. “I’m impressed with the abbey commitment to being faculty residents,” she said. “The monks didn’t join a monastery to live in a freshman dorm. But from former president Fr. Hilary to younger monks, they live with the students. Looking back later, the students might not remember things from their classes, but they will remember learning how to cook from a monk. That connection is invaluable.”

Since our conversation last November, Norris returned to Saint John’s to lead a summer writing workshop for pastors and theologians called Theology in the Real World. During this workshop she explored ways to use story and metaphor to unpack religious concepts and make them accessible to faith communities. Without question, it will only be one of many more trips to Central Minnesota. Like many others who have found the lure of the abbey and campus irresistible, Norris has formed a connection here that continues to energize her work and her life.

Books by
Kathleen Norris

Non-Fiction
• Dakota: A Spiritual Geography (1993)
• The Cloister Walk (1996)
• The Quotidian Mysteries: Laundry, Liturgy and “Women’s Work” (1998)
• The Virgin of Bennington (2002)
• Acedia & Me: Marriage, Monks and a Writer’s Life (2008)

Poetry
• Falling Off (1971)
• The Middle of the World (1981)
• Little Girls in Church (1995)

Children’s
• The Holy Twins: Benedict and Scholastica (2001)

Illustrated by Tomie de Paola

Susan Sink is a poet and writer living in St. Joseph, Minn. She and Norris became friends when they were both scholars at the Collegeville Institute. Sink is the author of three volumes of The Art of The Saint John’s Bible and a book of poems, The Way of All the Earth, and blogs at cowbird.com and susansink.wordpress.com.
Bringing His “A” Game
Michael Hemesath ’81 Assumes

By Glenda Isaacs Burgeson
Michael Hemesath assumes his presidency at Saint John’s University at a pivotal point in the school’s 155-year history. He is the first layperson elected to a full presidential term. His tenure also coincides with the transfer of the university to a new civil corporation.

Don’t expect major changes in the way Saint John’s prepares students for life. A strong liberal arts education grounded in Benedictine tradition will continue to define the Saint John’s experience, he says.

His memory of two undergraduate experiences sheds light on the values that will guide this alumnus as president.

The first one is as a first-year student on 3rd Mary, sitting in the faculty residence of René McGraw, OSB, with a group of floor mates.

“I don’t remember exactly what we were talking about; it had something to do with the meaning of life, kind of broadly defined,” he says.

He remembers thinking, “Hmm, this is different from what I’ve done before,” and yet it seemed so natural.

“It wasn’t as if you’d walk into a room and Fr. Rene said, ‘Tonight we’re going to talk about finding a vocation or finding meaning in your relationships.’ The conversation just went that way with this group of boys, young men, many of whom are still my very close friends.”

The second memory begins in an honors government class with the late Jim Murphy.

“What I remember most is I took this class freshman year, and the fall of my sophomore year, Murph approached me out of the blue and asked me if I wanted to do an independent study over January term.

“I was just so naive about all these things, I just assumed that it wasn’t unusual for a faculty member to approach a student and ask them if they wanted to do an independent study.”

Usually it is the reverse. The student requests an independent study from the faculty member and then they figure out how to make it work.

Later, in the spring, Murphy suggested that Hemesath present his paper from the independent study at an undergraduate conference. The idea appealed to him. Once again, it did not occur to him as anything unusual that Murphy would volunteer to give up a Saturday to drive to Macalester and sit through a bunch of undergraduate presentations, simply to give Hemesath the experience of presenting his academic research.

That experience began to shape how Hemesath thought about his future.
“That was part of the transformative piece for me, when I started thinking about academia as a viable option for me,” he says.

“Murph saw something in me that said this guy might be interested in graduate school, and I wasn’t even a government major. He gave me this opportunity for which I am eternally grateful, but at the time, I am not sure I even thanked him properly.”

As president, one way to express his thanks is to make sure that “transformative piece” remains a part of the Johnnie experience for today’s students, and his memories lie at the heart of that commitment.

Fond memories aside, however, this is no back-to-the-80s return to campus for Hemesath.

“This is not some nostalgic tour,” he says. “Saint John’s will be a 21st-century institution under my leadership.”

The civil incorporation of SJU is one aspect of that 21st-century institution. While this development primarily affects university governance, Hemesath recognizes his responsibility for focusing on the primacy of the residential student experience, and in particular for maintaining the faculty-resident program in student housing in order to preserve the Benedictine character at Saint John’s.

“The relationship with the monastics is absolutely essential to Saint John’s, and the faculty-resident piece of my experience was tremendously important,” he says.

“I will do everything in my power to work with the monastery to ensure that piece stays at the heart of the undergraduate residential experience at Saint John’s, especially for first-year students.

“To have a monastic, or at least someone who is steeped in and deeply interested in the Benedictine tradition, is one of the things that makes Saint John’s absolutely unique in American higher education.”

Another aspect of 21st century higher education is the set of challenges facing colleges and universities, including

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**This Is Your Life**

*Commentary provided by President Hemesath*

Michael Hemesath born in Iowa City, Iowa to Norbert and Suzanne Hemesath. The first of six children (two of whom were destined for SJU and CSB).

1959
- Becomes a temporary Michigander, living in East Lansing while father is in grad school. *Pictured here with brother Tim in 1962*

1964-1967
- California Dreamin’—learns what little he knows about cool while in kindergarten through second grade in southern California.

January 1967
- Misses out on attending the historic first Super Bowl when father and neighbor leave him crying in the driveway.

1967
- Back to Iowa—family moves to Cedar Rapids, where parents still live. October 1967, sister Amy, CSB ’90, is born—last of six.

1974
- Makes Eagle Scout.
student recruitment, tuition costs and student debt.

Recruiting prospective students has become intensely competitive in recent years, and Hemesath says attracting a sufficient class size each year is essential to the ongoing health at Saint John’s.

“That has to happen every single year,” he says.

Rising tuition rates and student debt loads have generated increasing concern among policymakers, as well as parents. To some extent, Hemesath attributes the current level of alarm to concerns about the economy overall.

“My sense as an economist is that a lot of the nervousness and discussion about the challenges facing higher education right now are not unrelated to the macro-economic slowdown we’ve experienced over the past three years,” he says.

“Without sounding like Pollyanna I would say that if the macro-economy started growing a little bit faster—say
we went from 2 percent GDP growth to 3 percent GDP growth in a year, which would be the more typical long-run trend in the country—I think a lot of the nervousness about the costs of higher education and tuition increases, and the loan burden students face would not disappear but would be softened. It would be less strident, less panicky.”

Nevertheless, he says, these issues are a priority and will be addressed in a thoughtful manner.

“We need to think about our costs—the cost structure of the institution. We need to think about the tuition we’re charging students. We need to think about the loan burden that they will have when they leave our institutions, but I think all of those things can be addressed in a thoughtful, careful fashion. There is no need to hit the panic button about any of those things right now.”

As president, Hemesath will encounter a challenge also faced by College of Saint Benedict President MaryAnn Baenninger that few other college presidents encounter. For each of them, it is how to maintain a distinctive Saint John’s experience and Saint Ben’s experience, respectively, while

“The first word of the Rule of Benedict is ‘Listen,’ and I will take that seriously.” —President Hemesath

1990

Another Hemesath joins the CSB/SJU family when youngest sister, Amy, graduates from CSB.

1989-2012

Professor of economics at Carleton College, Northfield, Minn. 1991: Leads his first study abroad program in Russia. 1993: Leads his first study abroad program in Cambridge, England. 2006-12: Director of Ethical Inquiry Program. 2009-12: Faculty president.

1984

Desperately procrastinating on his dissertation, unofficially runs Boston Marathon. Earns master’s in economics from Harvard, despite procrastinating.

1987-89

Assistant professor at Tufts University in Medford, Mass.

1998

Marries Elizabeth Galbraith (whom he met through former SJU philosophy professor Linda Hansen) in Cambridge, England in the chapel of St. Edmund’s College at the University of Cambridge. The only slight hitch is that the priest is a Dominican, not a Benedictine!

1998

Earns Ph.D. in economics from Harvard and makes mom and dad proud.
also maintaining a seamless experience for the students at both schools.

Hemesath says the challenge has both similarities and differences for each school because of differences between young men and young women.

“President Baenninger and I will be working very closely together with the provost and the deans to ensure the highest quality educational experience on the academic side for our young men in conjunction with getting the same kind of experience for the young women at Saint Ben’s,” he says.

Additionally, he wants to make sure Johnnies take full advantage of their undergraduate experience.

“We have some survey results that suggest that many men experience Saint John’s differently than women experience Saint Ben’s,” he says. That difference is apparent academically and socially, as well as in extracurricular activities.

“There is some evidence to suggest that the women come in and are more academically prepared than the young men, on average. There is also some evidence that suggests that maybe they are more academically engaged when they are here.”

Since, from an academic programming standpoint, SJU and CSB offer identical majors, faculty and curriculum, Hemesath says the question is how to make sure the men take full advantage of their academic opportunities.

“That will be part of my job as president of Saint John’s, to make sure that that academic piece gets the students to dive deeply into the academic life of the institution.”

Hemesath accepts these challenges readily, with both confidence and enthusiasm.
“I don’t feel like a complete rookie, because I know and love Saint John’s,” he says. In addition to his experience as a student, he has made regular campus visits for the past 23 years and knows faculty in the economics department. “I also know other faculty and staff from my time as a student. I’m in touch with what’s going on here but I also know it’s not 1981,” he says.

Since his appointment was announced, he has consulted with several college presidents, including SJU alumnus Robert Gavin ’62, who served as president of Macalaster College and also served on the SJU Board of Regents.

Hemesath has several friends and mentors who are college presidents, and he will have access to the wisdom of previous SJU presidents Bob Koopmann ’68, OSB, and Hilary Thimmesh ’50, OSB.

“That’s one thing atypical about this presidency. Usually, when you come in as a president, the previous president rides off into the sunset. At Saint John’s, the previous president and presidents before him ride off into the monastery. I will have access to their experience, wisdom and insights at my fingertips, and I’m very lucky and pleased about that.”

It is tremendously important to have more than one person to call on to get different outside perspectives, he says.

He also has taken counsel from the Rule of Benedict. “The first word of the Rule of Benedict is ‘Listen,’ and I will take that seriously,” he says.

Hemesath says he is prepared to act, “but it starts with listening, and I need to get to know the community and its needs and its history even better than I do now.” As the first year of his presidency gets under way, Hemesath is clear-eyed about the challenges. Yet he remains upbeat about Saint John’s in the 21st century.

“We are a healthy institution in Collegeville, and we are even healthier when you think about the external communities that are supportive of this institution, especially our alumni body. We have an alumni body whose loyalty to their alma mater is second to none,” he says.

Hemesath says he looks forward to meeting with alumni to make the case for Saint John’s—to seek financial support, help with student recruitment and help for Johnnies in their search for jobs and internships.

“I think that will be an easy sell. Johnnies are incredibly loyal to Saint John’s University.”

Hemesath also is positive because of the reliable constituencies that help sustain Saint John’s. The faculty and staff, board of trustees and friends all make him confident in the institution’s long-term health.

“I’m not naive about the challenges we face, but I think we provide a superb residential liberal arts education in the Benedictine Catholic tradition. That was true for past generations, and it will be true for future generations. Saint John’s will continue to be a place whose Catholic Benedictine ethos develops the character of young men at the same time that it provides a transformative educational experience.

“Of that I am quite confident.”

Where Will They Live?

For the first year, Hemesath will live in Frank House. “It’s lovely, comfortable and the location is absolutely convenient,” says Hemesath. “I need to be on campus as much as I can to get to know the faculty and the staff and the monks and the students.”

The arrangement buys time for university trustees to consider several long-term housing options.

It also gives his family time to make the transition from Northfield to Collegeville. His wife, Elizabeth Galbraith,
who is a religion professor, is midway through a two-year teaching commitment in the Great Conversation program at St. Olaf College.

She teaches half time and is home part time with son Cameron, who turned two this past July. With Cameron well situated in day care, the couple decided it would make sense this first year for Galbraith and Cameron to stay in Northfield rather than contend with the disruption of relocation and a last-minute search for housing and day care.

Galbraith is no stranger to Saint John’s. She was once offered a faculty position by the CSB/SJU theology department but ultimately decided the commuting distance from Northfield was too great.

“She was interested in taking that job because she loved the people she met, and monasticism is important to her both personally and professionally,” Hemesath says.

“She also wants to meet the community as well. It’s a little hard with her in Northfield, but we’ll find ways for her to be involved in public events as much as possible.”

Glenda Isaacs Burgeson is CSB/SJU director of editorial services.
John Chromy ’64 would rather sit down to dinner on the floor with the poorest of the world’s citizens than hobnob with heads of state. He says it’s a better way to solve conflicts that are tearing communities apart.

Chromy has seen the best and the worst of humanity. He has witnessed the ruins of war and has helped communities recover from that destruction.

Chromy shared his experiences as a lifelong peacemaker with students, faculty, staff and the public during a weeklong campus visit March 19-22 as the fifth annual scholar-in-residence for the Eugene J. McCarthy Center for Public Policy and Civic Engagement at Saint John’s University.

The McCarthy residency provides SJU and CSB students extended access to someone who has a distinguished career in public service, policy or politics. Chromy recently retired as vice president at Cooperative Housing Foundation International (CHF). Founded in 1952, CHF International is an international development organization that works in post-conflict, unstable and developing countries.

CHF serves more than 20 million people each year and has programs in more than 25 countries across Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe and the Caucasus and the Middle East.

Chromy has been with CHF International since 1996. He has extensive experience in nonprofit management, organizational development in international settings, sustainability and fundraising in the private sector. Currently he manages CHF’s relationships with the U.S. Congress and the Department of Defense.

His work has brought him in contact with the upper echelons of the world’s power structure. He has met three U.S. presidents, one pope and heads of state from six countries. He has met with executives of top corporations, advised three U.S. cabinet members and has testified three times before congressional committees of the U.S. Congress.

Yet, when it comes to actual conflict resolution—the roll-up-your-shirtsleeves nitty gritty—Chromy can be found at the bottom of the world’s power structure.

“I have sat on the floor and shared food with low-income families of Asia and Africa on hundreds of occasions,” he says.

Chromy pioneered CHF’s unique “Bottom-up Community Participation and Self-Help Planning” approach to economic development, job creation, community stabilization and infrastructure re-construction.

“We don’t negotiate between national leaders and governments. That’s not our business,” he says. “We work on the community level.”

At that level, he first works to identify the source of a dispute. Then he works to increase the number of people making decisions about its resolution.

“We direct the community’s attention to things they can control,” he says.

As an example, Chromy cites a dispute over water. The conflict involved Somali sheep herders who crossed into Ethiopia to water their livestock. National borders have little meaning when livestock are thirsty, he explains.

The solution was to develop improvements in water storage and to negotiate access, he says. Rather than having herders show up unexpectedly with thousands of sheep, the herders agreed to send runners ahead to announce their arrival and then to water the sheep 200-300 at a time.
This decision-making process changes the focus of disputes, and it develops new leaders, Chromy says. “Over two years’ time we have had new leaders step up who aren’t arguing over the Old Testament,” he says.

These new leaders have had enough of endless conflict and are ready to solve problems. The decision-making process also empowers women to participate, he says. “When women are involved, the projects are better maintained and sustained.” Chromy says.

Neutrality is another principle that guides his work, and that of all NGOs, he says. The practice of strict neutrality has allowed CHF workers to provide relief and expertise in some of the world’s hot spots.

Chromy has been involved in assisting people to stabilize their communities and defuse conflicts in more than 30 countries, including most recently Afghanistan, West Bank/Gaza, Lebanon and the Darfur region of Sudan.

Throughout his career, he has traveled to and visited extensively 55 countries and lived for several years in India and Barbados. Despite the devastating conditions he has witnessed, Chromy maintains faith in the human capacity for good.

“I have great hope for the future,” he says. “I know most people are good. There are some people inherently bad, but the greatest bulk of humankind wants to do the right thing.

“I have always been a great fan of the Sermon on the Mount,” Chromy says. “Jesus was pretty hard on the rich. I’m all for people gaining wealth, as long as they are not hurting people, as long as they use it to do good.”

Glenda Isaacs Burgeson is CSB/SJU director of editorial services.
The sun rises on the banks of the Sagatagan.

Photo by Michael Crouser ’85

If you would like a reprint of this photo, please email sjumag@csbsju.edu with your name and address, and we'll send you a complimentary 8 x 10 photo.
Saint John’s students love athletics. They love watching them and playing them. The school’s varsity sports draw record-breaking crowds and make national headlines. And each year hundreds more students participate in intramurals and club sports.

My old Greg House roommate Mike Berndt ’98 still owns several T-shirts we received after winning intramural basketball championships. They’re well-worn, a bit dirty and hardly fashionable, but Berndt still cherishes them. Countless Johnnies understand the attachment (although their wives may not!).

Ninety percent of Saint John’s students are involved in athletics at some level, whether it’s a freshman running back on the varsity football squad, a junior on the club water polo team or a senior playing intramural sand volleyball. Intramural sports are competitions just between
Intramurals: Something for Everyone

It only took Tyler Rongitsch ‘11 a week or two to meet a group of fellow freshmen in his dorm who thought it’d be fun to form a flag football team during the fall intramural season. A few months later, Rongitsch won an intramural hockey championship—and the T-shirt—and halfway into his first year at Saint John’s, the Chaska graduate started working with Alpers on the intramural staff. He worked in intramurals all four years at Saint John’s, balancing work and play.

“It puts you in an element that’s outside of studies and is more laid-back and carefree and allows you to bond over something as simple as a softball game,” says Rongitsch. "Many intramural participants were high school stars but choose not to play varsity sports at Saint John’s. Others aren’t quite good enough, and some simply want to concentrate more on academics. Plenty of Johnnie varsity athletes also compete in intramurals—it’s common to see a fall football star in an IM basketball game in the winter. But as an intramural staffer, Rongitsch also reached out in the freshmen dorms to students who weren’t aware of the intramural programs and helped place them with a team. And there is a sport for everyone. Flag football, softball, basketball, kickball, Wiffle Ball, hockey, sand volleyball, indoor soccer … the list goes on. Students can suggest ideas to Alpers and the staff, but facility space and overall interest are also taken into consideration.

Some intramural sports have been around for decades while others—like dodgeball—are newer additions. Yes, dodgeball: It’s not just for firing red rubber balls at cowering high school classmates. Inspired by the Ben Stiller movie about the sport, Alpers and his crew started dodgeball leagues. One takes place in the wrestling room, the mats cushioning the falls of the shoeless players who are diving while not attacking. The IM staff also runs a campus-wide dodgeball tournament, pitting residential area against residential area. “We’ll have Mary Two playing against First Tommie or going against the off campus-apartment team,” says Alpers, “and there are times when we have 150 kids on the basketball courts playing one game of dodgeball. It’s madness.”

Rongitsch and the student staff helped oversee the massive dodgeball tourney. But otherwise intramural games are now self-officiated, the athletes serving as...
refs while the workers only get involved when a touch of mediation is required. Rongitsch, an accounting major who now works at Cargill, fondly recalls the hours spent working with the intramural programs, whether it was making the schedules or lining up the fields.

But ultimately intramurals are about participating. They’re about reliving past glories or simply running around for a few hours with friends. Even better, they’re about beating your friends, because winning against your buddies can prove even more satisfying than defeating strangers. When Rongitsch won the hockey championship his freshman year, his team defeated a senior-laden squad. The seniors entered the game with such confidence, they brought champagne to the arena, anticipating a victory and a celebration.

“They weren’t thrilled,” Rongitsch says, “but they walked over afterward and congratulated us.”

**Club Sports: Different World, Same Dedication**

Saint John’s Ultimate Frisbee co-captain Matthew Kortz ’13 projects a relaxed demeanor when talking about his sport. He jokes about the team—called BAM—taking “anyone who gets cut from any other sport” and about keeping things “low budget because that’s how we attract the majority of our people.” But Kortz and his cohorts devote serious time to their sport. Like so many other Saint John’s club programs that compete on the national stage, their dedication and accomplishments are no joke.

BAM finished second in the Division III national tournament in 2011 and returned to the tourney in 2012. Kortz competed in high school while attending Cretin-Derham Hall. He is one of the best players on the 29-man roster, in addition to handling his responsibilities as a captain. At Saint John’s the captains run the Ultimate Frisbee team—there are no coaches. The team practices three to four times a week, and during the spring, travels to places like Chicago and Georgia for tournaments.

Kortz came to Saint John’s for the academics. And as one of BAM’s leaders, he makes sure the atmosphere remains relaxed. Still, the scoreboard also matters—as it does in any sport. “We emphasize having fun,” he says, “but the guys can also be pretty competitive, and we can have even more fun when we win.” The school covers two-thirds
of the team’s expenses while the players handle the rest. Kortz says, “The school gives so much with money and support. It’s nice to be able to win games and get the Saint John’s name out there and hopefully represent the school in a positive light.”

The Saint John’s lacrosse team is familiar with representing the school in a positive light on the national level, although the first members of the team might find that surprising. A history of the program written on the team’s website notes that “only two or three” of the guys who showed up for the first team in 1986 had played lacrosse. Now, 26 years later, Saint John’s has established itself as one of the top club programs in the country, having qualified for eight straight national tournaments.

Head coach Derek Daehn took over the team in 2009. A former player at the University of Minnesota-Duluth, Daehn recruits students who also contemplate playing for large club teams at places like North Dakota State and the University of Minnesota, not to mention the University of St. Thomas, a school that is, as in all sports, Saint John’s biggest rival. Saint John’s carries a smaller roster than their opponents, but “I think we offer the best combo of academics and athletics,” Daehn says. “We look for the blue-collar-type players we can coach up versus the all-star.”

After spending his workday at Rasmussen College in the Twin Cities, Daehn commutes to practices in Collegeville and makes the drive back at night, epitomizing the dedication of club sport enthusiasts. The limelight’s not as bright as it is for varsity sports, but the commitment is similar.

Hiring coaches for the club teams is a recent development for Saint John’s and reflects the growing popularity of the teams, although even sports that have a coach—such as lacrosse and rugby—remain student-driven enterprises, whether it’s organizing, fundraising or running practices when the coaches are unavailable. The potential to lure top-flight recruits plays a role in deciding whether to hire a coach. For example, the Minnesota State High School League sponsors lacrosse, and having a coach enables the Johnnies to devote more time to recruiting the players who hope to move on and play at the collegiate level.

The club teams and intramurals will benefit from the school’s planned multimillion-dollar upgrade to the athletic facilities, and Alpers especially hopes a proposed dome will provide “space and time for students to recreate.” In the winter, Saint John’s is “starving for space,” he says. Alpers and his staff juggle the available facilities—a couple of nights in the fieldhouse for the club teams, then a few

Tyler Rongitsch ’11 played intramural hockey and worked on the intramural staff. He and fellow staffers oversaw the campus-wide dodgeball tourney that has become so popular.
Club Sports
- Men’s Lacrosse
- Men’s Rugby
- Men’s Volleyball
- Joint Curling
- Joint Crew
- Joint Nordic Skiing
- Joint Water Polo
- Joint Ultimate Frisbee

Intramurals
- Men’s Flag Football
- Men’s Tennis Singles & Doubles
- Co-Rec Softball
- Co-Rec Freestyle Basketball
- Indoor Soccer
- Indoor Men’s Soccer
- Basketball 3-on-3
- Basketball 5-on-5
- Ultimate Frisbee
- Men’s Racquetball
- Co-Rec Indoor Wiffleball
- Sand Volleyball
- Dodgeball
- FR’s Cup Dodgeball
- Men’s Hockey
- Kickball

Matthew Kortz ’13, co-captain of the Ultimate Frisbee club, gets set for a pass in a scrimmage on Clemens Field.

We emphasize having fun, but the guys can be pretty competitive, and we can have even more fun when we win.

Matthew Kortz ’13

We emphasize having fun, but the guys can be pretty competitive, and we can have even more fun when we win.

Matthew Kortz ’13

Shawn Fury ’97 is the author of Keeping the Faith: In the Trenches with College Football’s Worst Team. He was a two-time intramural basketball champion and says he was “good but probably not quite as good as I remember being.”
Scorecard

**BASKETBALL** (16-11, 11-9 MIAC) tied for fifth in the MIAC. Andy Burns ’12 and Aaron Barmore ’12 were named to the All-MIAC First Team. Burns ended his career 26th in school history with 1,068 points and finished second in assists (377). Barmore ended his career with 969 points and a .536 shooting percentage in 103 career games. The Johnnies completed a season sweep of St. Thomas and earned a victory over another NCAA Tournament team, Wisconsin-Stevens Point.

**BASEBALL** (29-16, 14-6 MIAC) tied a program record with 29 victories and won its first MIAC Baseball Playoff Championship, in addition to its 13 regular-season titles, to earn its third trip to the NCAA Tournament. Joey Long ’13 was named to the D3baseball.com All-America second team as a pitcher after shattering SJU’s records for saves in a single season (10) and a career (14) in 2012. Long, Connor Cline ’13, Dylan Graves ’14, Ryan Spengler ’13 and Hayden Zimmerman ’12 were all named to the All-MIAC first team as well as the respective All-Region teams by D3baseball.com and the American Baseball Coaches’ Association.

**GOLF** Dennis Granath ’13 earned PING All-America third-team honors and was named the MIAC Player of the Year. Granath and Alex Klehr ’12 received Division III Cleveland Golf/Srixon All-America Scholar recognition. Casey Vangsness ’14 joined Granath on the Golf Coaches’ Association of America All-Region team.

**HOCKEY** (9-7 MIAC) finished third in the MIAC and made its first postseason appearance since the 2007-08 season. John Haeg ’15 and Trent Johnson ’14 were named to the All-MIAC first team. Haeg and Wally Cossette ’15 were also named to the five-man All-Rookie team.

**SWIMMING AND DIVING** finished fourth at the 2012 MIAC Championships. After winning three conference titles at the meet, Josh Seaburg ’12 was named MIAC Men’s Swimmer of the Year. He won the 500-yard freestyle, the 400-yard individual medley and the 200-yard butterfly, ending his career as a seven-time All-MIAC honoree at SJU, and an eight-time honoree in his collegiate career (All-MIAC as a freshman at Gustavus). Seaburg finished 25th in the 200-yard butterfly at the NCAA Championships. Logan Arnold ’15 collected three All-MIAC performances and Wes Schlichting ’12 earned his fourth All-MIAC honor.

**TENNIS** (6-12, 4-5 MIAC) Ian Hansen ’12 earned All-MIAC honors as well as the conference’s Arthur Ashe Award, which annually recognizes a senior tennis student-athlete with outstanding sportsmanship and exemplary athletic, academic and humanitarian accomplishments. Fabricio Moncada ’13 was named All-MIAC for the third consecutive season. Hansen and Moncada also earned All-MIAC honors as a doubles tandem.
Leadership Gifts Help Launch Phase I

Bennett ’85 and Sharon Morgan

Bennett and Sharon Morgan have accompanied their children on many campus visits around the country. They observed that facilities make a distinct impression on young people and parents and can often be the deciding factor in a college choice if there is little perceived difference in academic reputation. This experience, in part, inspired Bennett and Sharon to make a very generous leadership gift to the new SJU Athletic Facilities Project.

“The reality for Saint John’s is that the marketplace is extremely competitive,” said Bennett. “This facilities plan is bold and ambitious and we are excited for the students. We are very pleased to help SJU move forward.”

Thanks to their commitment and to the generosity of many others, Phase I of this multi-year project is under way and set for completion by the end of October. Among the priorities in this phase is the completion of Haws Field, a new home for Johnnie soccer, a new baseball stadium with a SprinTurf surface, and initial work on the tennis court complex. “The new fields will help us reclaim an important competitive advantage for our SJU varsity programs, while also providing space for club sports like lacrosse and rugby,” commented Fr. Bob Koopmann, outgoing president. “We are deeply grateful to the Morgans for their enthusiasm and exceptional generosity.”

Bennett graduated with an economics degree and went on to earn his MBA from the Carlson School at the University of Minnesota. He has been with Polaris Industries, Inc. for more than 24 years and has been president and chief operating officer since 2005. Polaris is a Medina, Minn.-based manufacturer of off-road vehicles, snowmobiles and motorcycles. Bennett and Sharon have three children and are very active in school, church and community.

Bill ’70 and Ginny Laliberte

In November 2011 Bill and Ginny Laliberte were asked to consider a significant leadership gift for the new seasonal dome project at SJU. It was the day before Hall of Fame coach John Gagliardi turned 85. As a former player it gave Bill pause, and he took that moment to reflect on the significance of John's legacy as a coach, leader and mentor. The fact that John believed in Bill made a lasting impression. “John Gagliardi gave me the opportunity to flourish within the Saint John's tradition. All I want to do is to continue that tradition by giving others the same opportunity he gave me but within a warmer, seasonal dome environment,” said Laliberte.

Thanks to Bill and Ginny's extraordinary commitment in honor of John Gagliardi, the seasonal dome is in the planning phase and is expected to be the featured project in Phase II of the athletic facilities project. “This project will set us apart from most of our peer institutions in Minnesota and across the country,” commented Tom Stock, athletic director. “There is no doubt that the seasonal dome will give us an important advantage in recruiting top student-athletes in football and other sports.”

“We are very humbled by the Laliberte’s heartfelt generosity and support for Johnnie athletics,” said former president Fr. Bob Koopmann, OSB.

Bill graduated from Saint John’s with a degree in history. His senior year, he was named all-conference in the MIAC, leading the team in rushing while averaging nearly six yards per carry. That year the Johnnies also won 1969 Mineral Water Bowl. Following his service in the Navy he settled in southern California. Together, Bill and Ginny own WJL Distributors, a produce brokerage firm based in Westlake Village not far from Los Angeles. The Lalibertes have two children and five grandchildren. They return to Minnesota regularly to visit family, to see John Gagliardi and enjoy Johnnie football.
Brian '81 and Joy Crevoiserat

When Brian and Joy Crevoiserat were asked to consider a significant leadership gift to support the new SJU Athletic Facilities Project they saw an opportunity. In making a very generous commitment they chose to honor several individuals at SJU who have had a profound impact on their lives.

“John Gagliardi taught us how to play winning football and to seek lives of substance. I got to do the former for four amazing years; the latter I have been aspiring to for the past 31 years since graduation. I can think of no more humbling of an honor than to recognize John for his 60 year commitment to the students and athletes of SJU,” said Brian. “Thom Woodward set me on the path of service to SJU in 1994 with an invitation to join the National Alumni Association Board. My life has been blessed by the many opportunities I have had to serve SJU and the people who have become my friends in the course of this service. Thom’s love of all things Saint John’s, in particular the baseball team, motivated Joy and me to honor his long-time service to the University.”

Their support for both football and baseball helped make it possible for Saint John’s to move forward with two very important projects this summer. In June the impressive new SprinTurf surface was installed in Clemens Stadium for the upcoming football season. Simultaneously, work began on the initial phase of the new baseball stadium which will be completed by the end of October. They are convinced that these projects are critical to SJU in a very competitive student recruitment environment. “Brian and Joy really grasp the big picture,” said Fr. Bob Koopmann. “We are not only thankful for their generosity for Johnnie athletics, but also for their gift for the new Learning Commons project in honor of the late Br. Dietrich Reinhart, and for Saint John’s Abbey in honor of Abbot John Klassen.”

Brian graduated with a double major in accounting and business administration. He has spent the last 23 years at Wells Fargo Bank (formerly Norwest), where he currently serves as senior vice president and national sales executive. He and Joy have three children and are active volunteers with their church, community and, of course, Saint John’s. Brian served on the SJU Alumni Association Board from 1994 – 2001 and served as its president in 1996-97. He also served on the SJU Board of Regents and several capital campaign committees.
Coborns Make Gift for Haws Field

Coborn’s, Inc. recently announced a $400,000 gift to Saint John’s University for a new soccer field in honor of Pat Haws, retired SJU head soccer coach. The new field will be called Haws Field. Construction began this spring, and it will be ready for play by the fall 2013 soccer season.

“The Coborns are one of Central Minnesota’s most philanthropic and community-minded families, with deep roots at Saint John’s,” said Fr. Bob Koopmann, OSB, former president of Saint John’s University. “This gift follows a long tradition of generosity to Saint John’s from Coborn’s and the Coborn family, including the Coborn Scholarship program at Saint John’s University and the College of Saint Benedict.”

With a total project cost of $600,000, the gift from Coborn’s will be used as a challenge to attract the additional $200,000 needed from alumni, parents and friends.

“Coborn’s is delighted to be in a position to continue its support of Johnnie athletics and the Johnnie soccer program with this gift in honor of Pat Haws,” said Chris Coborn ’81, president and CEO of Coborn’s, Inc. and former member of the University’s Board of Regents.

Alumnus Makes $9 Million Estate Commitment

A Saint John’s University alumnus and his wife, who wish to remain anonymous, have designated Saint John’s as a 50 percent beneficiary of their estate plan. With a gift value of $9 million, this is among the largest gifts in Saint John’s history. Upon maturity, the gift will be divided equally between the Abbey and University for their respective missions.

“We are absolutely delighted and very grateful for the extraordinary generosity of this remarkable couple,” said Abbot John Klassen, OSB. “This gift comes at a wonderful moment in our history, and it affirms the commitment and devotion that our benefactors have for both Saint John's Abbey and University.”

“This is a transformative gift for Saint John’s,” said Fr. Bob Koopmann, OSB, president emeritus of Saint John’s University. “While we expect it will be many years before this gift matures, even now it is a strong vote of confidence in our future.”

“The timing of this gift could not have been better,” observed Rob Culligan ’82, vice president for institutional advancement. “It is a capstone to Fr. Bob’s presidency, and it is a cornerstone upon which Michael Hemesath begins his service as president.

“This kindhearted couple has set a great example for the Saint John’s alumni community,” adds Culligan. “Regardless of the size of the estate, alumni can leave a legacy and make a profound difference by naming Saint John’s as a beneficiary of their estate, whether it be two percent, five percent, 10 percent, or in the case of this couple, even more.”

McNeely Center Receives $750,000 from Manitou Fund

Saint John’s University recently received a $750,000 grant from the Manitou Fund for core support for the Donald McNeely Center for Entrepreneurship.

“This gift from the Manitou Fund is such a wonderful way to honor Donald McNeely,” said Terri Barreiro, director of the McNeely Center. “I’d like to thank Mike Urbanos ’72 for his role in making it possible. It enables us to sustain the McNeely Center’s life-changing programs for students as well as ongoing services to entrepreneurial alums and campus-wide engagement strategies that stimulate entrepreneurial approaches to marketplace and social issues.

Since its founding in 2004, the McNeely Center for Entrepreneurship has evolved into a highly successful interdisciplinary program that serves students, faculty and alumni of SJU and CSB.
Learning Commons Receives Additional Board Support

The Saint John's Learning Commons continues to receive strong support from members of the Saint John's Board of Trustees. Recently three more board members stepped forth with financial commitments to this construction project: Pat and Kris Ellingsworth ’70, Bill ’82 and Amy Jeatran, and Tom Schnettler ’79 and his wife, Cheryl Appeldorn, CSB ’81.

“I am deeply grateful for the continued commitment of board members,” commented Fr. Bob Koopmann, OSB, president emeritus. “The board has really stepped forward in support of this project during my tenure as president.”

The Saint John’s Learning Commons will be a dynamic state-of-the-art academic facility that will foster integrated thinking and engaged learning and research. This project includes the conversion of Alcuin Library into a Learning Commons and the construction of a 40,000-square-foot addition that will include classrooms, study areas and a technology center.

Bill ’82 and Amy Jeatran

“We are very excited to support the new Learning Commons. As a past SJU student, the library was the primary place where we would study. Very little has changed in the structure and environment of the old library in the 30 years since I graduated, yet very much has changed in how today’s students study, collaborate and learn. As a parent of a current SJU student, I can see how important it is that we transition the old, outdated library to a new learning commons that is reflective of how students learn and study today. As a trustee, I understand the importance of making sure our learning environments are among the best and provide exceptional learning opportunities for our current and future students.”

Pat and Kris Ellingsworth ’70

“It is a pressing need to convert the historical format of a library to a modern academic learning environment. I applaud Saint John’s efforts to do so, particularly in such a manner that it enhances the view of the Abbey Bell Banner from inside Alcuin Library, thus maintaining Marcel Breuer’s vision of creating a dynamic conversation between faith and reason.”

Tom Schnettler ’79 and Cheryl Appeldorn ’81

“The quality of the academic program at Saint John’s is critical to the University’s vitality and economic well-being in an increasingly competitive market. The Learning Commons will provide many opportunities for our students, faculty and staff to ensure the educational experience at Saint John’s is second to none.”
Bob Gavin has spent the better part of his life on college campuses. Throughout a remarkable career in higher education, many colleges have benefited from his insight, wisdom and leadership—perhaps none more than SJU.

Described by a colleague as “a leader amongst leaders,” Gavin was both an honor student and All-American lineman at Saint John’s. For more than two decades, he was on the faculty and held various administrative positions at Haverford College. Gavin subsequently served as president of Macalester College from 1984 to 1996.

Throughout his career, Gavin has always championed Saint John’s. He has been a generous financial supporter and was on the national consultation team for the capital campaign One Generation to the Next. He has also been a Twin Cities chapter volunteer, class committee volunteer and reunion committee member.

Gavin served on the Board of Regents from 2000 to 2009. Fellow Regents routinely sought him out for his experience and leadership. “Bob provided other Regents with insights and recommendations that addressed key issues being worked on at the time,” says Joe Mucha ’66, who served on the Board of Regents with Gavin. “When Bob offered his comments and thoughts, all other Regents would stop and listen intently to what he was saying.”

Ken Roering distinguished himself on the gridiron at Saint John’s as a two-time All-American football player and key member of the 1963 national championship team. Almost 50 years later, Roering still ranks in the top ten of all time in yards per reception.

Roering went on to earn a Ph.D. in business administration and a highly successful career in academia. From 1982 to 2004, he held the prestigious Pillsbury Company-Paul S. Gerot Chair in Marketing at the Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota, where he is currently a professor emeritus. Roering has been a consultant to numerous national corporations and is a prolific author.

Saint John’s has been a grateful recipient of his expertise. He served on the Board of Regents from 2006 to 2012, and continues on the Board of Trustees. He recently chaired the SJU presidential search process.

The Basten Award honors a former Johnnie football player who has been an outstanding leader as an alumnus. It is given in honor of the late Bob Basten ’82, a former Minnesota Viking, business executive and founder of the Playing to Win for Life Foundation for ALS Research.

Bob Gavin ’62 will receive this year’s Fr. Walter Reger Distinguished Alumnus Award at the Homecoming Banquet on Sept. 28. The award, the highest honor bestowed by the Alumni Association, salutes a key alumnus in the name of Fr. Walter Reger, OSB (1894-1971)—long-time secretary of the Alumni Association and friend to legions of Johnnies.
Johnnies in the Media

Mike Dady ’71 gave viewers of KARE 11 a tour of his “Ranch in the Sky” in downtown Minneapolis. Dady’s office on the 51st floor of the IDS Center, the tallest building in Minnesota, emulates his beloved ranch in Veblen, South Dakota. “Why not re-create what we love so much about South Dakota here?” Dady said.

John Wiehoff ’84, CEO of global logistics giant C.H. Robinson Worldwide Inc., was featured in a story on the future of the company in the Minneapolis Star-Tribune. Throughout its 107-year history, Robinson has responded to changing markets and prevailed. “We have thousands of competitors, but not anybody who’s close to being like us,” says Wiehoff. “In a fragmented competitive industry, we’re unique.”

Tim Gruidl ’90, president and founder of Fishbowl Solutions, was profiled in the Minneapolis Star-Tribune. Gruidl started Fishbowl Solutions, a software and consulting services company, in his basement in 1999. Fishbowl has nearly doubled since 2009, with 40 employees and 2011 revenue of slightly more than $7 million.

James Wolford ’90 is the CEO of Atomic Data, which was named one of Fortune’s 100 Fastest-Growing Inner City Businesses. Atomic Data (No. 26) offers a wide range of IT services, including an increasingly valuable asset: digital storage space. Wolford, who has grown the company 48 percent each of the last five years, tries to distinguish the company as a more ethical IT company. Wolford traveled to Uganda in April to determine how to improve communication technologies in African refugee camps.

Ryan Heining ’91, CEO of MSpace Inc., was honored with a Diversity in Business award from the Minneapolis/St. Paul Business Journal. Heining was among a select group of Twin Cities corporate leaders who were recognized for promoting diversity in the workforce. MSpace provides video-conferencing and audiovisual solutions.

Barry Griffin ’09, a law student at King’s College in London and president of the Bahamas Law Students’ Association, was featured in his hometown newspaper, The Freeport (Bahamas) News, as one of four top students chosen to moot court for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II during her diamond jubilee celebrations. The Queen was on hand to formally open Somerset House, the new home of the King’s College School of Law.
How Johnnies Connect

More than 3,900 alumni attended 149 events worldwide last year. Look for one near you.

We have email addresses for 60% of you—let’s make that 100%. Go to sjualum.com and register on JohnniesConnect. You’ll never miss event notices, class notes or breaking news again.

More than 3,100 alumni the Saint John’s University Alumni Association page. Join them! Give us a and get in the conversation.

310 of you are following @sjualumni. If Tweets are music to your ears, follow us.

Go to sjualum.com anytime from your phone, tablet or computer for up-to-date information on alumni events and news.

Where Johnnies Connect

There are more than 24,000 alumni in 74 countries worldwide.

SJU Alumni Chapters

For more on alumni chapters worldwide, go to sjualum.com.
Come back to Collegeville

Friday, Sept. 28
Homecoming Banquet 5 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 29
Johnnie Football vs. St. Olaf 1 p.m.
Celebration on the Tundra 3 – 7 p.m.
Bring the family and celebrate after the game!

Go to sjureunion.com for more information

Congratulations to the Classes of
and Beyond 50th

Spread the Red by recommending a high school student who would be a great addition to SJU or CSB. Go to spreadred.com and fill in the simple referral form.

Be sure to tell recommended students they are eligible for a FREE T-SHIRT at csbsjushirt.com.
Members of the Rochester Alumni Chapter volunteered at the Channel One food bank in Rochester last February. Pictured are (front, L to R) Tom Hartman ’07, Scott Torborg ’96, Grace Torborg, Jim Ranweiler ’64 and Pat McKee ’76 and (back, L to R) Dean Sorum ’93, Trent Christensen, John Weiss ’72, Trace Christensen ’89 and Aaron Getchell ’06.

Looking for Johnnies in Rochester?

Check in with the Rochester Alumni Chapter

President
John McBroom ’97
johnmcbroom@yahoo.com
“Our main goals are to give alumni in southeastern Minnesota a chance to stay connected with Saint John’s, meet other Johnnies and promote the university. This year we’re focused on new events that may appeal to alumni who have never attended a chapter event before.”

Past President
Eric Reeve ’03
ebreeve29@gmail.com
“The Rochester chapter works to stay connected to Saint John’s by engaging local alumni in networking, volunteer activities and social events. No matter the size of the group, bringing fellow alumni together is what makes our chapter successful.”

Recent Events
• An evening at the Rochester Honkers baseball game
• Channel One food bank service event and social
• Community picnic and student sendoffs
• Local park cleanup benefiting the Litter Bit Better campaign

Did You Know?
• 479 alumni spanning the classes of 1943 to 2011 live in Rochester and surrounding communities.
• More than 100 of the 479 Johnnies in the area are employed by Mayo Clinic or IBM.

Connect with the Rochester Chapter
• Email John or Eric.
• Check out the Rochester chapter page on sjualum.com.

For more on alumni chapters worldwide, go to sjualum.com.
Milestones

ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS 2012

Bob Praus ’62
Executive (ret.), Kraft Foods

Jon Theobald ’67
President, Mairs and Power Inc.

Tom Hokr ’72
CEO, Capital Advisory Group, LLC

Michael Urbanos ’72
Chief Operations Officer, Space Center Inc.

Chris Boyd ’77
Vice President, Kaiser Permanente

Tim McHale ’77
Major General, U.S. Army

Rob Culligan ’82
Vice President, Institutional Advancement, SJU

Rick Odenthal ’87
CEO, Central Minnesota Credit Union

Denis McDonough ’92
Deputy National Security Advisor, Executive Office of the President of the United States
**MARRIAGES**

'69 Kathy Smith to Michael Fiala, Sept. '11
'72 Mary Claire Kent to Jery Vandrovec, June '11
'73 Soraya Medina to Kevin Cashman, May '12
'88 Amber Buck to Todd Setter, Sept. '11
'96 Kindra to Christopher Englund, June '11
'00 Susan (Schulzetemberg '04) to Michael Gully, Jan. '12
'02 Stacy Reichert to Ryan Tamm, Apr. '11
'03 Michelle (Minke '02) to Cam McCambridge, May '12
'06 Erin to Eric Reiner, Oct. '11
'06 Char to Jeff Snegosky, May '12
'07 Kathleen Byrne to Cody Fischer, Aug. '11
'08 Megan (Kurtz '07) to Tyler Engelke, Feb. '12
'09 Stephanie (Gassert '07) to Scott Paul, Sept. '11
'10 Megan Schmitz to Scott Sand, Aug. '11
'11 Heidi Loftquist to Dan Burgstaler, Aug. '11
'11 Courtney (Christenson '11) to Luke Opsahl, Dec. '11
'12 Gina (Pellegrene '13) to Bradley Downs, Aug. '11
'15 Amanda (Linn '14) to Tyler Roles, Aug. '11

**BIRTHS**

'84 Yumi & Rob Mori, boy, Hugo, Jan. '12
'85 Yanira & Doug Cleary, girl, Nora, Oct. '11
'89 Stacy & Thomas Kowalkowski, boy, Viktor, Apr. '12
'90 Selvi & Tom Habstritt, girl, Katelyn, June '11
'95 Sarah & Marshal Cooley, boy, Miles, July '11
'95 Shelly & Justin Dekker, girl, Ruby, Nov. '11
'95 Stacy (Tasto '95) & Douglas Ferderer, boy, Owen, Mar. '12
'96 Connie (Goeden '97) & Drew Gottfried, girl, Sydney, Dec. '11
'96 Joy & Jon Ruis, boy, Oliver, Jan. '12
'97 Molly & Dan Haske, girl, Margo, Mar. '12
'97 Sally (Swansstrom '98) & Peter Rahn, boy, Jack, Nov. '11
'98 Jennifer (Hafner '98) & Ben Doom, girl, Harper, Apr. '12
'99 Kim & Mike Caputa, boy, Joseph, Oct. '11
'99 Ashley & Brian Eisenenschick, boy, Noah, Mar. '12
'99 Laura & Jim Fuschetto, girl, Clara, Sept. '11
'99 Karen & Keith Gallus, Oct. '11
'99 Ellen (Tuchner '01) & Mike Kennedy, girl, Victoria, Nov. '11
'99 Suzanne & Adam Kishel, boy, Blake, Feb. '12
'99 Nicole & Jeremy Kletzin, boy, Colton, Feb. '12
'99 Marian (Studer '05) & Kyle Lyngaard, boy, Lars, Feb. '12
'99 Tina & Jason Velinsky, boy, Grayden, Dec. '11
'00 Debra (Wentz '00) & Dan Ferraro, boy, Jack, Dec. '11
'00 Elsa & Bill Fogarty, boy, Sebastian, Jan. '12
'00 Maggie & Brian Kirchoff, boy, Thomas, Oct. '11
'00 Robyn (Magalska '00) & Daniel Liebl, girl, Elizabeth, Aug. '11
'00 Katie (Rothstein '01) & Tony Minnich, girl, Luella, Nov. '11
'00 Karen & Chad O'Hara, girl, Madalyn, Apr. '12
'00 Amy (Larson '00) & John Sand, boy, Michael, Feb. '12
'01 Kristi & Brad Dingman, girl, Elia, Feb. '12
'01 Valerie & Blair Folkens, boy, Grady, Apr. '12
'01 Melinda (Noll '01) & Matthew Jungbauer, girl, Aubrey, Mar. '11
'01 Jennifer (Maza '02) & Timothy Otremba, girl, Eleanor, Aug. '11
'01 Angie (Minnerath '01) & Robert Spitzley, girl, Sydney, Mar. '12

The Saint John’s Alumni Achievement Award is given to outstanding alumni in seven reunion classes during Homecoming each fall.

Nominations for the Alumni Achievement Award may be made at any time through the alumni office, 800-635-7303, or online at sjualum.com.

**ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS**

Bob Praus ’62

“Ever since our class matriculated in 1958, Bob Praus has been a leader and role model,” notes a classmate. Bob Praus was a class officer, stalwart football player and strong student while at SJU. After graduation, he served three years in the U.S. Army before beginning his work with Kraft Foods. When Praus retired in 1996 after a successful, 33-year career at Kraft, he had several company awards to his name. Known for his leadership, collaboration and his commitment to community, Praus was a natural choice for this year’s alumni achievement award.
ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Jon Theobald ’67
When the Minneapolis Star-Tribune asked Jon Theobald the best advice he ever received, he quickly responded, “be kind and respectful to everyone.” Theobald took the advice to heart and it has served him well for more than 40 years in the financial services industry. His successful career led him to his current role as president, chief operating officer and director of Mairs and Power, Inc., Minnesota’s oldest investment firm under private ownership and management. Theobald has also been an active Saint John’s alumnus, serving on the SJU Board of Regents from 1991-2000.

Tom Hokr ’72
A classmate cited Tom Hokr’s embodiment of the Benedictine values in his work, his community and his affiliation with Saint John’s. For more than 30 years, Hokr has followed his passion in helping people make the most of their financial assets. He is currently president and CEO of Capital Advisory Group, LLC, a Twin Cities-based financial services company. In his spare time, Hokr has been a devoted volunteer to the Rotary Club, Knights of Columbus and Saint John’s, where he served as president of the Alumni Association Board from 2009-10.

Michael Urbanos '72
Michael Urbanos’s career has taken many twists and turns since graduating from Saint John’s. This English major went on to receive both his CPA and his law degree.

He has worked in accounting and financial management positions in firms such as United Way, Arthur Andersen, LLP, and the Internal Revenue Service Office of Chief Counsel. Currently, Urbanos is the COO and general counsel for Space Center Inc., an industrial real estate company. Urbanos also serves on the boards of the Saint John’s Alumni Association, the Manitou Fund, the Minneapolis Rotary Foundation and the investment committee of the Science Museum of Minnesota, and as a mentor and advisory board member for the McNeely Center for Entrepreneurship at SJU.

Chris Boyd '77
While at SJU, Chris Boyd directed summer camps, worked at a Catholic mission in Appalachia and taught religious education. After graduation, he discovered a passion for health care while working in a mission hospital in Liberia through the Peace Corps. For more than 35 years, he has dedicated his life to community service and health care management. Boyd has worked in CEO positions at multiple hospitals, and currently works for Kaiser Permanente, Santa Clara, serving as CEO of the Hospital and Health Plan. Throughout his career, he has championed access to health care, performance improvement and holding health care providers accountable. He is active community volunteer and serves on several boards.

ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Tim McHale '77
Maj. Gen. Tim McHale has served our country in the U.S. Army for more than 35 years, assigned throughout the United States as well as Germany, Korea and extended combat tours in both Iraq and Afghanistan. An aviator and logistician, McHale commanded at every level from company to theater support command. From 2007 to 2009, he was the theater logistician for Gen. David Petraeus during the surge in Iraq. McHale returned to the United States for a short time and redeployed to Afghanistan to be Gen. Stan McChrystal’s vice deputy for support. McHale is a highly decorated officer, and now adds an SJU alumni achievement award to his accomplishments.

Rob Culligan '82
Since graduating from SJU Culligan has dedicated his life to service, education and family. He worked as a Vida Volunteer in Colorado and for Pax Christi USA in Pennsylvania. For nearly 25 years he has worked for SJU and CSB, first as an admissions counselor, then as a grant writer and eventually as the vice president for institutional advancement (since 1999). Under Culligan’s leadership, SJU successfully completed a $168 million capital campaign, the largest in the history of the university. Culligan worked tirelessly on The Saint John’s Bible, raising much of the funds to commission it, championing it within the Saint John’s community and providing valuable strategic counsel. He has served on several boards and coaches youth sports. One nominator writes, “Rob’s behind-the-scenes initiative, skills in organization, and good and compassionate heart make him an exceptional recipient of this award.”
DENIS MCDONOUGH ’92

Denis McDonough has established a career in foreign policy and legislative advisor to several key U.S. senators, including Barack Obama. McDonough was tapped for a key role in the Obama presidential administration, where he currently serves as the deputy national security advisor. He is part of an inner circle on which the president relies. The New York Times noted in a profile on McDonough that President Obama “often will not make a move on big issues without checking with him first.” McDonough was pictured in the history-making situation-room photo taken in the hours leading up to Osama bin Laden’s death.

ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

RICK ODETINAL ’87

Rick Odenthal has been president and CEO of Central Minnesota Credit Union (CMCU) since 2001. Under Odenthal’s leadership, CMCU has donated thousands of dollars to schools and charities in Central Minnesota. In 2010, CMCU received the Dora Maxwell Social Responsibility Award for credit unions in the greater-than-$500 million-in-assets category. Odenthal is an advocate for strengthening rural communities and has grown the more than 70-year-old credit union greatly during his tenure. Odenthal and his wife, Jane (Franta) CSB’89, are proud supporters of SJU, CSB and Saint John’s Prep. They are both active community volunteers.

'87 Gregory Wolf ’87, son of Hugo ’55, brother of Brian ’79, Michael ’84, Apr. ’12
'89 Rev. John Scott, OSB ’89, Apr. ’12
'90 Edward Bodensteiner, father of Terry ’90, Dec. ’11
'91 Harry E. Olson, Jr., father of Bill ’91, Feb. ’12
'95 Judy Cooley, mother of Marshal ’95, May ’11
'07 Justin Winker ’07, Dec. ’11

saintjohnsabbeycemetery.org
320-363-3434 or info@saintjohnsabbeycemetery.org
The Lord has been weaving and rearranging the threads of my life in an ever-changing and ever-astonishing pattern. And as I become more reflective as I age, I discern how God has used Saint John’s to help mold and shape my life, spiritually and professionally.

My most vivid memories of my Johnnie years (1954-1958) stem from the liturgies. A close friend and I would attend two Masses every Sunday—first the students’ Mass and then the monks’ high Mass with Gregorian chant. Not many students attended the second one, but the liturgies, especially the monastic community’s, fed and inspired us. In fact, some of our close friends “diagnosed” us as having contracted “monastery fever.” My friend did enter a Benedictine monastery a few weeks after graduation. He journeyed west to Blue Cloud Abbey, Marvin, South Dakota—I went east to New York City for six years.

A Sunday Mass in Venice, my favorite city, in 2004, flooded my mind with memories of these liturgies as the church of San Giorgio Maggiore (Benedictines occupied the original monastery) filled with the solemn rhythms of Gregorian chant. It affected everyone in my tour group, both Catholics and Protestants. Their reaction reminded me how fortunate I had been to experience such a Mass at Saint John’s almost every week for four years.

I also remember with admiration and gratitude Fr. Clarus Graves, my first-year French instructor. When I began teaching English at the then Brainerd Community College—with no teaching credits or experience, although I did have a master’s in English and comparative literature—I developed a teaching style, inspired by Fr. Clarus. His teaching and his “antics” gave me permission to be spontaneous and energetic in the classroom and still teach the subject matter. Fr. Clarus would say, “Je danse,” and he would dance with his scapular swinging. On one cold, wintry day, he ran to the window, shouting “Ouvrez la fenêtre,” pushing the window up so that snowflakes drifted in. Then, with the same burst of energy, “Fermez la fenêtre,” and down the window would slam. One never knew what to expect. I’ll never forget him.

And Saint John’s helped cultivate my lasting friendship with author Jon Hassler ’55. We met in 1968 at Brainerd Community College when Jon began teaching English there. One fall Jon invited me to visit his off-campus art appreciation class in Wadena since I had spent some weeks in Europe that summer. On the way to and from Wadena, we discovered how much we had in common—Saint John’s (our years there overlapped by one), a deep admiration for the writer Flannery O’Connor, and much more. (I thank Saint John’s and Sister Mariella Gable for introducing me to O’Connor’s writing.) We talked as if we would never quit. That time together began and anchored our friendship until Jon’s death in 2008.

For the first issue of central Minnesota’s Lake Country Journal Magazine, in 1997, I interviewed Jon for the cover feature. To tie all of these threads together, our interview took place at Sexton Commons, named in honor of Bill Sexton, a 1955 classmate of Jon’s.

Now Saint John’s enters a new era, as we welcome our first lay president. Yet, as I’ve learned, the threads of the past are inextricably woven into the future—inspiring and coloring the new pattern. Like the Masses that inspired and fed me long ago, the best of our past will endure, shaping Saint John’s future in its own ever-changing and ever-astonishing pattern.

Joseph Plut ’58 earned his master’s in English at Columbia University and taught English and humanities for 36 years at Central Lakes College in Brainerd, Minn. He was a longtime friend and colleague of writer Jon Hassler ’55 and is the author of Conversations with Jon Hassler (Nodin Press, 2010).
It wasn’t until many years after graduation that Fred Senn realized how much his Saint John’s education had made a difference in his life.

A successful agency executive, author and founding partner of advertising firm Fallon Worldwide, Fred is thankful for the many Johnnies who helped him along the way. When he and his wife, Heidi, were preparing their estate plan, they wanted to help others receive what Fred calls his greatest return on investment.

Through a charitable remainder trust, Fred and Heidi made a gift to Saint John’s that will provide student scholarships.

“The further you get into life, the more you are impressed by how the Benedictine values help the world work better,” says Fred. “It’s something I want to be a part of.”

It’s your will.

To learn more about making a bequest to Saint John’s, contact Jim Dwyer ’75, director of planned giving, at (800) 635-7303 or jdwyer@csbsju.edu
Sculpture of Saint Benedict
Graces Campus

Next time you’re on campus, be sure to visit the new sculpture of a young Saint Benedict, which stands in the courtyard between Stephen B. Humphrey Auditorium and the Great Hall. Commissioned by Gene and Mary Frey in honor of their son, Jim ’78, Saint Benedict was sculpted by David Paul Lange, OSB, with Steven Lemke ’08. Benedict is depicted standing in a moment of reflection, his head turned toward the Abbey Church.